



MATT BLACK, Sun, January 6, 2019
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6 | PHILIPPIANS 1:27

WALK WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL

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Announcements

1. Welcome visitors!
2. This week is prayer week. Every day Monday through Friday, we want to meet for prayer at 7pm at the church.
3. This Saturday our annual planning meeting is taking place from 9am to noon. If you'd like to stay for lunch that will be provided after the meeting.

Introduction

Open your Bible if you will to **Philippians 1**. The title of our study this morning is: “Walk Worthy.”

A New Culture, Citizenship

When I was a child we moved to Louisiana, and I had to walk according to a different culture. To be accepted and appreciated, I had to learn that new culture. I had to learn how to say ya’ll. I had to learn how to eat crawfish. I had to learn how to swim with water moccasins and alligators. I learned a new culture. I walked according to the atmosphere of that culture. In a sense I had a new culture and citizenship in Louisiana. I was now south of the Mason Dixon line.

In Philippians 1:27, we are taught that we have a new culture and a new citizenship. We are growing each day more and more, learning to walk worthy of that citizenship in the New Jerusalem.

A philosophy for living

Paul lays the foundation in Philippians 1:21, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain” (1:21). What an amazing life philosophy!

Paul now begins to tell us how to live a Christ-centered life, a humble life, worthy of the Gospel from 1:27 through chapter 2 and verse 18. Paul’s told us: to live is Christ, and now he tells us how to live the Christ exalting life. This passage is both a **threshold** and a **launching pad**. You pass the threshold into a building, a new place. You enter in. We need to enter into the Christ exalting life. Paul is commanding us to enter in. But then it is a launching pad. He takes us to new places with Christ. Let’s read about it.

Scripture Reading

Let’s stand and read our passage today, Philippians 1:27-30,

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 (1:27-30).

This is God’s Word.

We are presented with two things here: you have to choose daily to walk worthy, and second that worthy life brings conflict and difficult consequences that might frighten you. So my purpose in the message today is to motivate you to choose that life of holiness with a complete abandon to it. We are going to deal with verse 27 today.

1. THE EXHORTATION TO WALK WORTHY (1:27A)

AN IMPORTANT EXHORTATION

Normally I like to cover more than one verse, but this verse is so full of truth that it just fills us up.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ... (1:27).

The Meaning of “Only”

Sometimes we use the word *only* to simply introduce a new thought. There are other times when we use the word *only* as a way to describe singularity: like only child. Here Paul is using this word to underscore the weight of supreme importance. It is sometimes translated, “above all else” (NLT, CEV). This is something that should singularly describe a Christian’s life: “**Only** let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ...” (1:27; cf Gal 2:10, 5:13). ‘*This one thing and **this only***’. Nothing else must distract or excuse them from this great objective; above all, living out the Gospel must be their all-embracing occupation and focus.¹

If you go back and look at the previous verses in chapter 1, Paul has said not to be overly concerned about him since his difficulties and imprisonment are not setting the back the cause of Christ, but advancing it, working out for the furtherance of the Gospel. We learned that no matter what we are going through in life, however bad or confusing, God will use it to advance the Gospel. Christ will build his church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. He then gives the motto of every Christian: “for me to live is Christ and to die is gain” (1:21).

And now as a good disciple-maker, he wants the Philippians to live this way too. He says, whether I die, or whether I live, let this one thing be your concern. He says: this is of supreme importance. Above all, more important than anything else you do: “**Only** let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ...” (1:27). Walk worthy saints. Christ is worthy. Exalt him in your life. Exalt him in how you live.

Whatever You Do...

Some of you remember when you came of age, 12 or 13 years old, and mom and dad said, “*Whatever you do*, don’t answer the door for strangers.” Or, “*Whatever you do*, you need to be in bed by 9pm.” This is of supreme importance. Above all, this is important. That’s the sense Paul introduces this section. Above all, walk worthy of Christ. Exalt Christ in your life. He’s going to tell us how to do that from here through chapter 2:18.

A NEW MINDSET

I normally don’t slow down so much in a verse, but there is so much here. Paul says:

¹ J. A. Motyer, *The Message of Philippians*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 92.

Only **let your manner of life be worthy** of the gospel of Christ... (1:27).

The word, “**let your manner of life be**” (πολιτεύεσθε)² is one word in Greek. We get our word “politic” from this word. It means to live out as a **citizen**. And here it’s a present imperative, a continual command. Above all else, what you should be constantly doing is living out the Gospel as a heavenly citizen. It’s the same root word as **Philippians 3:20** when Paul says, “**Our citizenship is in heaven.**” Let your political mindset, how you operate, be geared toward your heavenly home. In other words, the key to walking worthy is **adapting to a new homeland**. You have a new heavenly **citizenship**. You need to adapt to your new homeland. Christ is your home. Abide in him and he in you. Christ is your culture.

A DIVINE IMPERATIVE

When Paul turns his attention to the Philippians, he does not plead with them. He does not beg or entreat them. Instead, in the full consciousness of his authority as an apostle, the Spirit of God breathes out Scripture through Paul and **commands** us to walk worthy of the Gospel. He is not asking them, he is giving a command that says: if you truly belong to Christ, then submit yourself to his way of living.

When the letter was brought to the Philippian church, perhaps by **Epaphroditus** (2:25) and this letter was read before the congregation, they knew it was from God. It was a divine imperative.

Only **let your manner of life be worthy** of the gospel of Christ... (1:27).

Paul was binding their consciences to these words. We cannot live whatever way we want. We must live a life in submission to Christ. He died and rose again. I deserve hell, but now I belong to him.

A Continual Command

This command is a present imperative tense (in Greek). In other words, we are to make this our constant goal. It’s just as the 1st question in the Westminster Catechism: What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and love him forever. Above all else we are to live a life that points to the glory and worthiness of Christ. It’s not to be lived out only on Sunday, but *every day*.

Your Response to God’s Voice

Let me pause here and ask you by way of application, what is your response to God commanding you to do something? When you hear the voice of God in Scripture, what is your response? Nothing is more effective in uncovering the state of the human heart than our instinctive reaction to a Word from God. Your reaction to God’s command reveals your heart. What is your reflexive reaction in the presence of a Word from God that comes as a command? Few things are a more accurate indicator of the state of your heart.

²Kurt Aland et al., *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (Interlinear with Morphology)* (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993), Php 1:27.

The Unrepentant Sinner

If you sit here this morning as an unrepentant, unregenerate man or woman, boy or girl, then nothing more quickly brings to the surface the state of your soul and your standing with God than a command from God. Almighty God says, “This you must do!” And you think you can ignore it. In the language of Pharaoh, you say: “Who is the LORD that I should obey him?” (Exo 5:2). “*Who is this God that wants to tell me how to live? I’ll just ignore him. I’ll just act as if I’ve never heard God’s voice.*” That kind of reaction to God’s voice exposes a heart of stone. The state of the unbeliever is hardened and opposed to God. We are all born this way: dead in sin, with a stony heart. God’s commands are not important to the unbeliever. The unconverted person can take or leave what God says. The lost person is not committed to a life of hearing and obeying God’s Word because by nature, he’s at war with God. “The mind-set of the flesh [the lost person’s nature] is hostile to God because it does not submit to God’s law. Indeed, it is unable to do so” (Rom 8:7, CSB). Furthermore, the Bible tells us that every lost person on the planet knows God, but is pushing down and suppressing the truth of God’s glorious existence (Rom 1:18-20).

I wonder, what was your **instinctive reaction** when I said, this is not only of crucial importance, but to walk worthy of the Gospel is a **divine imperative**? It’s weighty. God is saying: *I have a right to regulate and direct your life.* What is your reaction to that? Do you groan? Do you push against his commands? Are you **at your core** uncomfortable with God’s sovereign right as King to direct you? If so, face what you are: a rebel against a God of love. An enemy of God. And in that condition, under the wrath of Almighty God, unless you repent and believe the Gospel.

When we become children of God, the state of our heart is changed to one of love and joyful obedience. Where is your heart. God’s divine imperatives are lovingly embraced by his children. He has revealed his infinite love is such a way, that we are compelled by joy to follow whatever he says to do.

The Self-Righteous Sinner

When the self-righteous sinner hears God’s commands, he might delight to hear it and add it to his list of things to do. He might look at others like the Pharisee and say, “I thank you that I’m not like that sinner over there. I know and try to follow God’s commands.” When the self-righteous person hears God’s command, he looks at it as another rung in his self-made ladder to heaven. Every precept or rule is another step of his ladder in which he himself can climb into heaven. He is utterly self-deceived, thinking his own performance is the basis of a right standing with God. When such a person hears a divine imperative, many times he has a reaction that seems to be very positive. “Wonderful, now I know something else that will make me right with God.”

The Crusty Plate: We all have this self-righteousness in us, and it blinds us. Self-righteousness is like eating from a nice plate but never cleaning it. You pile on good food to a plate crusted with dry and decaying food that you never washed off. So you have good

food that is mixed with the hardness and crustiness of a dead and decaying heart of pride. The heart is hard and cannot receive God's commands in the way they were intended.

The humble saint knows we can never come into God's presence in the filthy rags of our own righteousness.

The Humble Saint

When the Christian hears the divine imperative, he or she melts. We have the presence of God indwelling us. The Spirit speaks and convicts when the Word is preached or read or listened to.

The humble saint hears the command to "walk worthy of the Gospel" and treats sin as deadly. It is our sin that put Jesus on the Cross. The humble saint *takes sin seriously*. Treat it as the thing that it is. All sin receives the wrath of God. We take God seriously when he says he hates something. He hates sin. Sin destroys.

Imagine that in front of your house were a four-lane highway. Imagine that for a year, the high way was uninhabited. It was safe to play on. Your kids play on it. Neighborhood kids are all over the highway. No problem, right? But then one day a sign goes up. On such a date traffic will commence. That day comes and your children are no longer safe on the highway. You would do whatever it takes to keep a dear child from losing their life right?

How much more important is your soul and their soul? Are you willing to do whatever it takes to walk in a way that is worthy and that will not soil the glorious reflection of Christ in your life?

A GLORIOUS GOSPEL

We are called to walk worthy of the Gospel, the good news that we need a Savior, and God has sent us the Savior we need. He says, "I am THE way." He's not A way or a GOOD way, he's not the BEST way, but the ONLY way! He's the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through him.

Walking worthy of the Gospel means believing the Gospel. The good news begins with bad news: you are a helpless unworthy sinner. You need a Savior.

Transition: Walk worthy. That's what Paul says. Receive it. What an honor. What a privilege. Christ is worthy. Revelation 5:12, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." He's worthy of your life. He's worthy of your total commitment. He's worthy of your serious and radical sacrifice. He's worthy of your time and your life. He's worthy of every second of every day. He's worthy of your love. He's worthy of your strength. Give him your life. If you are young, he's worthy – serve him your whole life. Start young. If you are old, it's not too late! It's never too late! He's worthy.

2. WAYS TO WALK WORTHY (1:27B)

Paul is a clear-headed preacher and a wise pastor. He doesn't just present the principle that Christ is worthy of your life. He actually tells us in what ways Christ is worthy. He doesn't just tell us to walk worthy. He tells us how. He gives at least three ways we are to walk worthy.

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 (1:27).

The first way Paul intimates that we walk worthy is consistent obedience.

WALK IN CONSISTENT OBEDIENCE

Paul begins by saying: “whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are **standing firm**...” If you are aiming for a life worthy of the Gospel, the apostle points to a life of obedience. There is a pattern of life that does not depend on human accountability. The fact that Christ is King and omnipresent and indwelling us through the Spirit, is enough to motivate the Christian to a consistent pattern of obedience. What is that pattern? It involves *first*: a **consistent** pattern of obedience to Christ. Paul says I desire to know – whether in person or by someone else visiting you (like Epaphroditus) who observe your pattern of life—I want to know that you are **standing firm** in consistent obedience. Live out the love of Christ. Live out your devotion to Christ. He is worthy.

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... (1:27b).

A Cosmic Consistency

Paul exhorted the Philippians in a way which would have appealed to them. What he said, literally, was: ‘Exercise your citizenship worthily of the gospel of Christ.’ Our consistency comes from a cosmic focus: we are citizens of a heavenly kingdom. We are so focused on meaningless things, we need to lift our heads up to the heavens.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth (Col 3:1-2).

Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in (Psa 24:7).

Lift up your head to the New Jerusalem, child of God. That's where your citizenship is. This way of speaking would have been easily understood by the Philippians. Philippi was a Roman ‘colony’, a title seen as one of the coveted prizes of the Roman empire. ‘Colonial’ status meant that the people of Philippi were reckoned as Roman citizens. Their names were on the rolls at Rome; their legal position and privileges were those of Rome itself. They were a homeland in miniature.

But all this is also true of them spiritually as men and women in Christ. Grace has made them citizens of a heavenly city; in their far-off land they are an outpost of the heavenly homeland, the New Jerusalem; heaven's laws are their laws, and their privileges, its privileges. The life *worthy of the gospel* where the exalted Christ, the exalted Lamb who was slain, forms the focal point of all life.³

A Growing Consistency

Paul says, whether I am present or absent, I want to have a report that you are living a consistent life, worthy of the Gospel you claim to believe. What does this mean? It means that as the people of Philippi faced their **trials and temptations**, and as we and face our trials and tests, and frustrations and fits and frames of mind, we would **consistently** be choosing to **obey this command** to live a life **worthy** of the Gospel. Paul's hope was though all the trials and tests come, it would be reported to him that the Philippians are living lives worthy of the Gospel.

Where is our hope? In ourselves? No! Our emotions and circumstances are sometimes like a roller coaster. We change. But there are **changeless things** in this universe you can anchor your soul to. Is the hope of the Gospel changeless? Yes! Is Jesus Christ's position as King of kings changeless? Indeed! Anchor yourself to that. God's promise to give you **sufficient grace** to live a consistent Christian life is changeless as well. There is a consistency in the believer's growth. It's not the same rate for everyone. It's not perfection. It's not that there are no ups and downs. There are dry periods and times when our growth is arrested and stunted.

But the overall pattern of Gospel living is clear: Paul says: "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ," that is, "Let it be **consistently** worthy (1:27), that whether I drop in to see you or Epaphroditus travels to Rome to give me a report in this rented house where I am imprisoned, that I may hear of your consistent obedience. That is what will gladden my heart. Amidst all the changes in society, changes in your circumstances, all of the ups and downs in your emotional state, and all the changes that life constantly brings – among all that, I want to hear above all else, that you are a **consistent** people."

We are far from where we ought to be, but we are also so far from where we once were. We were dead in sin, now we live. We were blind, now we see.

John Newton, author of *Amazing Grace*, said it this way:

“I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once was, and by the grace of God I am what I am.”

³ J. A. Motyer, *The Message of Philippians*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 93.

Are you consistently growing in your character? Are you more humble when you are right? Is it your attitude in an argument with your spouse or close friend that you are like the one who is wrong? When you are accused of some fault, do you say, "I'm the problem. It's me O Lord." Spurgeon said, "If anyone thinks ill of you, do not be angry with him; ... If you have your moral portrait painted, and it is ugly, be satisfied; for it only needs a few darker touches, and it would be still nearer the truth." When you are accused, realize you are much more sinful in God's sight than in man's.

Are you growing in your reliance of the grace of God in trials? Are you growing in self-denial and seeing consistent victory in Christ? The pattern of your growth and obedience is to be consistent.

A Militant Consistency

How desperately this world needs to see Christians who are consistently reflecting Christ. Are you committed? Are you all in? We are to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." A soldier can't be allured by civilian life. "No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him" (2 Tim 2:4).

Or are you controlled by something other than the Lordship of Christ? We live in the generation of feelings. Every one is led by the rudder of their emotions. The mark of our culture is hedonism and narcissism and serving self. And you cannot allow this world's culture to put its imprint on you. If you let self dictate whether or not you serve God, then the mark of your life will be inconsistency. What about you? Are you predictable? Do people see a godliness in you that is consistent? Father, mother, do your children see in you a consistent humility? Are you consistent in the right ways? Is there a growing kindness? Is there an increasing love for the all the brothers and sisters, not just the one's that are easy to get along with?

Is there a consistency in your **service** for Christ? Are you helping in one area of the church, and you are comfortable, but are you ready to grow in another area of ministry? You need to be willing to stretch and grow in your service.

A Persevering Consistency

As a Christian, when you feel like giving in the towel and quitting, it is the Spirit who comes and brings a militaristic resolve never to quit. He comforts us. He puts a divine and holy ambition to persevere no matter how hard it gets. Consistency is the mark of grace in our lives. By God's grace we can "stand firm" in the hope of the Gospel. No matter what comes, we can say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15).

Brothers, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:12-14).

“Having put my hand to the plow, I will not turn back.” That’s Paul’s great passion and concern for the Philippians. It’s the burden of these pastors and elders. We long for your consistent character in the Gospel.

We avail ourselves of the means of grace, not because our flesh feels like it, but because we must. The very happiness of our soul depends on it. But our flesh, the sinful, selfish part of us, constantly fights against our best motives. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. So we go to pray, because God told us, “Men ought always to pray and not to lose heart.” So we pray whether we feel like it or not. And soon we do feel like it. Soon we are delighted in prayer.

We meet with the congregation for fellowship and preaching not because we feel like it. God commands us not to neglect meeting together for worship, but to do so more and more as we see the Day of Christ approaching. We fellowship and worship not because we feel like it, but because God commands it. And once we are here we are so glad we are so glad we’ve come.

Consistency Even When You Don’t Feel Like It

We don’t always feel like doing what we ought to do. The flesh is weak. But once we do obey we are so glad we did. The joy of the Lord is our strength. We meet him in the midst of obeying him. We don’t wait for a certain feeling to obey God. We obey.

We get turn off that unclean program that we thought would be so good, whether we feel like it or not. The man of God cherishes his wife, and the godly wife yields and submits to her husband, whether the feelings are there or not. Our obedience is based on the desire of God, not our own desires. God says, “Do this and live.” Our heart is tainted with sin so we do not always feel as we ought to feel. That’s what the Bible means when it says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your path” (Pro 3:5-6). You can’t lean to your feelings. You must trust the omnipotent and all wise voice of God.

How Can I Begin?

What does consistent growth look like? Well, the best way to start is to go to the impossible places in your life.

Marriage: I know some days in marriage that seem impossible. Start there. Where there is defensiveness and pride in your heart, you need to start asking God for constant humility. You have to have the attitude that you are the biggest sinner in the room. I know some men that constantly struggle against their wives and wives against their husbands. That’s not Gospel consistency. You need to get your focus off of your marriage and on to Christ.

Gossip: What about gossip? That’s a hard thing to change. Some of you have remade gossip and justified it by pointing to the reasonableness of your heart’s motives. You just want someone to know this and that to pray, but really you are cutting that person down. You know gossip is not a fruit of the Spirit. The **answer** to gossip and jealousy is to start loving that person that you seem to thrive putting down in your mind and with your

mouth. Start serving that person. Have them over. It's hard to gossip about a person that you are feeding a meal to and that you are praying for. Love that person. Stop the gossip.

The **impossible**: I don't know what seems impossible to you, but start there. God is a God of power and grace. He wants to demonstrate how faithful and powerful he is. Go to that place you've given up on in your spiritual life. Start there. Perhaps it's **purity**. Perhaps it's **anger**. Perhaps it's **covetousness** and **materialism**. You can't get a handle on your **debt** because you are addicted to the American dream. Whatever it is, test God. He's never failed. His reputation is impeccable.

Get a brother or a sister to pray with you. Walking worthy was never meant to happen alone. We are a body, a forever family, a flock: we can't do this alone. When we fall, we need a brother to help us up again and encourage us to keep walking forward.

Transition: So, we are to walk worthy, and the first way Paul says we can do that is consistency. I want to see you standing firm in the Gospel.

...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... (1:27b).

But here we see something else. Externally, the Christian walking worthy of the Gospel has a consistent, growing walk with Christ. There is growth in sanctification. There is a growing victory over sin. It may take time, trials, and tests, but God breaks us and renews us, breaks us and renews us. This is the pattern: externally consistency in Christlike character.

But now we come to the second mark of the worthy walk: fearing God. This is the heart of the passage. The pattern of obedience is not only to be **consistent**, but it is to be carried on in the **fear of God**. The external mark is consistent growth and obedience, but the inward engine is a heart fears God and melts before his presence.

WALK IN THE FEAR OF GOD

Paul says: it's not about human accountability that makes us walk worthy. Whether we have human accountability or not, we walk worthy of the Gospel. We have a far deeper motive for walking worthy of the Gospel: We fear God. We are aware of the presence of God. It's not about Paul's apostolic presence that motivates the Philippian believers. It's the fear of God.

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... (1:27b).

Paul was aware of the danger that his presence as a man of God might greatly influence the measure of the Philippians' obedience to the revealed will of God. "Whether I come and see you or am absent, I want to hear that you are standing firm... for the faith of the Gospel" (1:27). But he comes back to this theme in verse 12 of the next chapter:

Therefore, my beloved, as you have **always obeyed** [*consistency*], so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure (2:12-13).

You see what he is saying? Your walking worthy of Christ is not mainly due to human accountability. It's a much deeper motive: You are aware of the God who is working in you! You are so aware of this you **tremble** and **fear**.

Adam in the Garden

It's not our human accountability that transforms us, it is the living God. If our striving for a life worthy of the Gospel is material altered by our spiritual guides, we have yet to walk in the fear of God. You cannot walk worthy of the Gospel without an acute sense of the presence of God. There is a fullness in God that is forfeited by sin. We saw this in the life of the first man. When he sinned, and paradise was lost, the most important thing that was lost was Adam's communion with God. He was out of delightful submission to the will of God.

When Jesus died and said, *Tetelestai*, It is finished, God ripped the veil from top to bottom and opened paradise again. We can worship him now within the veil.

"He gave himself, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

We are interdependent in the Body of Christ, but we human accountability is not what is most important. We need to have the powerful and glorious presence. I've lost the fear of God.

When I come from my devotions and come to breakfast, and my wife burns my pancakes, and I make some snide comment, I have left the presence of God behind.

I go to work, and I start hating my job or my boss or a co-worker and I'm filled with annoyance with someone created in the image of God, I've stopped fearing God.

Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

Joseph in the Old Testament

Joseph in the Old Testament knew the fear of God. When he was tempted by Potiphar's wife, and she daily tempted him and said, "Lie with me" what was his response. Here is a man living in the fear of God. Listen to him: "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen 39:9).

Definition of the Fear of God

The fear of God is an expression that describes an experience of the awe and majesty of the living God. We can know concepts, but God wants us to know him personally.

WALK IN UNITY

Let me say that the next thing we see flows from the first. Unity comes from the fear of God because God's fear promotes a deep and profound humility in our hearts. "The

sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise” (Psa 51:17).

Unity always comes from humility. Paul’s goal is for them to walk together, standing firm in the Gospel and serving together side by side in the Gospel.

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... (1:27b).

Proud people don’t serve together. Proud people fight. Ask God for a fresh vision of his holy presence. Ask him to humble you. It’s what we need. You are either humble as a child of God or you will be humbled. “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble” (Jas 4:4).

Conclusion

Walk worthy saints because Christ is worthy. He is exalted. Recognize that. He is worthy of your life and energy and all that you are and have. Walk in consistent obedience. Walk in his fear. And in humility let’s walk and serve together side by side for the Gospel.