

Stand Fast Philippians 4:1

Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

As we stated earlier in the series, the church at Philippi is very dear to Paul. They have supported him in his missionary work and there is a closeness that is felt by Paul for them. As we will see this morning Paul showers loving words upon them here, almost to the place of embarrassment.

But he has something very important to communicate to them and wants to let them know, again how he feels about them.

- I. Paul's affection for the saints.
 - A. My Beloved
 1. He seems scarcely able to find words adequate to express his love for the Philippians; he heaps together epithets of affection, dwelling tenderly on the word "beloved." Pulpit Commentary
 2. This is a very common word in the NT used by almost all the writers.
 3. It is the word used by God for His Son when His voice is heard from heaven.
 - B. Longed-for
 1. Paul had a deep desire to see them again.
 2. But since he was in prison that was not likely.
 3. They had shown their concern for him when they sent Epaphroditus to minister to Paul's needs with an offering.
 - C. Brethren
 1. They had the same heavenly Father and were therefore brethren in the truest sense of the term.
 - D. My Joy
 1. This is the common word for joy in the NT *chara*
 2. Paul would have that sense of joy every time he would think of the Philippians
 - E. My Crown
 1. This is the crown of the victor at the Olympic games.
 2. They were the proof of his ministry, his letter of recommendation.

3. We can see his confidence toward them.
4. Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

II. Stand Fast

A. This is a term that Paul uses over and over.

1. Philippians 1:27 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, NKJV
2. 1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
3. 1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.
4. Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.
5. 1 Thessalonians 3:8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.
6. 2 Thessalonians 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.
7. Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil.¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the wicked one.¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints --NKJV

B. This military metaphor refers to the Christian's ability to remain faithful amidst problems (cf. 1:27; I Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:11-14). It also relates to perseverance, which is only possible "in the Lord" (cf. Gal. 6:9; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison, Utley, R. J. (1997)

- C. It is a characteristic of spiritually mature believers.
1. Ephesians 4:14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,
 2. A small boy was standing by a horse tied to a post. A stranger asked him, "Can that horse run fast?" "I don't know," said the boy, "but he can stand fast." Steadfastness. It means not faith, but faithfulness. It is the quality of reliability, trustworthiness, which makes a person one on whom we can utterly rely and whose word will stand. (1 Cor. 15:58)
 3. Sorry to say that many can run fast but they are not good at standing fast.
- D. We must stand fast in evangelism.
1. If we do not take the gospel to the world, who will.
 2. If we do not convert our friends and neighbors, who will.
 3. We have a command to go and make disciples, but it is so easy to not.
 4. That is the reason for the peril we are in today in our country.
- E. We must stand fast in the face of persecution.
1. 2 Timothy 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
 2. Jesus said that the world would hate us.
- F. We must stand fast in the face of false teachers.
1. As we have seen in this letter not all teach the truth and some who do teach the truth do it for the wrong reasons.
 2. We stand by searching the scriptures to see what is the truth.
 3. We accept and believe what the scriptures say.
 4. We put the scriptures into action by living them out in our daily lives.
 - a. Jesus said let your light shine.
 - b. John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.
 - c. Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. NKJV
- G. We must stand fast in the face of those who would cause division in the body of Christ.
1. This is the next verse where two women, good women, according to the

text were about to divide the church by their contentions.

2. Paul does not call on the church to throw them out but to help them.
3. Help them see the danger of what they are doing.
4. To remember their love and care for one another.

H. We must stand fast in the face of an immoral society.

1. In Paul's day they did not live in a post Christian age but a pre-Christian age which was much worse.
2. I am reminded of what the Lord said to Jeremiah, "If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, Then how can you contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, In which you trusted, they wearied you, Then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?" Jeremiah 12:5 (NKJV)

I. We must stand fast against our own flesh.

1. In the words of Pogo, "We have met the enemy and he is us."
2. So it is that because God has chosen to remove our fleshly nature when He converted us, we continue to struggle each day.
3. This may be the hardest to stand against of all the above.
4. For the battle never lets up, we are always in struggle.
5. Rom 7:15-20 15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

III. In the Lord

A. Isn't that what Jesus said.

1. John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. NKJV
2. John 15:3-4 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. NKJV

4:1 Paul's transition ("therefore") closes the previous section (3:17–21) and introduces the following exhortations. joy and crown: Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.

He seems scarcely able to find words adequate to express his love for the Philippians; he heaps together epithets of affection, dwelling tenderly on the word "beloved." He tells them of his longing desire to see them, repeating the word used in ch. 1:8. He calls them his "joy and crown"—his joy now, his crown hereafter. He uses the same words of the other great Macedonian Church in 1 Thess. 2:19, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye?" The Greek word for "crown" - means commonly either the wreath ("the corruptible crown," 1 Cor. 9:25) which was the prize of victors at the Grecian games; or a garland worn at banquets and festivities. *Pulpit Commentary*

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." NKJV

Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. NKJV

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. NKJV

Hebrews 10:35-36 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: NKJV

Revelation 3:10-11 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. NKJV