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## CONDUCT OF BELIEVERS

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Good Morning! Where does the Lord have you today? My prayer is that you are abiding in Him wherever that is, so that in whatever you do in word or deed, all is done as unto the Lord. Whatever tasks you may face, know that He has gone before you, and is there with you! That's just biblical truth you can count on!

We've seen that Paul's approach to these believers in Philippi is that he wants them to grow in their relationship and knowledge of God, and from that knowledge to experience His joy. I want you to know that you've been prayed for today, that you too, would grow and know His joy.

Today we finish up chapter one by looking at Philippians 1:27-30.

**Take a minute to read it in the translation of your choice.**

With Paul's foundational statement "to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (v. 21) he moves on to instruct these believers that their conduct should reflect that thought. I like the wording in the New American Standard,

"Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ."

Worthy of the gospel of Christ? Wow, when I think about the price that was paid, the suffering that took place, not only physically for Jesus but then His separation from the Father and the Spirit when He took our sins upon Himself, having never experienced that separation from them before, that must have been more excruciating than the worst torture they could offer. And yet, in His great love for us He willingly offered Himself.

What conduct would be worthy of such a price? As a sinner, how could I ever do anything that would be worthy? I can't. Praise Him. He alone makes us worthy! But with our position

of being in Christ, and with His Holy Spirit's help, we can conduct our self in a way that would share the gospel to those around us.

Let's take a deeper look at this verse.

The word "Only" (monon) is a word that establishes an exclusive position - there is only one kind of conduct that the Believer should even consider, that's a conduct worthy of the gospel of Christ. Think on that just a bit. What does that look like? We have examples, Paul, as a matter of fact, offers himself as an example. There are those in Hebrews 11 where we have example after example, in what is often called "The Hall of Faith". In Philippians 2 we will see Jesus Christ being our ultimate example. And apart from Christ, every other one of those named failed at one point or another. Still, they are held up as examples, why? Because of their faith. They weren't perfect on their own, but they followed after God.

### **How's your faith?**

We have seen in several scriptures already in this study how we are to live. Paul emphasizes there is really only one kind of conduct for a believer. The flip side of that is that we are to EXCLUDE ALL OTHER FORMS of conduct. Not for the purpose of salvation, for our conduct could never save us. However, there is a purpose in maintaining the proper conduct, and although our salvation is not dependent upon our conduct - our conduct should be determined by our salvation.

**Read the following scriptures.** Do you struggle with any of these? Let God's word speak and His Spirit convict so that we may learn to walk in a manner worthy.

**Galatians 5:19-21, 26**

**I Thessalonians 4:1, 3-4, 7-8, 11-12**

**I Thessalonians 5:14-15, 21-22**

**2 Timothy 2:24**

**Titus 2:3-5**

**James 3:5-6, 9-10, 4:11**

Since our citizenship is in heaven, our conduct should represent the heavenly kingdom, not the kingdom of this world. Here's the kicker - Feel free to get excited about this one - Because the word is in the "middle voice" (throwing in a little language class here) it indicates the Believer does not act alone, but participates in this conduct - in other words, the Holy Spirit has been sent to participate with us. He instructs, encourages, equips, and empowers us, enabling us to maintain the proper conduct. Our part in the participation is a yielded-ness, a submission to the control of the Holy Spirit in order to live properly.

(Remember Ephesians 5:18?) I'm so thankful I do not have to attempt it on my own. Neither do you.

Ephesians 5 has a great list of conduct we should have, but v. 10 sums it up in saying,

"trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."

That should be our goal, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Day in and day out seeking Him and the life He has designed for us. He did not leave us alone to do it all by our self! I tell you, He's a good Father to us!

Another aspect of this truth is that while we don't have to be accountable to others for our conduct (our accountability is to God alone), we do have a responsibility to others for our conduct. Too often we take that responsibility lightly and it effects our witness, and in the process, it effects Christ's reputation.

**Read Matthew 5:16 - what is our conduct to do?**

Paul's list in Philippians 1:27-30 encompasses some general points of conduct:

- 1) Worthy of the gospel of Christ (we see the price that was paid, as Romans 12:1 says, it's our reasonable act of service to present our bodies a living sacrifice, living in such a way that the gospel is revealed to those around us.)
- 2) Standing firm in one Spirit (requires engaging our free will to submit to His control, and creates a greater stability as we rest in the Spirit's power)
- 3) One mind (the mind of Christ, united in faith with other believers)
- 4) Striving together for the faith of the gospel (working together with other believers for the furtherance of the gospel)
- 5) No fear! (Romans 8:31-32) (Others will see your steadfast faith and the gospel will be furthered).

If you're struggling in any of these areas, just remember, His word and His Spirit are there to help. Study scripture that deals with any particular area of struggle, I guarantee it's in there because there is nothing new under the sun. And most important, trust Him.

**As a result of our study each of us should answer the following three questions:**

- 1. Is my life and conduct different from the behavior of unbelievers?**
- 2. Do others hear of, or detect, my higher standards?**
- 3. Are the results of living under the control of the Spirit evident in my life?**

**A. Do I have stability?**

**B. Am I part of a concerted effort for Christ?**

**C. Do I have deliverance from fear?**

Oh, how I would love to take more time to really pursue each of these topics. Perhaps the Lord will inspire you to continue on your own. I pray that each of us will really evaluate our conduct, and allow the changes to continue because "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

To Him be the glory and praise.

REVIEW

~ We are to conduct ourselves worthy of the gospel of Christ. Philippians 1:27-30

~ There is only one kind of conduct that a believer should live. Worthy of the gospel.

~ The kind of conduct believers are to have excludes all other behavior that isn't like Christ.

Galatians 5:19-21, 26, I Thessalonians 4:1, 3-4, 7-8, 11-12, I Thessalonians 5:14-15, 21, 2

Timothy 2:24, Titus 2:3-5, James 3:6, 9-10, 4:11