

## **Citizens of Another Country**

### **Philippians 1:27-30**

So far, Paul has used his recent trials to show the Philippians how they can see all of life through the lens of the gospel. But having talked about his own situation, he now he turns to theirs:

#### **Live Worthy**

The phrase 'manner of life' means, 'living a life worthy of a citizen.' The people of Philippi were proud to be Roman citizens. But Paul is talking of a different citizenship, that of heaven. We are to live our lives here as citizens of another country, living lives worthy of the gospel, with our thinking governed by another world-view, with the good news of all that God has done and is doing in Christ influencing every part of our lives.

Living worthy of the gospel will show itself in 3 ways:

#### **Stand Firm**

In v27 Paul encourages them to stand firm in one spirit. They are facing opposition and are beginning to wobble. The same can happen to us when we face opposition for our Christian faith. But when you understand the gospel, and what that says about God and about you, you won't wobble.

But you can only do that as you stand firm in the one Holy Spirit, looking to him for everything you need.

#### **Stand Together**

When you are under pressure you might withdraw in on yourself, or you might turn on your friends. But Paul says we are to stand firm together, striving side by side, and not against one another.

When you are a Christian, having opponents is a given. But your Christian brother or sister is never your enemy. But neither does Paul say 'strive against your enemy'. He says strive *for* the gospel, for the good news, and Jesus says we are to love our enemy.

And we are to do that in 'one mind': our focus, vision, ambition, what we are thinking and feeling about the gospel, are to be united. It is this gospel that is to be shaping and forming us.

#### **Don't Fear**

The Philippians are, most likely, facing serious opposition. But Paul says they are not to be fearful. How can they respond like that? When the gospel is the lens through which you see all of life then there is nothing to fear.

When you know what God thinks of you, when you know how he uses situations that others mean for harm, then you have nothing to fear. When you know how the future will turn out, there is nothing to fear. And when you know, as Paul says in v29, that suffering for Jesus is God's gift to you, because it tells you who you belong to, you won't fear.

All of that comes from seeing life through the gospel.