



Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus

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Teacher: Steve Holt

**Philippians: The Leverage Of Joy**  
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## **Introduction:**

- We are in a study on, what I'm calling, "The Leverage of Joy."
- We are studying through the "manifesto of joy", the book of Philippians.
- Philippians is Paul's personal journal on how to have a life of joy. It is my conviction that joy is a leverage in our life—no matter whether we have cancer, been divorced or struggled with various addictions. Joy can be a leverage for God's abundant life.

For example, four couples in our fellowship, all separately, recently said to me that, they are reading and praying through Philippians and it is changing their marriage!

## **Today, we are in the last verses of Philippians chapter 1**

### **Philippians 1:25-30**

- Paul had a special love and affection for the church in Philippi.
- It was one of the more mature churches described in the New Testament.
- But Paul understood that it does not take long for a faithful church to slip into indifference and eventually moral and doctrinal error.
- Even in Revelation 2 we see that one of the strongest churches at the time, the church in Ephesus, in just 20 years was being called out by Jesus for "losing its first love."
- For example, many great churches in our city, once known for their powerful ministry, but because of a loss of integrity and then moral and doctrinal error, are only a shell of what they once were.

- Paul is deeply concerned that this not happen in Philippi.

### **Philippians 1:25-26**

***<sup>25</sup> And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, <sup>26</sup> that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.***

### **Joy Leverage: Spiritual Integrity**

- Paul is passionate about the Philippians continuing in their faith, to constantly progress.
- Paul is looking forward to seeing the church again so he can hear the stories and see the people with a joy in their faith.
- Then he begins to explain that this progress in the faith is only possible through spiritual integrity.

### **Philippians 1:27**

***<sup>27</sup> Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,***

- The verse uses the word “only” or *monon*, which is emphasis. Like an explanation point to what he is saying.
- The word “conduct” is the main verb in these verses. The verb carries the meaning of being a citizen, a good citizen.
- Philippi had the distinction of being one of the leading Roman colonies with a highly privileged status.
- The citizens of Philippi considered themselves “little Romes” and took great pride in that association with the Roman Emperor and all the privileges of being Roman.

- Roman society just like Greek society before it, was highly community conscious. The individual was subordinate to the state, and a person's skills, talents and energies were devoted first to the community.
- A responsible citizen was careful not to anything that would bring disrespect to the community of Philippi.
- Paul may have had this in mind when he chose this word.
- He uses the same word in **Philippians 3:20**: ***“For our citizenship is in heaven.”***
- In the same way, we are now citizens of the kingdom of God and this was a theme of Paul:
  - **Ephesians 4:1** ***“walking in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called”***
  - **Colossians 1:10** ***“in a manner worthy of the Lord to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God”***
  - **1 Thessalonians 2:12** ***“in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His kingdom”***
- The church's greatest testimony is spiritual integrity!
- The Christian's greatest testimony is spiritual integrity!
  - When society and those who are unchurched look at the church or look at our own lives and there appears to be immorality, impurity and compromise morally, there is no reason for them to believe.
  - The Gospel of Christ is respected or put into disrepute by the actions of believers
  - How we live really matters! People are watching. The little lives of our children are watching—not what we say we believe but how we treat others, how we talk and how we walk.

- The Gospel of the Good News of Jesus Christ! It is the message Paul describes “as the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.” This Gospel should demonstrate the power of God through changed lives.

**Paul now describes 3 characteristics of being a Wholehearted Disciple who walks worthy of the Lord, who walks with spiritual integrity.**

**Philippians 1:27b Standing Firm!**

***that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,***

- Spiritual integrity means we stand firm. The word has the meaning of a soldier defending his position at all costs, even to the point of sacrificing his own life.
- Figuratively it refers to holding fast to a belief, conviction or principle regardless of personal loss.
- Standing firm is always positive and negative:
  - Stand for God against Satan.
  - Stand for truth against falsehood.
  - Stand for righteousness against sin.
  - Stand for unity against disunity.
- Paul was not afraid of ridicule, hardship and suffering, or even death. His convictions were firm and unshakeable.

**Verse 27: Striving Together as a Team**

- “One spirit, one mind” refers to unity, harmony, same goals, same vision.
- Spiritual integrity requires we work together as a team!

- *Sunathleo*—meaning striving together as a team. The word used here is the one from where we get the word “athletics” and it is the idea of being a team, working as a team, fighting for victory as a team.
- Not striving together for the sake of unity but for the sake of the Gospel.
  - Working together to bring the Gospel to our city.
  - Springs Initiative is coming up this summer.
  - Guatemala
  - Signs and Wonders Camp
  - Working with our children, our youth, our men, our women.
- For example, like a team, where each athlete has a responsibility, a job to do, and when the team comes together and is working together, striving for victory, the team wins. The body of Christ is a team that needs each other. Christ is the head, but he needs all of us.
- **1 Corinthians 12:12-23**

***12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? 18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,***

- Teamwork requires we work together, striving in the same direction, giving ourselves to the Gospel as a team, respecting and honoring each other.

**Philippians 1:28-30    Suffering**

***28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.***

- **Spiritual Integrity is expressed best during the darkest of times.**
- You will suffer for your faith. You will suffer in this life.
- Our passage says, “has been granted” and it means you have been grace to suffer, just as you were giving grace to believe, you have been given grace to suffer.
- **John 1:12    The gift of salvation**  
***But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name***
  - The second gift that God grants His children, “for Christ’s sake”, is not as appealing as the first. Nevertheless it is an integral part of divine grace: suffering.
- **2 Timothy 3:12 *“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.***
- Jeanne Guyon writes, “You must be patient in all the suffering that God sends you. If your love for the Lord is pure, you will love Him as much on Calvary as on Mt Tabor. The Lord Jesus loved His father on Mt Tabor where He was transfigured, but He loved Him no less on Calvary where He was crucified.”
- **Matthew 10:22-25**  
***22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. 23 When they persecute you in***

***this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. <sup>24</sup> A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. <sup>25</sup> It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!***

- To suffer for Christ is not a command but an privilege

- **Philippians 3:7-9**

***<sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;***

- It is an honor to suffer for Christ

- **Romans 5:3-5**

***<sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.***

**Spiritual Integrity is what our church needs today. It means to:**

- **Stand Firm**
- **Strive Together, and**
- **Suffer**