



**SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Monday, May 17, 2021**

**Scripture: Philippians 1:27**

**TITLE: Living As a Heavenly Citizen**

Have you ever given your kids the pep talk before walking into a church or into a restaurant? You know that talk. “Please, kids, be on your best behavior. It’s not a zoo in there. It’s a nice restaurant—no throwing rolls. No yelling. No tag. Act like sane humans, okay?” I know you’ve given that talk, or at least received it as a child.

Well, kids are not the only ones who need that important reminder on how to behave. Paul had a similar message for his Philippian friends in Philippians 1:

“Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News.” (Philippians 1:27, NLT)

Paul gives a parental pep talk to this church. He says, *Above all*, in other words, do this one thing: conduct your life that’s worthy of the Gospel. The NASB (New American Standard Bible) doesn’t mention the “citizens of heaven”. The NLT (New Living Translation) adds it, and for a reason. The word Paul uses for conduct comes from the root word *polis*, meaning city. It’s a word that means to be a good citizen, which the Philippians would have been. So, Paul says, live like a Christian – a citizen of Heaven - because if you don’t, it will tarnish the reputation of the Gospel.

I remember a friend telling me, “Why would I want to be a Christian? You guys really don’t live any different, except for the fact that you give up a couple hours on Sunday, and maybe give some money away.” You see, some people claim to be Christians, but live like pagans. They don’t live like citizens of Heaven, just like, at times, my kids act like Tasmanian devils, instead of pastor’s kids.

Paul is so passionate about the Gospel and it’s power not being diminished because of our behavior. That’s why Paul said, “I will know we are standing together with one spirit and one purpose: That purpose is the spread of the Gospel.” Paul says, *standing together*. The NASB says, “standing firm.” It’s a military picture of a group of soldiers standing together and not giving up the hill. Paul says, “We can do this, so let’s do this”.

And that’s my challenge for you today! Live as a citizen of Heaven. Live as someone who is proud of your heavenly citizenship, and wants to make your city and your King famous.

When we live a life reflective of the changes the Spirit is making in us, we become a beacon of light that reflects off of us and points straight to Jesus. So go and live out the Gospel. When we do this, you know it, friend, we will win the day.