

Philippians 10-04-30a

This is Friday the 30th of April 2010, we're in the book of Philippians chapter 1 and moving into chapter 2. We'll take a moment as we begin to focus our concentration as we go to the Lord in prayer. Shall we pray? Father what a blessing it is for us to spend time together in fellowship centered in the truth of your word and the mutual enthusiasm that we have for the wonderful grace that you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the Lord Jesus for his work on our behalf, his continued ministry for us, his presence in our midst, his affirmation that we have been made acceptable in your sight through his work.

We thank you for the opportunity to grow in grace and in knowledge of our Savior through the study of this portion of your word and we ask your blessing on us as we spend this time together. In Jesus name, Amen. Well we know the nature of the audience to whom this letter is being written, the epistle of Paul to the Philippians.

We have largely covered the first chapter. We spent some time last week in verses 21-26 and in particular took a look at the particular translation there and Paul's dilemma because for him death held no fear. In fact it was something preferable because he would be with Christ and that's how real the eternal future was to him.

This is a theme that's important for us to review as we move forward in the passage tonight because it's something to which he is going to refer. It's in the background of his next set of statements that the threat of what the world can do. He is in prison.

He is on trial for his life. There is the possibility and even the expectation on the part of some that he will be found guilty of a capital crime and executed. He says I'm not sure how I feel about that because on the one hand it's great to be here but to die is gain.

Nevertheless it is needful. I can see that there is work that needs to be done on your behalf and I am sure that God will leave me here to finish that work before I leave to go and be with Christ. So in verse 25 he says convinced of this, remaining in the flesh being more necessary for your sake, I remain and I'm confident that I will continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith.

Paul's greater joy would be to go be with the Lord and that's actually true of all of us. There is nothing that is going to cause us more happiness than being with the Lord Jesus. But he is interested in their progress, in their advancement, in their blessing and in their joy.

And as we noted this idea of a happy outlook is part and parcel of the message of Philippians. We as believers ought to have a positive view. We will face trials.

We will be down. We will be discouraged. We will be, you know, on the, I used to have a pastor that talked about the happiness spectrum with tranquility on one end and ecstasies at the other.

It's like a meter. When the meter, there's hardly any voltage in it at all, you're just over in the tranquility side of the happiness spectrum. And when things are different and we are meditating on great truths or God blesses us in wonderful ways, we see the mighty hand of God strengthening and sustaining and doing extraordinary things, we move over into that ecstatic side and we spend most of our lives or should spend it somewhere in that spectrum.

And there are a lot of times where I'm sure when Paul was receiving his 39 stripes, when he was in the middle of being shipwrecked, when he was shaking that snake off his hand, when he was being stoned and left for dead in Lystra and so on, he wasn't exactly on the ecstasies side of the happiness spectrum, but he said, you know what I've learned? I've learned in all different kinds of conditions to be content, to be tranquil, to not give away my peace. Whatever state I find myself there with, to be content. And this is our birthright.

This is our heritage. This is what Jesus gave us. It's one of the last things he said to the disciples before he left.

Peace I give to you. My peace I leave with you. Not as the world gives.

Worldly peace is transient. It's temporary. It's circumstance based.

Change the circumstance, the peace disappears. God's peace partakes of the eternal, partakes of the permanent, partakes of God himself. It's our birthright.

It's our heritage. It's a gift from the Lord Jesus Christ and we shouldn't give it away lightly. And that's one of the themes of this book again and again and again.

I will stay here. I will remain and continue for your joy in the faith. And Paul is going to impart some of the truth that sustains and undergirds that joy in this passage.

So that, verse 26, your rejoicing for me may be more abundant. When the Philippians find out that Paul is in fact vindicated and released and is not executed and is free to travel and come visit them again, they will be joyful. And Paul is confident, even though the trial hasn't taken place, the outcome is uncertain in the minds of others.

Paul already knows how it's going to come out. I know that God is going to leave me here to finish this ministry, so be expectant. You will be rejoicing for me and it will be abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

So now we pick up tonight in verse 27, only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ. And you can see this real, I would say clever, but it's masterful. Paul begins by, in the early part of the chapter, talking about the Philippians and God having begun a good work in them and completing it unto the day of Christ and how much he longs to see them with the affection of Jesus Christ and he prays for them that their love will abound in knowledge and eisthesia, the

aesthetic, the arena of discernment and application that makes that truth live and breathe and make a difference.

Remember those two things? In verse 9, that your love will abound in epinosis and eisthesia, it takes both, not just one. You can't just have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, love builds up.

How does knowledge get translated into a building up love? Got to know when to use your knowledge and when to put a cork in it, when to step back, when to be flexible. Don't cause the weaker brother to stumble. Don't put out the spirit's fire.

Remember that? Quench not the spirit literally means in the context of other believers who maybe don't know as much or aren't as far along in the faith, don't put out the fire that the spirit has started in them. And we can do it by being knowledgeable without that aesthetic sensibility, that perception and discernment and flexibility and recognition that being right isn't always the most important thing, being technically correct. All things are lawful, not all things are edifying, principle applies.

So he's referring back to that. And he began the letter talking about them and the benefits that he could see coming their way because of God's blessing on them. Then he says, I want you to know, brethren, what has been happening to me.

And he says, I know you've heard that I'm in prison, I'm having a bad time of it, but let me tell you, God is working that together for good. The glory is shining out of the prison. The Praetorian Guard is getting evangelized.

People are preaching Christ all over the place, not always for the right reasons, but hey, in all things Christ is being preached and that's what I care about. Now he's going to turn back to them and he's going to this, it's kind of like a, not exactly a sandwich, but there's, I hear good things about you Philippians, here's what's been going on with me. And now he's going to turn back and talk about the Philippians again.

And he's going to, it's just like when you put peanut butter and jelly on a sandwich, you can take the thing back apart, but there's jelly and peanut butter on both pieces of bread. And that middle ingredient, the example that he makes of himself and for me, you know, living is one thing, dying is a gain, however, I'm going to deny myself that greater joy because it is more needful for me to be with you and your joy and your growth in the gospel is what counts. You know where he's going.

We've memorized this second chapter, let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. He has already previewed that by talking about himself, his own example of selflessness. I will stick around even though I am persecuted, imprisoned, beaten, harassed, chased around because of you.

I am here for you. I will share in the sufferings of Christ. I will endure whatever it takes because God has put me here to be a blessing to you.

That's what he's saying. So having encouraged them in the beginning part of the letter, having at the same time giving them some news about himself and casting that in a positive light, now he's going to say the same thing that you've seen me exhibit in the view of my circumstances, that's what you need to do. That's where he's going.

So look at it. Starting here in verse 27, only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ. What did he just finish up with? I want you to be happy when I come see you again.

I want your rejoicing to be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again. How will their rejoicing be more abundant? Because they progress and have joy in their faith. And it's that much more fellowship, it's that much more communion.

That is what makes the relationship between Paul and these people in Philippi, that's what it is made of. That's what constitutes it, is their mutual love and interest in the things of God, in the gospel of Christ. You can have friendships on a lot of different bases.

You can share a hobby, you can share an activity. There are people who form friendships because they're on jury duty together. There are people who form friendships because they serve together in a short or long hitch in the service.

Many men that went overseas and shared the rigors of combat together, lifelong friends. Many times surviving a stressful thing, there's reunions. People get together and that's the basis for friendship.

What is the glue that holds people together? What is it that is the common element, the life of that relationship? Hopefully in a marriage there's all kinds of things that bond and unite and those are things to encourage, those common elements. In the greatest of all possible worlds, the single biggest element is shared spiritual life, enthusiasm for the things of God, for the word of God, for the cause of Christ, for the plan and purpose that God is unfolding for us. If you have that in common, how can you go wrong? Same thing in a church.

What binds people in a church together? Hopefully it isn't, well we sure do have great miniature golf tournaments or wow, isn't the food great when we have potluck? Hopefully there's something more substantial. So when Paul says, your rejoicing is going to be great because I remain and continue with you, I'm writing you this letter, I'm giving you some additional great spiritual truth here and when I come to you again we're going to have a great time, we're going to have joy and abundance in Jesus Christ. Only let your conduct, Paul has talked about his part, his half of this relationship.

He's not going to court death, he's not going to pray that God takes him out of the world and ends

his suffering and abuse. He's going to stick around, he's confident that God's going to keep him there and he says, now what about the other side? It takes two to tango here, you can't all be one-sided. So as I persevere, as I endure, as God prepares me and fits me and preserves me and here I come and I'm going to be visiting you and we're going to have this great joy, let your conduct also, if you will, in parenthesis, be worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether or not I come, hopefully in the plan and purpose of God, Paul makes it back to Philippi and they have a wonderful time of fellowship and mutual edification and just great rejoicing.

But he says, if your conduct can be worthy of the gospel of Christ, whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear of your affairs that you stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, 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. And you kind of start losing a grip on exactly what he means at the tail end of that, at least I did. But the first part is pretty clear, right? Does it make sense? You need to be the party of the second part here and have that same enthusiasm and same divinely informed viewpoint on things so that when I come and see you or even if I don't, I will hear that you all are standing firm, one spirit, one mind, and so on.

Well, I'd like to point out a couple of real interesting things here in Greek. First of all, he says, only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Let me see if I can give this to you in Greek.

And you all are beyond being shocked by the Greek, but this is really interesting. It's monon axios. You can figure that out, right? Monon, only.

Axios, it's like an axiom, something that is measured and found to be worthy. To euangelou, to Christou, of the gospel of Christ. Only worthily of the good news, euangelou, of Christ.

Then you have paletousthe. You may have heard in times past about paletouma, about citizenship and all of the rights and privileges thereunto pertaining. Paul in another context talks about paletouma.

Well, this is paletousthe, and it literally means to act like a citizen. To act like a member of that to which you belong. So, if you're a boy scout, you'd be a good scout.

If you're a marine, you'd be a great marine. You'd be a worthy representative of that to which you belong. That's what he's literally saying.

That's what paletouma is. You are part of something bigger than yourself. You're a citizen of the empire.

You're a member of this thing. So, monon axios, to euangelou, to Christou, paletousthe, only, singly, this is kind of like the most important thing. Be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

This is a present middle imperative. Be a worthy citizen of the gospel of Christ is a literal way to translate it. Only be a worthy citizen of the kingdom of Christ, of the nature and the faith that

Christ represents.

You know, they used to always talk about the Army Navy game and you get the, what do you call them, cadets marching on. The Army cadets marching on and they say, here's the cream of American youth. Then they get the midshipmen marching on and they say, there's the best and brightest that our nation has to offer.

It's a wonderful thing. There's a lot of really outstanding people. There's a lot of outstanding people elsewhere, but you've got a group of people who have been screened and brought together as a group that are, it's very competitive.

And so you look at that and you say, this is what we like to see representing the United States of America. The Olympic athletes represent their countries. And we say, here's a guy who's running or jumping or skiing or doing whatever he's doing and he represents his country.

This is the face. This is the nature. This is what we like to think that our country produces and represents.

Hard work, diligence, excellence, dedication, perseverance, the best of the best, right? That's what palatuo means. Be the essence, the quintessence of a thing. So Paul says, as you're thinking about this and waiting for me to come see you again and I'm giving you this truth and we're all believers and we want to have joy in it and all that, just be sure to be a worthy citizen, a worthy representative of the gospel of Christ.

How can we have joy if you're really not in it? If the level of dedication is different. When the Bible says, be not unequally yoked together with the faithless, and that's what it says. Unbeliever is kind of a radical interpretation.

It's like, oh well, I've got to figure out if somebody's saved. It's apostuo. It's faithless.

And there's lots of believers that are not in the faith. And don't be unequally yoked. If you've got faith, don't hook yourself up friendship-wise, spending of time-wise, or effort-wise.

There was a topic of debate on the 5 to 6 show on KCBI one day this week was how ecumenical should we be? To what extent should we join hands with diverse denominations who may have not just slightly different but radically different, or how different can they be before we say, I don't really think I want to join hands? This comes up every time the Billy Graham crusade used to come to town. Because there's a wide diversity of churches, and Billy is come one, come all. We'll let people walk the aisle, and then you all have your people there, and we'll just let God sort them out.

Let them go to whatever denomination happens to get them. Well, some people think this is great. It's the same Christ.

It's the same gospel. It's the same good news. People are getting saved.

We'll leave the fine-tuning to God. Other people say there are certain sticking points. I just can't join hands with somebody who doesn't affirm the inspiration of Scripture, who doesn't affirm the deity of Christ, or who doesn't affirm that there was a literal resurrection of Christ.

There are churches who no longer believe in the literal resurrection of Christ. They say it doesn't really matter if he bodily came back. What matters is the truths, and what matters is the principles, and the morals, and the teachings, and the warm good fellowship.

I don't really think the miracles happen. They're parables. They're morality tales.

They're like Aesop. They're like Brer Rabbit, and Uncle Tom's Cabin. It's just a ... No, Uncle Remus.

Sorry, not Uncle Tom's Cabin. It's a whole different thing. Morality tales.

These are just stories to make a point. You're not supposed to read reality. Well, some people might have trouble joining an effort with that.

So, without necessarily solving that puzzle, because it's individual, and it's different in different circumstances, it depends. It's like everything else. That's why we don't have the Law of Moses coming down on tablets of stone, saying, Thou shalt, or Thou shalt not.

We're in the age of grace. We're in the age of discernment. We're in the age of spiritual flexibility.

We're in the age of euthanasia. The answer from Scripture is, you figure it out. You make the application.

You go before God in prayer. You bring everything you know to the situation, and you decide. Billy Graham comes to town.

You figure it out. It's the great thing about this age. We live in the greatest age.

I wouldn't want to be in the Flood Age. I wouldn't want to be in the Exodus Age. I wouldn't want to be in the time of David or Solomon.

I wouldn't want to be in any time but this time, because God is giving us more and doing more with us. We have more freedom in Christ. We have peace that passes understanding.

We have the ministry of the Spirit. We have unlimited troughs of truth in the Word of God. Who would want to be anywhere but in this age? I think we've got it made.

Only let your conduct, your citizenship, your representation of the Gospel of Christ be worthy. The word worthy is right up front. Only.

Worthy. Mon on. Oxios.

That's how the verse starts. That's the guidepost. When you navigate the choppy waters, that's your fixed point on the land.

Make sure you're aimed at being a worthy citizen of the Gospel of Christ, worthy representative, so that whether Paul comes, whether Jesus comes, and I see you, or I am absent. These two words are great. Whether I elthon and iddon, whether I come and see you, or I am appon, I am absent.

Appa means away from, A-P-O. Remember my favorite little diatribe on the great apostate? Apostasy before antichrist is revealed. That day shall not come except there comes first the apostasia.

Stasia, stasis, to stand. Appa means away. Paul says, whether I come and see you, elthon iddon, or I am appon, I am away.

It is the standing away. It is the rapture. The rapture precedes the revelation of the antichrist.

We will not be here. We will not go through the tribulation. It is as clear as crystal.

But he says, whether I am here, I will hear of your affairs that you stand fast in one spirit. This idea of coming or not coming, you remember up above when he said, I am torn between two, having on the one the desire to depart and be with Christ, and on the other to stay on in the flesh. So which one should it be? And he says, I am persuaded that I will remain, meno, and parameno, be alongside you all.

I will remain and remain alongside. And it is the same idea down here. So he hooks back into that middle of the sandwich, talking about his, should I stay or should I go? And he says, look, even if I should be wrong about this, I think I am going to be restored to you and will rejoice.

But in this particular thing, he is not claiming infallibility. He says, I am confident that I will see you again. But whether I come and see you or not, it doesn't change the gospel.

And this is important because it is a reminder that the truth of God's word does not depend on circumstantial outcomes. People like to say, I don't believe in prayer anymore because I prayed for Uncle Joe and God didn't answer that prayer. The truth that the Bible teaches about life and death, illness and health, healing, prayer, intercession, and so on, is not conditioned or affected, proved or disproved by circumstances.

The truth of God defines and explains circumstances. Circumstances do not define and explain the truth of God. And that sounds kind of obvious, but you would be surprised, you would be amazed as you look around, as you listen, that people try to vindicate, even when they are trying to do God a favor, even when they are trying to brag on the Bible or so on.

They will say, I know prayer works because I prayed this and God answered. That is not how you know that the Bible is true. Well, I tried it and it worked.

You can find infomercials that will tell you all kinds of things that people tried and it worked, and that doesn't make it true. The truth of the word of God is true independent of circumstances. Now the truth is going to be reflected in circumstances.

I hope you understand the distinction that I am struggling to make here. But Paul says, even if I don't come see you, it doesn't change the truth that you are called to be a good citizen of the gospel, to stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. Don't be discouraged and decide it is not worth struggling for the faith anymore if something happens and Paul is not released and he doesn't come see the Philippians.

A circumstantial unexpected difficulty or trauma or reverse doesn't change the mission, it doesn't change our purpose, it doesn't change what God has called us to. It may make it more difficult, it may make it easier, it may make it more pleasant, it may make it less pleasant, but it doesn't change the fundamental truth of who we are and why we are here. You are a citizen whether you are living and sipping a mint julep on your back porch or whether you are off in a prison camp or in a muddy foxhole or stuck in an airport in Lisbon for three days because the weather is bad or volcanoes went off or there was an earthquake or whatever.

Citizenship doesn't change. Our polituma, our polituo, our responsibility to be that single-minded representative of Christ doesn't change because things are great or because things are bad. And he is leading up to something really important here.

Whether I come and see you or am absent, that I may hear of your affairs that you stand fast in one spirit. This word spirit is suce, that you stand fast in one soul, literally. Well, spirit is numati and mind is suce.

So you have hen numa and you have mia suce. When you are learning Greek, it's kind of like uno, dos, tres in Spanish, but there are three different words for one, so you can't just start counting in Greek because the three words for the numeral one are heis, mia, hen. And it just depends on the dynamics because I taught a Greek class way back in Wakefield.

Heis, mia, hen. So it's one spirit and one soul. It's hen numati and it's mia suce.

Stand fast and this is your steko, s-t-e-k-o. What do you pound into the ground when you want something to not move? A stake. Of course we changed the spelling a little bit.

I got a nice cable for Major so we can put him out front without him going out there and ripping anybody's leg off. And I didn't want to put it on a tree or anything else where the thing would whip around and knock all the 12 volt lights out of the garden as it has done every other time I've put him out there. So I put a stake in the ground.

I staked the cable. Now he can pull on it to his heart's content and it's not going to move. Steko.

This is where the noun stasis, to stand fast, comes from. Stand fast in one numa, one suce, one spirit and one soul. This is all the people in the group.

Struggling together. This is sun atleo. You know what sun means.

When you bring it over to English, the U becomes Y and you have S-Y-N. And that means struggling with. If you synchronize, you've got the same time with a couple of different things.

A symphony is everybody's playing with each other. Hopefully they're on the same beat and on the same sheet of music and in the same key. Symsum.

With. Atleto. It's not hard to figure out what that is.

Athletics are a struggle, a contest. We're striving. This gets back to your palatuma.

If you want to be a worthy representative, you sun atleo. We're a team. We've got a single purpose.

The same spirit, the same soul. How do diverse, corrupt, fallen, sinful, aggravatingly imperfect people get together and act and think and operate as one? It's like a pyramid. Here's person A, could be the husband.

Here's person B, could be the wife. Here's person A, the wife. Here's person B, the husband.

And up here is Christ. And as you grow toward Christ, you grow closer to one another. As all of us grow toward Christ and adopt the thinking of the Lord Jesus, we become more alike.

Our values and our goals and our priorities and our perceptions and our viewpoint become more and more alike as we grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior. So once again, how did Paul say their love would abound toward one another? Epinosis and eistasis. Knowledge and discerning, thoughtful, perceptive application.

Same thing here. Paul says, if I'm absent and I hear of your affairs, I would like to hear that you all are standing fast, one soul, one spirit, sun atleo, striving together. You're on one side of the tug-of-war rope and you're all pulling in the same direction for the faith of the gospel.

And there's that euangelium again. And it's really related to joy. It's good news.

Good news makes people happy. And it's belief in the good news. Now, it's not just, friend, Jesus died for your sins, and if you'll accept him, you'll go to heaven.

People think that's the gospel. That's a part of the gospel. It's central to the gospel.

It's the first piece of the gospel that any of us understand and believe. It is by no means the limit of the gospel. The gospel is everything that is ours.

I have sometimes bought something impulsively. I don't know if you all have ever done this. You just see a thing and you think, wow, and you just buy it.

And then subsequently I began to find out all kinds of things about what I bought that I didn't know when I bought it, but it's a great feature. I didn't know this car had separate headphone jacks in the back so the kids can listen to the stuff turned up loud. It comes with the headphones right in the, there's a drawer there.

When we got our Ford van, the one before the expedition, what was that thing, Aerostar? Yeah, the Ford. Lo and behold, got it, bought it, used, opened up the back, and here's these two pairs of headphones, and there's a headphone jacks and volume. I didn't know that when we got it.

I thought, wow, what a great feature. There's good news when you discover that the mileage is great and that it drives well in the rain and that it's got a really good air conditioner, and boy, isn't that something the way the seat folds down, and, oh, I got a flat, and look at the way they did this spare tire. This is really elegant.

I didn't know all of these things when I got it, but it's good news. When we're saved, that's just the tip of the iceberg, and there's more and more good news. As we grow in grace and knowledge, it's good news, good news, good news, and we believe it, and it becomes our reality.

That's the gospel. Every single piece of spiritual truth that you know is the gospel. Every piece, everything you know, that's gospel.

It's good news. Every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of Lights, and we strive together for the faith of that good news, not in any way terrified by your adversaries. This word is interesting because it's one of those ptuh words, one of those cuspidor words.

It's P-T-U-R-O, pturo. It's like pterodactyl, but it's pturo, and this means to be intimidated, but this is a participle, which means it's been turned into a noun, and it's to Romanoi, not to Romanoi, not being intimidated ones. What would be the worst thing? Here the Lord Jesus comes down and saves us, purchases us with his own blood, enters us into eternity and into the kingdom, gives us the wonderful truth of the gospel, gives us fellow believers with whom we can soon athleo, and the first time there's a cloud on the horizon or a loud noise, somebody pops a paper bag someplace, we become intimidated ones.

We lose our confidence, we lose our hope, we lose our joy, we lose our peace, and we're like these startled birds that just go flapping away at the first hint of something untoward or unexpected. He says, not intimidated ones, and he doesn't say not being intimidated like it's an episode, it's a condition. When the Word of God uses a participle to describe people, that means

it's a condition.

This is a syndrome, it's a problem. Every time something unexpected, I'm intimidated, I'm caught off guard, I'm knocked off my pins. Not being to Romano in anything, en me bene, it means not in anything, nothing intimidates you.

You are a child of God, you're a citizen of heaven, you've got the Lord Jesus Christ, you are sustained by the right hand of God's righteousness. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee. Ask and it shall be given, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened.

Ask anything in my name and it shall be done for you. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, even though you'll have tribulation. Don't be intimidated ones in anything, especially in this case, hupo ton anti kamanon, and this means by the adversaries, by the opponents.

The root of this word, the K-E-M-E portion, this literally means to lie down. Anti means they've laid down against you. It's kind of like you're in the closet and your dog lays against the door and you can't get the door open.

Not that that's ever happened to me, but I have been in a situation where somebody didn't want me getting somewhere and so they just laid down in the way. They prevented my access. And that's what this is.

It doesn't say someone swinging a big axe. It doesn't say Texas Chainsaw Massacre. This is someone who laid down against.

They've made their position clear. I'm opposed. I am an opponent.

I could give you lots of places where this is used, but we don't have time. Don't be intimidated by those, specifically this is people testing, people antagonizing, which is to them a demonstration of destruction. What? This is where I was saying you kind of start losing the bubble.

Everything's fine. Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel. Whether I come and see you or I'm absent, I hear of your affairs, you're standing fast in one spirit, one mind, one soul, striving together for the faith of the gospel and not in any way intimidated by your adversaries.

Everything's good so far, which is to them a proof of perdition. And that's where it kind of gets a little lopsided for me. What is proof to the adversaries of perdition? What exactly is that? Remember the sandwich thing I was talking about? He started out talking about the Philippians.

He talked about himself and he said, look, I'm not intimidated. I'm not discouraged even though I'm locked up here because I look on the bright side. The guards and everybody else are evangelized.

People are preaching Christ and I think this is all going to turn out for my salvation, my soteria, my deliverance, my vindication. Then he turned back and he said, and I'm looking forward to seeing you all. And when I come and see you, or even if I don't, I'd like to hear and know that you're standing fast and that you're not intimidated by anyone.

And you're standing fast in the gospel and not being intimidated no matter what people say or do or throw at you, even if they lock you up, as they have me. This is a demonstration that they have lost. You have something they don't have.

They can't survive bad circumstances. They can't keep a good attitude. They can't maintain joy when the chips are down.

You can. And every time you stand fast with joy in the hope of the gospel and do it together with believers, it's a lot easier to remember what one of the founding fathers said, we must hang together, we shall all surely hang separately. Stick together.

There is power in fellowship. There is gifting where we benefit each other and bless each other in fellowship. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.

Why? Because God says where two or three of you are gathered, I'm in the midst. That's what Jesus said. There's power in fellowship.

I don't know, and don't ask me if texting counts, I don't know if blogging counts. I'll have to work on that and get back to you. What I do know is that when we spend time together face to face, there is benefit, there is blessing, there is upbuilding in it.

And that's what he's talking about. You strive together for the faith of the gospel, not intimidated by your adversaries. Guess what? It proves they have lost.

They may be making these arguments and making these accusations and putting up this opposition, but your joy and constancy and fellowship proves that they've lost. They've already lost, and they don't even know it yet. It proves they have lost.

And the word for loss is our old friend Apollia, Judas the son of perdition, Apollia the son of loss. This Apollia is a fascinating word, and we're going to take a little bit of time to look at it, because this is what we should think of when we encounter opposition. Buddy, Mr. adversary, Mr. antagonist, Mr. opposer, you have lost.

You are in the kingdom of Apollia. I am a Palatuma citizen of the faith and the gospel of Christ. You are in the kingdom of nothing.

You have lost. It's over for you. And all I can do is pray that God can transfer you from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of the Son of His love, and I feel sorry for you.

I'm not intimidated by you. I'm not frightened by you. I'm not put off by you.

I can pray for you who spitefully disuse me, because you've lost, and everything associated with you is Apollia loss. You are in the same boat as Judas, and it's a sinking ship. Well, we have to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we'll pick up and just take a little bit of time to look at this term Apollia. You will be surprised the places where it is used in the New Testament Scriptures.