

- A. Opening Greetings (1:1-2)
- B. Thanksgiving & Prayer (1:3-11)
- C. Proclaiming Christ Amidst Opposition (1:12-18)
- D. Magnifying Christ (1:19-26)
- E. Striving & Suffering for Christ (1:27-30)
- F. Godly Ambition in Christ (2:1-11)
- G. Work out Your Salvation (2:12-16)
- F'. Godly Ambition in Christ (2:17-30)
- E'. All things for Christ (3:1-11)
- D'. Pressing toward the Goal in Christ (3:12-16)
- C'. Standing Firm Amidst Opposition (3:17-4:7)
- B'. Exhortation & Thanksgiving (4:8-20)
- A'. Closing Greetings (4:21-23)

Beware of the Dogs

Philippians, Part VI

Philippians 1:27-30 & 3:1-11

Stuart W. Bryan

I. “A servant is not greater than his master.” (cf. Jn 15:18-16:4)

We are the _____ of the world. There are times when a people are so accustomed to darkness or increasingly embracing darkness, that they don't like the light when it shines. They love the darkness rather than the light. Hence we face opposition.

II. A Chiastic Outline

Our two sections focus on the theme of opposition and persecution. Paul urges us to cling to Christ and not get drawn away from Him.

III. Facing Opposition

A. Worthy of the Gospel (1:27-30 cf. Mt 5:10-12)

Paul calls them to conduct themselves worthy to be recognized as _____ of God's kingdom (cf. 3:20). Many mistakenly interpret Paul saying that this earth is not our home. However, that is not the sense at all. The point of being a citizen of heaven is that we are called by God *to bring the culture of heaven to earth*.

Paul identifies three ways in which they can conduct themselves worthy:

- (1) that they stand fast in the Spirit
- (2) that they strive together “with one mind (soul)”
- (3) that they not in any way be terrified by their enemy.

B. That I may gain Christ (3:1-11 cf. Acts 17:1-9; Jn 1:29; 2:19; 5:39; 8:56; 10:11; 12:41)

In chapter 3 Paul then identifies one source of this opposition: *Beware the dogs, beware the evil workers, beware the mutilation!* His warnings identify the threat – hostile, unbelieving _____.

The pretense on which they opposed Paul was reverence for the law and the covenants. What Paul insists, however, is that the Scriptures of the OT point to _____ – and the one who rejects Christ does not truly worship the God of the Old Testament.

IV. Application

A. Sanctification is a Battle (cf. Eph 6:10-18)

The process of sanctification is a battle. Dying to sin and living to righteousness thrusts us into conflict. Paul's commands to stand fast, to strive together, and to be unafraid are given in the context of opposition, conflict, warfare. To be a friend of God is to be an enemy of the world and exposed to attack.

B. Sanctification has enemies (cf. 2 Cor 10:3-6)

Because we are involved in a battle it is important for us to recognize that we have enemies. There are forces and people who hate God, His law, and His people.

1. Pulling down strongholds

_____ are places where the enemy has entrenched himself and from which he sallies forth to attack God's people.

2. Casting down arguments and ideas

These strongholds are animated by various arguments, ideas, and philosophical convictions. Our weapons are fully capable of overthrowing these foolish foundations.

3. Bringing every thought captive

Third, there are internal enemies – alien ideas within our own hearts and minds. Our weapons are able to equip us to consecrate every area of life to the service of Christ. They not only destroy ungodliness, they build godliness.

4. Preserving the integrity of the troops

Finally, there are at times traitors in the camp – and our weapons can deal with these enemies as well. Our weapons can preserve the peace and purity of the Church.

C. Sanctification requires shrewdness

1. Be Immoveable in the Spirit
2. Be United in the Fight
3. Be Courageous in the face of Opposition

V. Conclusion