

Standing Firm

Philippians 3:17-4:1

¹⁷ Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

¹ Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. Philippians 3:17-4:1

⁶ But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always think kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you, ⁷ for this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we were comforted about you through your faith; ⁸ for now we *really* live, if you stand firm in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account, ¹⁰ as we night and day keep praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and may complete what is lacking in your faith? I Thessalonians 3:6-10

¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. Philippians 3:18-19

A) A **stirring** embrace.

Everything about Paul's **expression** of love is **sincere**.

Twice he uses the **sacrificial** and **self-denying** love of God.

¹³ ...each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. I Corinthians 3:13

²¹ What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness? I Corinthians 4:21

B) A **strong** command.

²⁷ Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel... Philippians 1:27

Our "**standing firm**" isn't reliant on our **ability**.

Paul immediately points us in the direction of:

1) **Where** to stand: **In** the Lord.

John Gill – "As they stand supported by His strength, trusting in His might and leaning on His arm."

⁹ And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Ephesians 6:10

2) **How** we stand: **Put on** Christ.

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. Ephesians 6:11

¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Ephesians 6:13

a) Shared **hope**. (Phil 3:20-21)

² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows—⁴ was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. 2 Corinthians 12:2-4

²³ But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better... Philippians 1:23

¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:13

²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28

b) Shared **experience**. (Phil 3:17)

¹⁵ ...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. Ephesians 4:15-16

The “I’s” of small groups:

- 1) Instruction
- 2) Investigation
- 3) Integrity
- 4) Intercession
- 5) Intimacy
- 6) Integration
- 7) Interaction
- 8) Ingestion

c) Shared **peace**. (Phil 4:4-7)

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7