

Study 9: Just One Thing

Philippians 1:27-28

Fellowship in the Spirit Phil. 2:1

Share about a group or organization in which you belong (or did belong).
(i.e. a choral group, Future Farmers of America, your neighborhood book club, your Wellspring/Restore group 🙂)

Encouragement in Christ Phil. 2:1

We invite you to be still, give thanks, write a prayer, or release any concerns to Jesus.

If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy,
the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.
C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

The Gospel of grace is the announcement that all the incomprehensible
Good News really is so: you *are* loved, you *are* vindicated; you *are* home.
And you are all of that *now*, just because He says so. Trust him.
Robert Farrar Capon, *Between Noon and Three*

Holding Firm to the Word of Life Phil. 2:16

Philippians 1:27-28

[27] Just one thing: As citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, in one accord, contending together for the faith of the gospel, [28] not being frightened in any way by your opponents. This is a sign of destruction for them, but of your salvation—and this is from God.

Growing in Knowledge Phil.1:8

Paul closes out this section of his letter by pointing his audience to one goal. Notice how he begins with words that are sure to get the Philippian's attention: "Just one thing." It's almost as if Paul is saying "Listen up!" J.A. Motyer says the force of Paul's words "is tremendous, as if Paul had said, 'This one thing and this only.' Nothing else must distract or excuse them from this great objective; it must be their all-embracing occupation whether Paul was there or not."

Paul's audience, the Philippians, were proud Roman citizens - a title that carried power, privilege, and honor. However, immediately after telling them to listen up, Paul redirects the Philippians' civic pride. The one goal Paul points his audience to in these next few verses hinges on them understanding and believing where their true citizenship lies - and it is not in Rome! Paul's one goal for the Philippians is just as significant for us today. How might God's Word challenge us to redirect our own civic pride? Let's explore it together.

Dwell on These Things Phil. 4:8

If there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things…
And the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:8-9

1. In verse 27, Paul brings up the topic of citizenship. When you think of being a *citizen*, what comes to mind?

    a. Remember, Paul's readers are proud citizens of Rome! However, Paul reminds his readers they are actually *citizens* of what other location?

    b. What do you think it means to be a *citizen* of heaven? What comes to mind?

    c. We have dual citizenship! What do you make of being citizens of earth and of heaven? Talk together.

2. Having reminded them of their citizenship, how does Paul charge them to live their lives in verse 27?

    a. Why is it significant that he affirms their citizenship in heaven *first*?

    b. What is the gospel of Christ?

3. As believers in the gospel of Christ, we live as both citizens of our home on earth *as well as* citizens of the kingdom of heaven. How might the values of these two kingdoms collide? Use the examples below to help you get started, then try and add one or two of your own.

As a citizen of heaven, you practice _____ …	**…in a culture of _____.**
forgiveness	revenge
truth	manipulation
generosity	
humility	

a. As the values of the kingdom of heaven collide with the values of the opposing kingdom, there is bound to be friction! Share about a time in your life when you've experienced the friction of living as a citizen in these two kingdoms.

b. How might the reality of your "citizenship in heaven" specifically impact your day-to-day life? (i.e. relationships, work, conversations, decisions, spending, etc.)

4. In verses 27-28, Paul references living "worthy of the gospel of Christ." Based on our personal stories, being *worthy* can have many different connotations. What does the word *worthy* mean to you? How do you react to Paul using the word *worthy*?

a. Let's investigate what Paul means. Reread verses 27-28. Paul lists four ways he would see or hear evidence of his readers living *worthy* of the gospel of Christ. What are they?

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b. Take a look at the four pieces of evidence, or “signs”, as Paul calls them. What theme do you notice?

c. Is this what you would expect? Why would these be the signs of “salvation”? What might this say about the priority of our relationships with one another in the kingdom of God?

d. Why do you think Paul calls for the Philippians to be “standing firm” and "contending together”? What might that look like in the lives of believers in the culture of Philippi?

e. How do these verses challenge or encourage your initial reaction to living in a way that is *worthy* of the gospel?



Praying with Joy Phil.1:4

Please join us in praying together Philippians 4:4-7 **in BOLD.**
Use the pause after each prayer to pray silently, even writing your prayers.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

Practice Rejoicing! The Lord is near you right now.

Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Practice presenting your requests to God. What are they?

Practice thanking God. For what?

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

You are guarded and safe in God's peace! You can rest in it.

Let the glory of the Lord endure forever
Let the Lord be glad in His works.
I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things. Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you. *Amen.* Philippians 4:8-9