

Walk Worthy

Քրիստոսավայել Վարմունք

Philippians 1:27-2:4

In the first chapter of the letter to the believers of Philippi, Paul shared:

1. Paul is joyful that they are partners in the Gospel
2. Paul is joyful because they are partakers of the grace of Jesus Christ with him
3. Paul is praying with joy that they will grow in the knowledge of God and discernment.
4. Paul is joyful in prison because whatever happens to him it is for the advancement of the Gospel.
5. Paul has a purpose, a Christ-centered purpose: whether he dies or lives, it is for Christ, for the glory of the Lord. Nothing will stop him from sharing the Gospel in the prison or outside.

We arrive to verse 27. HE says, only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ....

What is he talking about? Let me give you example:

Many of you have heard the music that is produced right here in my home studio. You hear it over the phone, during the online church services or even at the church. You might think I have an orchestra or a band. But actually, I don't. I don't have a professional studio, but I choose the quality of the sounds that are consistent with the high standards. I want the sounds to be worthy of creating good music.

I read about group of Christian organization for young men (Trail Life) that decided to use this term "Walk Worthy" as their slogan, and their simple definition is: "to behave in a manner that is consistent with their ideals."

Let us read the passage:

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.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. (Philippians 1:27-2:2)

Let us dig in

1. Worthy of the Gospel

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. (vs 27 ESV)

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. (NIV)

Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ (NLT)

The Greek word is *axios*: **suitably, worthily, in a manner worthy of**¹

This word appears different places in the Bible.² For example:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (Eph 4:1 ESV)

so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; (Col. 1:10 ESV)

we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. (1 Thess. 2:12 ESV)

Worthy of your calling, worthy of the Lord, worthy of God...

Is your life we consistent with your faith in Christ? Please examine yourself...

-Paul is teaching the believers to continue to live Christ-centered lives even if the “chief” Paul is not around. I remember a great teacher in my childhood who taught us to be reliable students if he was not observing us during the test.

To walk in manner worthy of the Gospel means Christ is continually transforming our mind, our behavior, and our character.

2. One Spirit and One Mind

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, 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. (27b-30 ESV)

-Paul clarifies further about the qualities of a Christian life. One spirit, one mind, striving side by side, and standing firm for what? FOR THE FAITH of the GOSPEL.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul uses the same idea of standing firm for the Gospel. There he defines what is the gospel (four things): Christ died on the cross for our sins, he

was buried, He rose from the dead, and he appeared to the disciples. This message continues until today. One day this message, the Gospel, became real in my life and started to transform me personally. I experienced God's forgiveness and freedom.

Yet there will always be opponents. Knowing that, he is teaching the church to face the "enemy" (opponents) together.

I don't know who the church members were. In Acts 16, we know about **Lydia**, a wealthy merchant, a non-Jewish convert. We also read about a **slave girl** who was freed from demons. I wonder if she joined the church. I don't know. We read also about the **Roman jailer** who became a Christian after seeing the faith of Paul and Silas. And I am sure **more people** joined the church, some **Jews** and some **gentiles**. Most likely people of different background joined the church. Paul is interested to see unity in their struggle in life. Please notice, these are the early church converts. They faced all kinds of opposition from the Roman authorities and the Jewish leaders. Those opponents could also be false teachers. Paul did not identify who were those. It could be also the Satan who wants to stop the Christians. "Face the enemy" together with one mind, one spirit, side by side standing firm.

3. Humility and Unity

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. (Philippians 2:1-2)

Again, Paul knows the dynamics of the church. He knows that there will be diversity in the church. As I said before, in the early church there were people from different backgrounds with different opinions. Every church should ask these important questions: How did our forefathers and foremothers start this church? Where are we now? What should we preserve from the old? What should we change?

Now that we are facing this pandemic, I believe we will ask many questions like, How do we continue after this?

Please see how Paul stresses unity again:

complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. (2:2)

How can we have one mind and the same love, being in full accord and of one mind?

Only when Jesus is the source of the unity. When we have mind of Jesus, when we have love of Jesus. And we will continue next week when Paul writes about Jesus, the perfect example of humble servant.

Application:

1. Are you living worthy **of your calling, worthy of the Lord, worthy of God...**

Are you consistent in your walk? Let us help each other to strive together in our faith. We have small groups, be part of them. We pray together, we worship together, we study His Word together...

2. Unity in Christ. It should not be artificial. It does not work just agreements without humility

1. Blue Letter Bible Greek Lexicon

2. Romans 16:2, Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 3 John 1:6

Our solar system has many planets and they have the Sun at the center. Brothers and sisters, the CORE, the center is Jesus. We can have the same mind if we all have the mind of Jesus. We can have same love if we have the love of Jesus...

(Next week we will see more about this. Paul will describe Jesus in a poem. He will draw a beautiful picture of Jesus, the humble servant, who emptied himself and came down to us).

We could face all kind of disagreements in the church. People can look at the same issue in several ways. How do we live side by side? Sometimes we come to an agreement. Please notice how Paul writes it:

He does not talk about agreement. Agreement does not bring unity, humility does.

How?

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Isn't this true in marriage?

Isn't is true in family dynamics?

Isn't this true when you take a break from hot argument and sleep over it, and come to the feet of Jesus humbly asking for forgiveness to approach a brother or sister who does not think like you.

Paul and Silas were in prison in Philippi. The doors of the jail opened miraculously. Now instead of getting out of jail, Paul and Silas stayed there. Next morning the jailor was terrified when he saw the doors of the prison open. He was ready to kill himself. Paul interfered and stopped the suicide of the jailer. That man saw something very important. **Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.** He saw a different kind of love and care in them. That made him ask: "what must I do to be saved?"

