

**Philippians 4:1 — “Cultivating Affectionate Love for One Another & Standing Firm in the Lord!”***Introduction*

- How would you describe a church that **'LOVES ONE ANOTHER'**? What are the marks?

We need repetitious reminders to **love one another**.

See, for instance:

- 1 Cor 13 - helps for true LOVE in a church full of problems/division.
- John 13.35 - all men will know you are my disciples if you have LOVE for one another.
- John 15.12 - this is my commandment that you LOVE one another.
- John 15.13 - greater LOVE has no one than this: that he lay down his life for his friends
- John 15.17 - this I command you: LOVE one another.
- 2 Cor 13.11 - Paul's final benediction to the Corinthians.
- 1 Thess 3.6 - love thinks kindly & longs to be with each other
- Philemon 7 - joy & comfort in this LOVE/refresh each other
- Heb 6.10 - and just remember: God won't forget your work of LOVE which you show in ministering to the saints!
  - \*\*Heb 13.1 - let LOVE of the brethren continue.

*Background to Philippians 4:1*

Ch. 4 is the concluding section of the book: very pastoral, very practical, very exhortational! Phil. 4 is about living out the gospel in your local church.

Note: before Paul begins his COMMANDS, he first COMMENDS them!

**THESIS — From Philippians 4:1, we'll glean 2 lessons from pastor Paul's example:**

## **I. CULTIVATE AFFECTION FOR THE BELIEVERS! (1a)**

**Note these terms -- descriptions:**

- 1. my beloved —**

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**2. my brethren —**

**3. long to see —**

**4. my joy —**

**5. my crown —**

**6. my beloved —**

How do we cultivate affection?? —

1. Remember the closeness of your spiritual family. (**intimacy**)
2. Remember to pray for your spiritual family. (**entreaties**)
3. Remember your duties toward your spiritual family. (**duties**)
4. Remember to advance the gospel together above all else (**priorities!**)

Practically here at CFBC, what can you do to grow/excel more in this [growing in cultivating affectionate love for one another]?

- Get to know your fellow members intentionally, specifically.
- Pray for them by name, weekly, deliberately, thoughtfully.
- Invite them over, hospitality.
- Are some older? Get to know them & learn from them (glean wisdom)
- Are some younger? Get to know them & encourage them & point them to Christ!
- Are you different than some? Overcome worldly preferences & love the children in Gods family

## **II. STAND FIRM IN THE LORD! (1b)**

The verb **stand firm** means:

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Considering the immediate context of Philippians 1 & 3 (where the verb “stand firm” is used), we glean the following:

1. **Stand firm!** *as a citizen of heaven (3:20)*. Steadfast in your loyalty and obedient to your governor and ordinances of heaven!
2. **Stand firm!** *in our commitment to the cross of Christ even when others oppose you (3:18-19)*. Hostility and sufferings will come. But don't be afraid. Don't back down. Don't be intimidated.
3. **Stand firm!** *by being UNITED in one mind (1:27-28)*. Can't stand if your army is dis-unified; if your team is at odds w/ one another; MUST be unified to be STRONG & effective!

In the more immediate context of Philippians 4, **how do we stand firm? What are we to know?**

Phil 4.1 - ... “*in this way stand firm...*”

> This points *forward* to verses 2-7 — to these ways to stand firm:

**HOW TO STAND FIRM** (*hints at what we'll be studying in detail in coming weeks*)

*7 ways that Paul will flesh out in Philippians 4:2-7...*

1. Diligently Pursue Unity at All Costs (2-3) (**Rigorously pursue unity**)
2. Assure Your Heart in Your Heavenly Position (3b) (**Rest in your heavenly position**)
3. Live a life exuding fervent, abiding joy (4) (**Rejoice at all times**)
4. Allow Gentleness to Permeate your relationships (5a) (**Radiate gentleness in relationships**)
5. Anticipate the soon-coming of Jesus Christ (5b) (**Ready yourself for Christ's coming**)
6. Kill the Sin of Anxiety with Constant Prayer (6) (**Root out anxiety & replace it with prayer**)
7. Rest Confidently in the protective peace of God (7) (**Revel in the protective peace of God**)

*Conclusion:*

Consider these examples of loving affection from Joseph Alleine (pastor of a church in Taunton, England) while he was in prison writing a letter to his congregation whom he loved...

*❖ I'm rejoicing to be yours... I acknowledge I am not my own. If I have any interest in heaven, it is yours, to be improved for you. If I have any talents or goods they are confessedly yours, your claim, your stock. ... I am only the friend of the Bridegroom. My soul rejoices to hear how you stand fast, how close you cleave to him; my joy is now fulfilled. ... This is my joy, it refreshes me; I am full of consolation, to hear how tender Christ is of you; to see him spreading the skirts of his love, the wing of his power and care over you.*

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Or another letter of Alleine’s to his congregation while he was in prison...

❖ *And I cannot but tell you, you are the people of my cares, the desire of my eyes, the people of my delights, & of my prayers. My labors with you for many years, though some time attended with difficulty, and danger, yet were not tedious; but my time passed like Jacobs, when he served for Rachel and my sufferings for you are not unpleasant – through grace, because I trust they are for your edification, and are a seal of my love to you, and more especially of the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, which I have long preached among you.*

**Brethren We Have Met to Worship!**

Brethren, we have met to worship  
 And adore the Lord our God;  
 Will you pray with all your power,  
 While we meet to preach His Word?  
 All is vain unless the Spirit  
 Of the Holy One comes down;  
 Brethren, pray, and holy manna  
 Will be showered all around.

Let us love our God supremely;  
 Let us love each other, too;  
 Let us love and pray for sinners,  
 Till our God makes all things new.  
 Then He’ll call us home to Heaven;  
 At His table we’ll sit down;  
 Christ will gird Himself and serve us,  
 With sweet manna all around.

**Beneath the Cross of Jesus**

Beneath the cross of Jesus  
 I find a place to stand,  
 And wonder at such mercy  
 That calls me as I am;  
 For hands that should discard me  
 Hold wounds which tell me, “Come.”  
 Beneath the cross of Jesus  
 My unworthy soul is won.

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Beneath the cross of Jesus  
 His family is my own—  
 Once strangers chasing selfish dreams,  
 Now one through grace alone.  
 How could I now dishonor  
 The ones that You have loved?  
 Beneath the cross of Jesus  
 See the children called by God.

Beneath the cross of Jesus—  
 The path before the crown—  
 We follow in His footsteps  
 Where promised hope is found.  
 How great the joy before us  
 To be His perfect bride;  
 Beneath the cross of Jesus  
 We will gladly live our lives.

**All Glory Be to Christ!**

Should nothing of our efforts stand No legacy survive  
 Unless the Lord does raise the house In vain its builders strive  
 To you who boast tomorrow's gain tell me what is your life  
 A mist that vanishes at dawn -- All glory be to Christ!

*All glory be to Christ our king! All glory be to Christ!  
 His rule and reign will ever sing, “All glory be to Christ!”*

His will be done His kingdom come On earth as is above  
 Who is Himself our daily bread Praise Him the Lord of love  
 Let living water satisfy The thirsty without price  
 We'll take a cup of kindness yet -- All glory be to Christ!

When on the day the great I Am -- The Faithful and the True  
 The Lamb who was for sinners slain, Is making all things new.  
 Behold our God shall live with us, and be our steadfast light  
 And we shall ere his people be -- All glory be to Christ!