

# Lessons From Prison Pt. 8

September 13, 2020

## The Courage Of Unity In Battle

Philippians 1:27-30 ESV

27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am 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,

28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

29 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,

30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

**Unity must be deliberately (with intention) nurtured and protected.**

*Ephesians 4:1-3 ESV*

*1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,*

*2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,*

*3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

- *If the unity found in the Holy Spirit is maintained in the context and environment of peace, how do we keep the peace?*
  - *Don't make issues out of non-issues.*
  - *Never let the works of the flesh (hatred, anger, selfishness, unforgiveness) be expressed.*
  - *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*
  - *Put others before yourself: their needs and their desires.*
  - *Give others the time and space to grow in their relationship with Jesus.*

**Unity and peace are nurtured and grow in the Word and worship of God.**

- *The purpose and context of the assembly must always and unmistakably be the worship and Word of God. We don't attract or keep people with temporal gimmicks or business strategies.*
- *Biblical unity is not built upon shared interests, common preferences, similar backgrounds, financial or vocational status.*

*2 Timothy 4:1-4 ESV*

*1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:*

*2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*

3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,  
4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

1 Peter 2:1-5 CSB

1 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander.

2 Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that you may grow up into your salvation,

3 if you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4 As you come to him, a living stone -- rejected by people but chosen and honored by God --

5 you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:19-22 ESV

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

**Unity is the Church's refuge of comfort and encouragement while living as aliens in this war zone.**

- *Fighting the good fight and finishing our race is all about keeping our faith to the end.*
- *Desperate times call for extraordinary encouragement.*

Hebrews 3:12-14 ESV

12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

- exhort (parakaleō) to call to one's side, console, encourage, strengthen, comfort

2 Timothy 4:7 ESV

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 ESV

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5 For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

Romans 12:15-16 ESV

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

16 Live in harmony with one another.

### 3 Enemies of our soul that can cause us to fall away from God.

#### 1. Neglect

Hebrews 2:1 ESV

1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

Hebrews 2:3 ESV

3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

Luke 14:17-18 ESV

17 And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

18 But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.'

#### 2. Worldly Enticements

1 Timothy 6:10 ESV

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

2 Timothy 4:10 ESV

10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.

Philippians 3:18-19 ESV

18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

#### 3. Adversity and Trials

Hebrews 3:7-8 ESV

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice,

8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness.

Hebrews 12:5-6 ESV

5 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.

6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

## **Godly encouragement provides positive momentum without violating personal choice.**

*Hebrews 10:23-25 ESV*

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

- This is not a license to over-reach and be controlling in each other's lives with self-righteous rules.
- As an assembly, we are to generate a positive momentum of righteousness where members are encouraged and strengthened to live godly.

*1 Peter 5:2-3 ESV*

2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

*John 6:64-67 ESV*

64 But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.)

65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

67 So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"

*Matthew 19:20-22 ESV*

20 The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?"

21 Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

*Philippians 2:1-7 ESV*

1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,

2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.