

Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Study In Philippians

Philippians 1:27-30

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Bruce: Good morning, men! How are you today?

Men: Good morning!

Bruce: Great to be with you.

Don: Bruce, why don't we sing something?

Bruce: Lead us, please.

Participant: Lead us, Don.

Transcriber's Note: The men sing.

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now I'm found;

Was blind, but now I see.

When we've been there ten thousand years,

Bright shining as the sun,

We've no less days to sing God's praise

Then when we'd first begun.

Bruce: Thank you, Don. Brothers, let's pray.

Amazing grace; how great the sound! Father, we don't know what we would do without Your amazing grace. Father, we just pray that You would superintend our meeting this morning, that You would give us the energy that we need to teach and to listen. May Your Holy Spirit descend upon us. Open our eyes, that we might behold Your glory for Christ's sake. And all the Brave Men said,

Men: Amen!

Bruce: Let's turn in your Bibles, please, to the book of Philippians. We'll be looking at verses 27-30 of chapter 1.

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or are absent I may hear of you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened of anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in Him, but also suffer for His sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw that I had, and now hear that I still have." May God be pleased to open our eyes, that we might behold Him for His glory. Amen and Amen.

Men: Amen.

Bruce: We're coming to the end of chapter 1 of the book of Philippians. But before we look at these last several verses I'd just like to give a quick review for us.

Take a look at chapter 1, verses 3-7. Paul was praying for his friends, a very personal expose of Paul and his heart. He was praying for his friends in verses 3-11. A key verse in

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that particular section would be verse 6. *“And I am sure of this: that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”*

Then we looked at verses 12-18, where Paul instructed us on the providence of God in his own life and the encouragement of God's providence in our own lives. The key verse there would be verse 12. *“I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.”*

Then we looked at verses 19-26, where Paul teaches us about the prospects for his future. And I would offer for your consideration the key verse there, which would be verse 21. *“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”* So we've seen Paul's prayer life. We've seen God's providence. We've seen God's prospects for his future. And now in these four verses we're going to look at how he provides *some instruction and some counsel* in verses 27-30.

So let me introduce this by the one word he says in verse 27, and that's the word *only*. The NIV translates that word as *“whatever happens.”* It's a Greek word meaning that the only thing you should be thinking about is this one thought. That's what it means. That's why the ESV translates it as the word *only*. And so he leads off with verse 27. *“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.”* In other words, that's the only thing you're thinking about. It's the number one project that you have. The NIV translates it as *“whatever happens.”* He's basically saying that whatever happens in our life, the one thing you need to focus on is living the manner of your life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Men, it means essentially this. Above all else, pay attention to what I'm going to say. Above all else, pay attention to this. Paul's main exhortation starts in these verses, but he goes through the rest of the chapters explaining what he means. And so for the rest of this study we'll be looking at what it means to live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Verse 27 means to preoccupy yourself with that thought. How often do we really think about this? Do I live a life that is worthy of the gospel? Do you ever give that thought in the day? I don't think that we think much about it. But Paul says that this is the only thing you should have in your mind—how you can live a life that is worthy of the gospel, wherever you are.

It's the same thing we've been learning over the years. Ministry is who you are, where you are. You don't need to create a ministry; you are the ministry. It's just that when you show up, you're in a ministry mode. And so Paul says that the only thing we should be thinking about is this. Are you living a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ? And we'll try to explain that a little bit today.

I think there's also a warning here, men. It's *the danger of being preoccupied with minor things*. You don't want to major in the minors. That's what the word *only* means. Don't major in the minors. Yield yourself so into the major issue, and that is living a life worthy of the gospel of Christ. And we're going to learn what that means. It's not only to confess it with your mouth, but you live it with your life. Confess it with your mouth and live it with your life.

I invite you to turn to 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 20, a correlating verse. 2 Timothy 2:20-23.

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Paul writes to his protégé Timothy and says essentially the same thing. *“Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.”*

And here's the warning. *“So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on our Lord with a pure heart. Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.”*

Men, the last thing that we need to do is to get involved in politics and things of that nature that cause quarrels. We need to be thinking of one thing only, and that is how I live a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: How do I live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ? That's my primary mindset. Now I was thinking the other day that the credibility of the gospel does not lie in the hands of theologians and apologists.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: Yes, we have a need for apologists and a need for theologians, certainly. But gospel credibility doesn't lie with them. It lies with us, where we are in the marketplace. That's why we are M-8s—mission-minded members of a movement motivated by mercy for ministry in the marketplace, so that we can live a life worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Our lives must not deny what our lips profess, because an un-christlike life destroys the quality of the gospel.

Now when you take a look at this verse, verse 27,-- *“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ”*,--focus upon the great word that we would translate as *conduct yourselves. Let your manner of life*” is the verb *conduct*. That word was used to describe somebody who lived as a citizen of a state. Conduct yourself because you are a citizen of a state.

Now Roman law dictated how a citizen should live his life in the city of Rome and also in any of the Roman provinces in the Roman community. And a person could be identified by his conduct if he were a Roman citizen. You see, there's a Roman citizen. And you could identify them because of their conduct. That's what the word means. Let your life be worthy. In other words, conduct yourself in a way so that people recognize where your allegiance is.

Look at Philippians chapter 3 verse 20. *“But our citizenship is in heaven. And from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”* You see, the correlation is this. Live a life worthy of the gospel so that people will recognize that you're a citizen of heaven.

Now one of the things that we're going to talk about later on in chapter 3 of this particular book is that Paul had such a perfectionist life that he wanted to live a heavenly life on earth. He wanted to experience as much of Jesus Christ as he could. And he wanted to live all the benefits of heaven in his earthly life. And so we'll get into that as we work through this book. But the idea is this. Let people know your citizenship because of your conduct.

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So what does it mean to live a manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ? I offer four different things for your consideration. First of all, I think that *it needs to be consistent with the gospel of Christ*. Before we live a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ we need to be consistent with the gospel. Secondly, I think that *it is independent of human observation*. Thirdly, there needs to be *a unanimity of gospel truth*, a unity in gospel truth. And fourthly, *we need to be steadfast in the face of opposition*. So let's take a look at those insights that we get from these passages.

First of all, we need to be consistent with the gospel of Christ. You see that in verse 27a. "*Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.*" The gospel is about Christ, and Christ is the gospel. It's not about man's needs or about what man gets. It's about what God gives.

So much of our emphasis on the gospel today is this is what God gives you, what man gets. We need to talk about what God gives. Who is God? What does He give? Why does He give? Why is there a gospel in the first place? It's really not about man's needs. It's not about our wants. It's about what God gives.

In summary the gospel can be made up of these six items—*the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, the Person and the work of Christ, and repentance and faith*. You see, the gospel is about who God is and what He gives. Man is the recipient. Why does God give? That's part of the gospel message.

Several years ago, when I was working on my doctoral work, I could walk. (*Laughter*) I interviewed a man who was the leader of a very significant parachurch ministry on a major university campus in the United States. And I interviewed him about his work on the campus.

He basically said this. "Of all the people who commit their lives to Christ on this campus, 9 out of 12 will fall away in five years. But they're saved."

Participant: Oh man!

Bruce: And I said, "Would you explain that to me?:"

And he said, "Well, they made a commitment to Christ, so we know they're saved. It's just that they've fallen away."

I said, "What about your national average?"

He said, "The national average for this para-church ministry 12 people who commit themselves to Christ, 9 will fall away in 5 years."

I said, "What are you teaching them?"

He said, "I'm teaching them that God will meet their needs."

I said, "Why don't you teach them who God is?"

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: "The gospel is about what God gives; it's not about what man gets. It's about what God gives." And we had a wonderful conversation about what the content of the gospel is.

He wrote me about four years later and said, "You know, I've changed my whole presentation of the gospel. I focus on who God is and what He gives. We have fewer converts, but we've got much more solid converts."

Participant: Amen.

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Bruce: Now the point here is that if you live in a manner of life worthy of the gospel, it's got to be consistent with the gospel of Christ. What is the gospel? Well, we need to make sure that our lifestyle is consistent with that.

I was really shocked that 9 out of 12 fell away within 5 years. Men, we have to ask ourselves this question. Is there a consistency between what I say about Christ and who He is? And secondly, is there a consistency about what I say about Christ and who He says I am? Is there a consistency? That's the beginning stage of how we live a manner of life worthy of the gospel.

During my second tour in Vietnam as a Forward Air Controller, I was assigned to an Army division. And one of the brigade commanders was General Norman Schwarzkopf. And I flew missions for him for about four months providing air support, Naval gunfire, artillery. I was a Forward Air Controller.

Now I was on his staff for those four months. I was an 03, a Navy lieutenant. The position was with 06, which was a colonel. So here I am in the Navy and I'm among Army guys, first of all. *(Laughter)* I was the only Naval officer among 2,000 Army guys. *(Unclear)* And my job was to coordinate all the supporting arms of the infantry unit.

He called me into his office one day, into his tent and gave me a lecture on leadership, probably one of the best things I ever learned, because he was it. I was an 03, and I was threatened by all these 06s, these colonels. He called me into his tent and said, "Lt. Bickel, you have the responsibility to act out your position. Don't worry about your name or your rank. Act out your position."

Now that was one of the greatest lectures I had, because I conducted myself with some trepidation because I was not an 06. I was not of equal rank with these men. He said, "Your job is this. Act out your position."

That's what we need to do in Christ. Who does God say we are? Now that is verse 1 in the first chapter of the book of Philippians. He says that you're a saint. What is a saint? A saint is not somebody who has better moral conduct than you and I do. A saint is somebody set apart by God. We are who God says we are. We are set apart by God.

Now we need to act out our position. That's the position that we have in the world. We are saints. That doesn't mean that we have an ego. It means that we're humble because of what God gives us. He gives us the position of being saints in this world and calls us to live a life that is consistent with the gospel of Christ. We have to make sure that there's a consistency between who I say Christ is and how I live my life. That's the first part of what we need to understand about living a life worthy of the gospel. Is it consistency with what I say about Christ and what Christ says about me?

Secondly, I'd offer for your consideration that I think that it is also independent of human observation. Look at 27b, the second part of the 27th verse. "*So that whether I come and see you or am absent I may hear of you, that you are standing firm in the Spirit in one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.*"

The question that we need to ask ourselves, men, is this. Do I need to be seen by men, by people, in order to be faithful to God? Can you worship God walking down the streets of Pittsburgh? Or do you need to be seen doing something? Can we be thankful when nobody sees it?

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What do you do when you're by yourself? Are you worshiping Him and serving Him? Do we need to be seen by men who think we are holy? You see, a life that is consistent with the gospel of Christ is independent of public observation. It has nothing to do with how people see us. It has to do with how we see ourselves and how God sees us.

Here's a question for us. What do I think about when I have nothing else to think about? Is what I'm about to do the most Christlike thing I think I can do? Or do I have to do it to be seen by men, to receive accolades? Men, a life worthy of the gospel is independent of human observation.

Notice what Paul says in 27b. "*So that when I come and see you or am absent, I may hear that you are standing firm*"—independent of public observation. We do it because we love the Lord. He is the One who is observing our lifestyle.

So first of all, is it consistent with the gospel of Christ? And secondly, is it independent of human observation?

And thirdly, I would offer this for your consideration. There is a unanimity of gospel truth. I believe that this would have to do with our churches. Are we in a church which is preaching a Biblical gospel, or is it a gospel based upon man's needs? Are we unified in its content?

If you would go to your church and ask somebody what the content of the gospel is, what would they say? First of all, would they have any idea? Would you have an idea so you could give it to them? You see, I believe strongly that Paul is teaching us that in the body of Christ there needs to be a unanimity of gospel truth. We need to be preaching the same gospel. You can't be teaching health, wealth and prosperity, and preaching the gospel of grace at the same time. We need to be unified in our gospel presentation in the church. The gospel is about Christ. So we need to ask ourselves. Are we preaching a Biblical Christ?

Turn with me to Jude chapter 1, verses 3 and 4—Jude 3 and 4.

Participant: That's to the right. (*A chuckle*)

Bruce: Jude 3 and 4. "*Beloved, although I was eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write, appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.*"

Now what do we preach? We preach the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. Where do we get that? We get that in the Scripture—Scripture authority, Scripture sufficiency. Is the Scripture sufficient in your church?

You see, I think the real battleground in America today is the sufficiency of Scripture. We don't think it's sufficient for this particular item, and we don't think it's sufficient for this particular issue or this particular problem. We do not believe in the sufficiency of the Scripture. We'll say that it is our authority. But that may just be giving lip service. The real issue is that it is sufficient for all things in my life. I can go to the Scriptures because the gospel we preach was the one that was delivered to the saints.

In other words, we don't need a new gospel. We don't need to come up with a new gospel plan. We don't need to come up with a new way of communicating it. We don't change the content just because the world has changed. We preach the gospel that was

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given to the saints once and for all. That's the gospel that we preach. And our churches need to make sure that we're doing that.

How about Romans chapter 1 verse 16?

Transcriber's Note: Romans 1:16. *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."*

Bruce: The gospel is the power of salvation to all who believe. What's the power in the church? It's the message.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: The message of Christ.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: Who superintends the message? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's job description is to call attention to Christ and to lead us into all truth. If you don't have the right gospel, you don't have the right power source. And men, no one is ever going to be converted by a corrupt gospel. People are not converted by a corrupt gospel. We need to make sure that the gospel we are preaching is the one once for all given to the saints, found in the Scripture. As my friend from the university para-church movement discovered, no one is going to be converted by a corrupt gospel.

The church acts with one Spirit and one voice for the faith of the gospel, one Spirit and one voice.

Next for your consideration I would offer this. Be steadfast in the face of opposition. Look at verse 28. *"And not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of our salvation, and that from God."*

Those who fear the Lord have no fear of those who oppose the Lord. They're not frightened by their opponents. Who runs the universe, men? A sovereign, holy and righteous God.

Participant: Amen!

Bruce: In spite of what's going on in this world, the world is run by our Father.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: And who are we? We are His saints. And we are the ones who now live a life that is worthy of the gospel, to call attention to His grace and His mercy.

Notice that steadfastness has two effects. Paul teaches two effects of steadfastness. To one group, to those who oppose it, it's a sign of their destruction—verse 28. For those who oppose the gospel, it's a sign of their destruction. And for those who do not fear, it's a sign of their salvation.

Do you know what the indication of the assurance of your salvation is? It's that you're not afraid of opposition. We're not afraid of the opposition. Now that doesn't mean that we don't have fear. I'm not saying that at all. All I'm saying is that when you get into spiritual fights you're not fearful, because you know the One who controls them. He is the One who is leading you. That's a sign of your sure salvation. We do not fear the opposition.

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I'm not telling you that it's going to be easy. I'm not telling you that it's going to be fun. But we don't fear the opposition because it is the omnipotent, righteous God who is in control through His providence in our lives.

Philippians 3:10. *"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, that I may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death."* It may be that God's will for us is to suffer. Now that's not anything that we would want to bring on ourselves, but it may be. Let it be done for the glory of God. And we need to be steadfast in our facing the opposition when it's thrown at us, and not to be fearful.

Men, I would suggest this. *It needs to be manifested in the fellowship of God's people*---verses 29 and 30. Our manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ is demonstrated by the body of Christ as a group. It's within the body of Christ.

Brothers, we need to be a good brother. Just be a good brother to people in your church. Be a good neighbor. I'm going to give you two things that I think would be pleasing to the Father. Be a good brother to the body of Christ. When you see a need, respond. Be an aggressive responder. Take care of that need. Participate in the work. Be a good brother in the body of Christ.

Also, be a good neighbor. Are we good neighbors? I have a friend in St. Louis. He has really been working on this one thing. "I just want to be a good neighbor."

Now he lives in a high-rise apartment building. And he has a different person over to his house from that building at least five nights a week. He has a different person in for a cup of coffee. He told me the other day that he had a Jewish woman, an African-American woman and a Hindu—the last three people to come to his house to have coffee. And he didn't consider this an inconvenience. I said, "Why are you doing this? No one does this anymore."

He said, "I'm just trying to be a good neighbor."

Participant: Amen.

And he said, "I don't know what's going to happen. I'd like to get a Bible study started. But we'll just see. But for right now, I'd just like first of all to be a good neighbor."

You see, it's demonstrated in the body of Christ. We need to be good brothers. Take care of each other. We have a family, and we need to take care of each other. But there is also a family out there who is lost.

Participant: Absolutely.

Bruce: They're absolutely lost. And what kind of neighbors are we? When they would say, "Why are you doing this?", he would explain that he was doing this because of His salvation in Christ, and he just wanted to give away what God had given him. What is that called?

Participant: Grace.

Bruce: That's ministry. Ministry is giving away to somebody else what God has given you. All he wanted to do was just to be a good neighbor.

Men, I challenge us to do that. Let's be good neighbors. Let's be good brothers. Let's take care of each other. That will be manifested as part of the evidence of a life worthy of

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the gospel of Christ. We gain strength and support from the fellowship of believers, to stimulate us to do good works. Let's just be good brothers. Let's just be good neighbors.

Men, there's a reminder that I would call your attention to in verses 29 and 30. There are three evidence of the assurance of our salvation in these verses. Look at the end of verse 28. "*Your salvation, and that from God.*" Who saved you?

Participant: God.

Bruce: God did. You see, that's the first evidence of assurance. Do you recognize that God is the One who really saved you? It's not something we did ourselves. It's the amazing grace that God gives us. God did it.

And what else is granted to us? It's granted to believe in Him and granted to suffer for Him. Three things He gives us. He gives us our salvation because God did it. Next, our salvation is covered by believing in Him. The word *believe* means *to rely upon, depend upon, trust in and adhere to.*" It doesn't mean to give mental assent. You have the gift of belief through the Holy Spirit. That means you can rely upon the Person and work of Christ. You can rely upon, trust in, adhere to and depend upon the Person and work of Christ. That's what it means to believe in Him.

Friend, that is a gift. You can't manufacture that yourself. It doesn't happen just because you have the will to say, "Oh, I want to believe." That's not how it happens.

As we saw, who is responsible for regeneration? God Himself through the Holy Spirit in the conversion of Lydia. God opened her eyes so that she could believe. God has granted salvation to you. He has opened your eyes, men, so you can believe. That's the first gift that we have.

First of all, *the gift of salvation.* Second, *the gift to believe.* And thirdly, *the gift to suffer for Him*—the gift to suffer for Him with dignity for the life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ.

The example I would give you would be Paul and Ananias in Acts chapter 9, verses 10-16. You might want to read that sometime.

In the book of Romans Paul says this. We'll be glorified in Him. Now in our sharing Christ, men, we need to be very, very careful when we have the opportunity, when God gives us the chance to speak and to share our faith in Christ, we need to make sure that we don't paint a false picture of the Person and work of Christ and of the Christian life. Essentially, your testimony would be this. I believe in Him. I will suffer for Him. And I will be glorified with Him. That's what Paul is saying.

We believe because God granted that. It was a gift. We suffer for Him because God granted that. It was a gift. And we will be glorified with Him because God granted that. It will be a gift.

So men, I just give you those as insights into those several verses, looking at what it means to live a manner of life worthy of Christ. Let me summarize it this way by reviewing chapter 1 of the book of Philippians.

Now in the midst of trouble, Paul exhibited a quiet confidence. He had a quiet and sure confidence. He was confident that the Philippians would continue in their Christian walk. That's verse 6. He was very confident that the Philippians would continue in their walk with Christ. He was also rejoicing that his trials would give new confidence to the

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believers in Rome. That's verse 14. And he was confident that he would come through these trials and be restored to his friends again. That's verse 25. And this is the blessing of a single mind, a joyful confidence in God, knowing that He is in control of circumstances.

You see, Paul was a notorious example of a single-minded man. "*To me to live is Christ.*" Therein lay his confidence in what the Lord was going to do. His joyful confidence in God was from the Lord Himself. He was in control of circumstances. May God be pleased to give us a faith like that.

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: He granted our salvation; God did it. And we can believe; God did it. We will suffer; God did it. And we will be glorified with Him because God will do it. And all the Brave Men said,

Men: Amen!

Participant: Bruce?

Bruce: Yes, Don?

Don: I have a comment and a question.

Bruce: Please.

Don: I love what Paul says in verse 21. "*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*" I think that we as American Christians really need to pay attention to verse 29. And I was wondering how you would counsel us as Americans who really don't suffer for Christ, other than the common sufferings that we have and that the world has. We really don't suffer for the cause of Christ.

Participant: Amen.

Don: I was wondering if you could elaborate a little bit on that for us.

Bruce: You're right. Collectively, the Christian body in America does not suffer much. We suffer inconveniences. And what is our normal response to our inconvenience? We gripe, complain and moan. I think if we start with that right away,--quit griping, complaining and blaming,--that's a good start. But we have never really experienced pure persecution in the church in America. That may come. Don, I think the thing we need to do is to get ready. Be ready for it, prepare ourselves for it. And one of the ways we can do that is to commit ourselves to living a life that is worthy of the gospel of Christ. And realize this. In God's providence, should He take us through a period of suffering, He will be the One who will guide us in that period of suffering.

So for me, I can't say that I've really suffered for Christ. I've had people call me names and things like that. But those are minor issues. I think we need to prepare ourselves for the bigger issues that face us down the road. Let's prepare ourselves so that when they happen, we will have the right response. Are there any other comments you want to make on that? That's a good question. Go ahead.

Participant: I have a question.

Bruce: Please.

Participant: When you summarized last Friday, I thought it was a great summary. In fact, I thought it would be neat if we would make it for our next wrist band and it would say, "For Christ, for the gospel, and for you."

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Bruce: Right.

Participant: Paul's statement to the Philippians. I can place that and love that. I'm older now. I don't have to work full time. And I think this. What about the young man who is trying to make a living and work in this world and it is very competitive and very demanding, and maybe isn't called to what we would say is a full-time ministry, yet he's in the work world. How would you—

Bruce: Remember that if you're in the work world, you have a full-time ministry.

Participant: That's right. Absolutely.

Bruce: Full-time ministry is who you are, where you are. Now get that through your head! (*Laughter and applause*) It's not what you do, it's who you are. When you go to Giant Eagle, you're in ministry mode. You have no idea what the Lord is going to do. Just be an aggressive responder to those around you. But you've got to get it through your heads, men, that there's no such thing as full-time ministry. When you're saved by the work of Christ, you are in full-time ministry. That's who you are. Ministry is who you are, where you are. Just take that to the marketplace. That's how we can change the world. Yes, Bob?

Bob: Bruce, commenting on what we think about when we have nothing to think about, you commented on how we are to act when there's no one around. Just take a moment and tell us. If you're walking in the woods with nobody around, what do you do with that time? Tell us what you do when you're walking through the woods and there's nobody around, what do you do?

Bruce: First of all, I make sure that I'm not stepping over a log or falling into a hole. (*Laughter*) There may be something more spiritual. Just enjoy creation!

Participant: There you go.

Bruce: Just stop! Smell the rose! Say, "Lord, what a beautiful tree! Look at that mountain! Look at that gully!" Just stop and enjoy creation; you're in the presence of God!

Participant: Amen.

Bruce: Just rejoice in that. That could be a wonderful time of exhortation and ministry to you, just enjoying the presence of God in all of His wonderful creation. You can do the same thing wherever you are.

I used to do that walking in downtown Pittsburgh, just thanking the Lord for the city that I live in. God has a history of being here. And I'd just like to be a part of the continuation of that history in Pittsburgh.

So it's really your mindset. You see, that's the single-mindedness that Paul is talking about. You've got to be single-minded. That's the issue. Don't major in the minors. Be singly minded. It's for you, it's for Christ, and Sig, the third one? (*Laughter*)

Sig: "For you" was the third one. It's for Christ, for the gospel, for you.

Bruce: Let him know any time you want to say it. (*Laughter*) It's for the gospel, for Christ and for you. Men, we need to be singly minded. That's the message of chapter 1. Be singly minded. "*For to me to live is Christ.*"

Let's pray. Father, it's overwhelming what you do for us for Your glory. You let us participate in the proclamation of the gospel message that brings people to saving faith.

Paul's Letter to the Philippians

You could do that on Your own. But you allow us to be a kind of work that You would do through Your Holy Spirit. Father, give us eyes to see all around us, that we would be aggressive responders to what You are doing in our lives. Father, there are moments when we are by ourselves. May we just reflect more upon You and less upon ourselves. And may it be so, Father, that You would begin to help us to live a singly minded life, that we may live a manner of life worthy of the gospel of Christ. And all God's children said,

Men: Amen. (*Applause*)