



Pastor Scott Archer 05.22.2016*
Central Congregational Church
"For the Glory of God and the Good of our Neighbors"
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The Power and Priority of Christian Unity (Pt. 1)

Philippians 1:27-30

Series: The Joy Factor

Central Passage

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.

Central Thought: Our unity in Christ, and our willingness to stand together, and even suffer together for his kingdom purposes, is our primary identifier and the key to our witness.

- ❖ Paul challenges us to live first and foremost as subjects of king Jesus. (Phil. 1:27a)
 - "Manner of life," Greek – *politeuesthe* = "your conduct as a citizen."

Philippians 3:20 (ESV) — **20** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ... (See also Hebrews 11:13-16)

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- ❖ Thus, the source and focus of our unity are as fellow citizens of the kingdom of God. (Phil. 1:27b)

- "faith of the gospel" = Greek – (*gospel*), *euongeliou* = the "good news" that Jesus is king!

1 Peter 2:11 (ESV) — **11** Beloved, I urge you *as sojourners and exiles* to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. \

- ❖ Our Christ-centered unity is a source of courage in the face of opposition, and the heart of our witness. (Phil. 1:28)

1 Peter 2:12 (ESV) — **12** Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, **they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.** (See also Matt. 5:16)

John 13:34–35 (ESV) — **34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. **35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

- ❖ Both faith and suffering are "gifts" from God that strengthen our unity and draw us closer to Jesus. (Phil. 1:29)
 - "Granted to you," Greek – *echaristhe* = freely given

Homework

- ❖ Prayerfully read through Paul's letter to the Philippians and the "see also" passages above.
- ❖ Prayerfully consider your citizenship and your ultimate allegiance.