
STAND ALONE

First Baptist Church

TOGETHER FOR THE GOSPEL

A message presented by Pastor Marc Minter

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INTRODUCTION

Every New Testament Church is called by God to live commendably together for the gospel of Christ. This is, in fact, the central task of the local church. Living a life worthy of the gospel is not some form of works-based righteousness. Rather, it is the idea that who we truly are and what we really believe is not unrelated to what we actually do. Local churches are intended by God as outposts of His kingdom on earth, where His doctrines are made known and visible among the congregation. In this message, we shall consider what it means to live in a manner worthy of the gospel.

MESSAGE MADE SIMPLE

“Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that... you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith...”
(Philippians 1:27).

Some people may believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ is merely a story you learn in order to make sure you know the right answer to God’s question when you arrive at heaven’s gate. “I believe in Jesus!” and “Jesus saves!” are not uncommon slogans in our part of the world. And yet, it is also quite normal to see many of those who claim to believe the gospel living lives that utterly contradict that claim.

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Living a life worthy of the gospel is not some form of works-based righteousness. Rather, it is the idea that who we truly are and what we really believe are not unrelated to what we actually do. Local churches are intended by God as outposts of His kingdom on earth, where His doctrines are made known and visible among the congregation. May God help us to believe the gospel, and may God help us to live in a manner worthy of proclaiming this glorious good news.

PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30 (ESV)

27 Only let your **manner of life** be **worthy of the gospel** of Christ,

so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that **you are standing firm** in one spirit,

with one mind **striving side by side for the faith** of the gospel,

28 and **not frightened** in anything by your **opponents**.

This is a clear sign to them of **their destruction**,

but of **your salvation**,

and that **from God**.

29 For **it has been granted** to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only **believe in him**

but also **suffer for his sake**,

30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

THE POINT I'M AIMING AT TODAY

Every New Testament Church is called by God to live commendably together for the gospel of Christ.

MESSAGE OUTLINE

(1) THE CHARGE

(2) THE CONFIDENCE

(3) THE CALL

(4) THE CONSEQUENCE

(5) APPLICATION: WHAT WILL YOU DO?

(1) THE CHARGE

“with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel of Christ” (v28)

- **To whom is the charge given?**

- The “**saints**,” “**overseers**” (pastors/elders), and “**deacons**” of Philippi (Phil. 1:1)
 - In other words... **THE LOCAL CHURCH**
 - Paul wrote to:
 - “**the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae**” (Col. 1:2).
 - “**the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus**” (Eph. 1:1).
 - “**the churches of Galatia**” (Gal. 1:2).
 - “**the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia** [the greater Roman province of which Corinth was the capitol]” (2 Cor. 1:1)
 - “**the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours**” (1 Cor. 1:2).
- **Therefore**, we can read this as a **direct charge** to the church in Philippi, but this is also a charge **to all churches** everywhere by extension.
 - So, this **charge is given to you** (if you are a Christian) in the context of **your own local church!**
- **Christ is calling us all to do something here...**

We should **ask Him what He wants** from us and **pray that He will help us** respond with **obedience and faith**.

- **What is the charge?**
 - “with one mind strive side by side for the gospel... of Christ”
 - **One Mind:** united in creed and conviction
 - “Have **this mind among yourselves**, which is **yours in Christ Jesus**, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:5–8).
 - Our Creed: Christ is the God-man who died in obedience to God, His Father, as an act of supreme humility and grace.
 - Our Conviction: Following the example of Christ, we do not count our own interests above others, but rather we intend to obey God even unto death.
- If Christians in a church family are to have “one mind,” let me ask you...
 - Do **you know** our **creed**?
 - I mean do you know it?!
 - Is the **story of Christ** a **passion** of yours?
 - Are **you committed** to our **conviction**?
 - Is **Jesus** and **church** a **hobby** for you?
 - A good way to know is if you have **other hobbies that take up more time and attention** than this one.
 - Are you **serious** about **following Jesus**?

- **Striving Side by Side**: united in common action
 - “Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that **you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life...**” (Phil. 2:14–16)
 - Our Common Action: (1) shine as lights in a dark world, and (2) hold fast to the word of life
 - 1) Shine: We are to live consistently with our creed, so that non-believers will be able to see the implications of the gospel on display in the world.
 - 2) Hold Fast: We are to maintain an indestructible and ever-tightening grip on the word of life, which is the word of God.
- Again, if Christians in a church family are to be “striving side by side,” let me ask you...
 - Are you **purposefully living as a light** for others?
 - Do you attempt to **shine blamelessness and innocence** in the midst of this crooked generation around you?
 - How about holding fast to the words of life?
 - Is **your understanding** of and **love** for God’s word **growing**?
 - Are you a good resource for your non-Christian friend to learn about what the Bible says about **parenting? Marriage? Financial stewardship? Work ethic? Retirement?**
 - Didn’t you know that the Bible has stuff to say about all of this?!

Summary: The charge is clear: **Have one mind and strive together** (“*side by side*” / *indicating the Christian community of the local church*) **for the gospel...**

Segue: *But where should our confidence be as we seek to do this?*

(2) THE CONFIDENCE

“[Do] not [be] **frightened** in anything by your **opponents**. **This is a clear sign** to them of **their destruction**, but of **your salvation**, and that **from God**. For it **has been granted** to you that **for the sake of Christ** you should not only **believe in him** but also **suffer for his sake**” (v28-29)

- **Our confidence cannot rest on glorious results in the world**
 - Jesus warned His disciples that suffering was sure to come.
 - “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, **therefore the world hates you**” (Jn. 15:18–19).
 - After a great harvest of new believers, early in the book of Acts, the apostles were jailed for preaching and then beaten and warned not to preach anymore. The apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name [of Christ] (Acts. 5:41).
 - Just listen to these promises of suffering:
 - “do not be **ashamed** of the testimony about our Lord... but **share in suffering** for the gospel by the power of God” (2 Tim. 1:8).
 - “**Share in suffering** as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:3).
 - “Always be sober-minded, **endure suffering**, do the work of an evangelist...” (2 Tim. 4:5).
 - “As an **example of suffering** and patience, brothers, **take the prophets** who **spoke** in the name of the Lord” (James 5:10).
 - “To this **you have been called**, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, **so that you might follow in his steps**” (1 Pet. 2:21).

- **Upon what does confidence rest?**
 - Jesus promised that suffering would come.
 - **“it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake”** (v29)
 - If you are suffering unjustly, it is a sign of your imminent salvation.
 - **“This is a clear sign... of your salvation”** (v28)
 - Unjust opponents are reminded of their imminent destruction.
 - **“[Do] not [be] frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction”** (v28)
 - Our confidence rests upon the God who judges justly!
 - **“and that from God”** (v28)
 - God will judge the wicked rightly; and He will vindicate those who trust in Him.
 - **“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful... And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever.”** (1 Pet. 5:6–11)
 - Friends, is you **hope or confidence** resting in **Christianity gaining the social clout** it once seemed to have in America?
 - Do you think, “If our local church will just **put these practical things in place**, then our crowds will start to grow”?
 - Are you holding out hope that **the world will love and appreciate you** as a Christian?

Summary: Our confidence is in the God who gets the final say in all of this.

Segue: *So, what does God call us (NT churches) into with this charge?*

(3) THE CALL

“let your **manner of life** be **worthy of the gospel** of Christ” (v27)

- **What does it mean to live in a manner “worthy of the gospel”?**
 - We do not deserve God’s grace in Christ when we **FIRST** receive it, so God’s word is not calling us to **BE** worthy of receiving the gospel.
 - We do not deserve God’s grace in Christ **AFTER** we receive it, so God’s word is not calling us to **BECOME** worthy.
 - What we have here is the need for consistent living: “**If you are going to claim the name of Christ – side by side with others who are doing the same – then live in a manner worthy of it!**”
 - Spurgeon: “It is shocking to think how persons **dare to remain members of Christian Churches**, and even to enter the pulpit, when they are **conscious that their private life is foul**.

Oh, how can they do it? How is it that their **hearts** have **grown** so hard? What? Has the devil bewitched them? Has he turned them away from being men, and **made them as devilish as himself...**

that they should dare to pray in public, and to **sit at the [Lord’s] table...** while **their hands are foul**, and their **hearts unclean** and their **lives are full of sin?**

I charge you, **if there are any of you** whose lives are not consistent, **give up your profession**, or else **make your lives** what they should be....

if you know yourselves to be living in any sin, may God help you to mourn over it, to loathe it, to **go to Christ about** it [right now]—to take hold of Him... to repent [heartily]—and **then to begin anew** in His strength, a life which shall be such as becomes the gospel.”

Summary: This call is to consistent living as we strive together for the gospel.

Segue: *And the stakes are high for all of us... and the world.*

(4) THE CONSEQUENCE

“let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, **so that** whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that **you are standing firm** in one spirit” (v27)

- “so that... you stand firm”
- **We need the gospel... every day.**
 - We need to be reminded of the gospel.
 - We need to be corrected by the gospel.
 - We need to be comforted by the gospel.
- **The world needs the gospel... every day.**
 - The unbeliever needs to be reminded of the gospel.
 - The unbeliever needs to be corrected by the gospel.
 - The unbeliever needs to be comforted by the gospel.
- **Every New Testament Church is called by God to live commendably together for the gospel of Christ.**
 - “**Practice these things** [exemplary **speech, love, faith, conduct,** and **purity** (v12); and also, the **public reading of Scripture, exhortation,** and **teaching** (v13)], **immerse yourself** in them, so that all may see your progress. **Keep a close watch on yourself** and on the **teaching. Persist** in this, for by so doing you will **save both yourself and your hearers** (1 Timothy 4:15–16)
 - NET “**Be conscientious about how you live and what you teach. Persevere in this, because by doing so you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.**”

Major Point: Every New Testament Church is **called by God to live commendably together** for the **gospel** of Christ.

(5) APPLICATION: WHAT WILL YOU DO?

- 1. Do you believe the gospel?**
- 2. Will you answer this charge... one mind... one common action?**
- 3. Will you rest your confidence in God?**

Our own souls... the souls of our friends and loved ones... and the very gospel is at stake.

May God graciously help us to strive together for the gospel.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Together, For the Gospel by J. Ligon Duncan

<https://www.fpcjackson.org/resource-library/sermons/together-for-the-gospel>

Striving for the Faith of the Gospel by John Piper

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/striving-for-the-faith-of-the-gospel>

The Gospel's Power in a Christian's Life by C.H. Spurgeon

<http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols10-12/chs640.pdf>