

PHILIPPIANS—WEEK 3
The faith of the Gospel: Phil. 1:27-30

In the first chapter of Philippians, Paul begins his epistle by reminding the church in Philippi of the importance of being a focused church. For Paul, the keys to the church fulfilling its mission are threefold: 1) having a fellowship rooted in the Gospel, 2) being focused on the furtherance of the Gospel; and 3) as we will see this week, living lives of faith—lives that are worthy of the Gospel.

In Philippians 1:27 we read the following challenge from Paul, “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ . . .” Living a life worthy of the Gospel is certainly a sobering challenge. But what does that mean? How do we live lives worthy of the Gospel of Christ? Paul goes on in chapter 1 to give us the characteristics of a life of faith:

1. **A life of faith stands firm.** We live in a society that is struggling to find its way. Because we live in the age of relative truth, people are unsure. Will what I say today be considered inappropriate tomorrow? What if I buy _____ today and it is out of fashion tomorrow? Can I believe in _____? What if it is proven wrong tomorrow? Such doubts can be overwhelming, leading to a life of paralysis. In contrast, a life of faith is unaffected by the winds of change. Rooted in the unchanging truth of God, believers have the confidence to move forward in life. God’s truth sets them free to live lives of purpose and passion. (Jas. 1:5-8)
2. **A life of faith is single-minded.** According to a study done by information scientists in 2011, Americans took in five times as much information each day as they did in 1986. To put that in perspective, that was the equivalent of reading 174 newspapers per day. And, that was nearly a decade ago. Think about what the information load is like today! All that information is distracting. Before we can fully process one piece of information, we are on to the next. People are distracted and unfocused, and with suicide and mental health issues on the rise, it is clear that this life of distraction is not healthy for us. But God has called us to something more. Jesus promised us a more abundant life—a life of purpose, a life of singular focus. How different would our lives be if we filtered out all the “stuff” society says is important to focus on the eternal? What would life be like if our primary concerns were glorifying God, caring for others, and sharing the Gospel?
3. **A life of faith is a life of community and unity.** If our lives are focused on glorifying God and caring for others, then we will necessarily be in unity and community with those with a similar focus.
4. **A life of faith is a life of courage.** Living a life of faith will buck the trends of our society. It will require us to take a stand against the relativism of the modern world and to stand up for the absolute truth of our God and His Word. Thus, it is a life that will bring conflict. However, in the end, Paul assures us the result is well worth the conflict. In the end, we can face whatever Satan and the world throw at us because we have confidence that our salvation is not from us but from God. In a world consumed with building self-confidence, we have something much more secure and eternal—we have God-confidence.

Questions:

1. We live in a society consumed with achieving self-confidence. What are the dangers of pursuing self-confidence, if any? What’s the difference between looking to ourselves for our worth and looking to God for our worth?
2. Is there such a thing as absolute truth? If so, what is its source? What is the problem with allowing everyone to find “their truth?”
3. If you were to die today, would _____ lived a life worthy of the Gospel be an appropriate epitaph for you? If not, what changes should you make to live a life worthy of the Gospel?