



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Firm Standing Saints Philippians 4: 1-3

TO: LEGISLATORS, SPOUSES, GOVERNOR, STAFF & LSO

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Philippians is a very practical book where Paul constantly focuses on central issues of our faith, giving sound instructions for living. He emphasizes the fact that we can expect hardship, as he also endured, when we are faithful and the gospel is proclaimed. Paul majors on Jesus Christ, setting our Lord's life as the supreme example to follow. And he reminds us of Christ's all sufficiency to meet our every need. Remembering then that our citizenship is not on this earth but in heaven and we have the certain hope of a coming Savior, Paul exhorts us to stand firm!

I. "STAND FIRM"- PHILIPPIANS 4:1

"Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved." Philippians 4:1

Paul exhorts the Philippian believers to "stand firm". From our previous study we saw this word is a military term used when under heavy attack.

"stand firm" Greek word "steko," is a military term meaning to stand your ground, be immovable, hold your position on the front line. All this is to be done while under a heavy assault or attack during battle.

Jesus said in John 16:33, "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." Luke writes in Acts 14:22 that, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." Even though believers will endure hardship, Paul desires us to remain immovable and steadfast in our faith. While under attack for your faith, hold your ground and do not waiver. Do not move or compromise, remaining secure in Jesus Christ with boldness. Remain resolute, steadfast and courageous in spite of the trials. Stand with integrity and a blameless life, living worthy of the honorable name you bear!

Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:10-20, "Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil...Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition, pray at all times..."

How do you stand firm in your faith while on the Legislative floor? How should you respond to ungodliness or evil? How should you respond to the

way the world thinks? You must be strong but humble. You must know what you believe and why. You must know Scripture and constantly be in His Word so you know how to respond to the trials that will come your way so you can stand firm. And you must remember that Christ is all sufficient providing what you need to endure. Remember that in serving our sovereign God, nothing surprises Him. Everything that comes our way serves only to clarify and purify our love for Him. Paul exhorts you to stand your post with your armor on while enduring hardship. And know for certain that we can expect God to use these trials and troubles to spread the Gospel. If Christ is proclaimed, then we can rejoice! (Philippians 1:18)

A. THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST

Christ was truly persecuted and yet He was without sin. Hebrews 4:15 says, "for we do not have a High Priest Who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points, tempted as we are, yet without sin." Sometimes we have suffered greatly. But always remember that we have never gone through what Jesus went through on our behalf. Christ is the sought after model of standing firm that we are to follow. And He understands our difficulties and distress when no one else does, even serving here in the Capitol. Therefore, we are to follow our Lord's example, pressing on to the goal of being like Christ. (Philippians 3:14) May this be our single focus in life; remembering all else will fade away, even your time in the Capitol. What will live on is our pursuit of being like Christ, immovable, steadfast, soldiers at our post not wavering even while under heavy attack and holding forth the word of life to a world who desperately need Jesus Christ. Let your light shine bright even in suffering. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

B. THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL

Though not "sinless", Paul is an example of one who stood firm regardless of distress that came his way. "Standing firm" was the habit of his life. Paul knew the Scriptures, he knew what they meant and what principles needed to be applied in what circumstances. So we too must be a student of the Word, and thus discerning. This is hard work and I encourage you to be in God's Word daily, studying the Scriptures and hiding them in your heart. Paul states in Philippians 3:17, "Brethren, join in following my example and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern." Paul was beaten and jailed many times. He was even stoned and left for dead as he sought to share the Gospel. Yet, he didn't compromise the Gospel so things would be easier for him. He didn't care if things were politically correct if they were right before

BIBLE STUDIES

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the Lord. He didn't color the truth of the Gospel to make it more palatable or acceptable. Paul never changed the Gospel message for the sake of personal acceptance or comfort. He stayed the course and entrusted his life to the sovereign Lord Jesus Christ. Bearing these truths in mind, Paul exhorts us to stand firm in this world that will test our faith.

II. STAND FIRM IN "HIS WAY"- PHIL. 4:2-3

"I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life."
Philippians 4:2-3

Paul will use the next few verses to help us understand how to stand firm. He begins first by addressing unity in the church. Remember from Philippians 2:1-4, Paul's plea for unity and mutual consideration for one another? Paul desired the church to be strong and withstand hardships from the outside and remain intact on the inside, not crumbling from disunity. In fact, Paul's joy was tied to the unity of believers. As believers, we are called to the same common goal of proclaiming the gospel and glorifying God, intent on that sole purpose alone. There is no room for selfish intent or selfish pursuits. Paul's appeal to unity unfolded as he examined the perfect example of humility, our Lord in the remaining verses of Philippians 2. Here in Philippians 4:2, Paul exhorts two women to live in harmony!

A. "EUODIA AND SYNTYCHE"— PHILIPPIANS 4:2

The text shows Paul "implored" each woman separately as if to admonish and place personal responsibility on each individual for the conflict. Obviously the discord between these two women had elevated to the point where Paul needed to address it in this small letter to the Philippians.

"implore" Greek word "**parakaleo**," verb for "**para**" meaning by the side and "**kaleo**", to call. To call to one's side, a calling of aid, an appeal for something, an exhortation, an encouragement to, a strengthening of.

Paul knew the church could not stand firm without unity. Disunity crumbles and cripples from the inside. Paul calls these women to live in harmony having laid the ground work for unity in Philippians 2:1-4.

"harmony, same mind" Greek word "**phroneo**" means to think the same things, to have the same understanding.

Only by submitting to Christ and His Word are we able to live in harmony with one another. In Philippians 2, Paul reminds us of Christ's great and sufficient provision for us to live in harmony with one another; focused and intent on one sole purpose... *proclaiming the gospel*. Because we have first received from Christ; His help and exhortation, His tender advice and counsel, partnership with the Holy Spirit Who now indwells our life to help us become like Christ and the deep, abiding affection and compassion of Jesus Christ *then we are called* to be likeminded, having the same love, in one accord and one mind. (Philippians 2:1-4) What Christ asks us to give; *He first gives to us* and then became an example for us as to how to live. Because of Christ's great and sufficient provision for us, we should be able to get along in harmony with one another. We are called to think and live Biblically with an unconditional love that seeks the welfare of all. There is no room for selfishness or discord because it damages the testimony of our Lord. The reality is that we cannot live like this on our own strength but only as we submit ourselves to Christ as Lord and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. A.W. Tozier asked this question, "*How do you get 3000 pianos to sound the same? Tune them to one tuning fork!*" Our tuning fork is Jesus Christ and His Word! Is your life *tuned* to God's Word? Paul admonishes these women to live in harmony for the sake of the Gospel. He knew this disunity could cripple or crumble the church from the inside out and thus they would not be able to stand firm! Unity, having the same mind and intent on one purpose is essential as believers. We are the body of Christ, His Church! In order to stand firm, we must be unified!

B. THE CHURCHES ROLE IN UNITY— PHILIPPIANS 4:3

Paul strongly admonishes the two women as individuals to be obedient and live in unity, but also calls on the church as a whole to hold these women accountable to the church's purpose of being of the same mind intent on one purpose. Paul calls on two individuals, Clement and another to help these women be obedient. Then he appeals to the entire body of Christ to help with the reconciliation of these two women. Unity in the body of Christ, with fellow believers is critical to being able to stand firm. If Satan can bring about dissension and friction and it is allowed to continue, it will fracture the church of Jesus Christ. We see it happen on a continual basis. True unity, true like-mindedness is hard, especially when you have been hurt or wronged. But it is essential and Paul begins here as he exhorts us to stand firm! We are called to no less! Paul said in Philippians 2:2, "*...make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.*"