



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

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Scripture: Philippians 1:29-30

TITLE: Strength In Numbers

There is strength in numbers. I truly believe that. When I was in my early 20's, my friends discovered this old, abandoned house outside of Lincoln. We went there one night about midnight. We were freaked out. The place was dilapidated and scary. But I was curious what was in the basement. Or maybe who could be in the basement. But I wasn't going alone. I remember saying, "Okay, I'm going down. Who's coming with me?" My buddy Leif said, "I'll go." We approached the stairs, I turned to him and said, "Let's go, but first hold my hand."

True story. Well, there was nothing cool in the basement. It was scary, but I felt better because we were together. The Apostle Paul believed in the power and benefit of a community. Listen to Paul's words in Philippians 1:

“For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. ³⁰ We are in this struggle together. You have seen my struggle in the past, and you know that I am still in the midst of it.” (Phil. 1-29-30, NLT)

As we said yesterday, Christianity is going to be hard. It's not your best life now. It's not health, wealth, and prosperity. When we live a life worthy of the Gospel, we live in God's will. And when we do this, the culture notices. And often the culture will not like it. The enemies of God become our enemies. They don't want the Gospel. They don't want the Gospel shared. Romans 3:11 tells us that no one seeks after God. Colossians 1:21 reminds us that apart from Christ, we are by nature hostile towards God.

So, persecution and rejection will happen when you follow Christ. We've been rejected by family members. Friends walk away. Co-workers can hate. But Paul says this suffering is a privilege. It means we are living that life worthy of the Gospel. It means we are sharing the sufferings of Christ. But the good news is we don't have to do it alone. We can and should do it with each other. Just like I had the confidence to venture into that basement with my buddy, how much more so can we face hurdles when we do it with the family of God?

So here's my challenge for you today: check up on a brother or sister in Christ and give them some encouragement. See what trials they're facing and pray with them. Give them some words to lift up their spirit. And then ask if you can help.

We are in this battle together. We weren't called to be rogue agents. We are called to function as the body. Each person is contributing. And sometimes, that contribution is simply being there in those hard moments. So reach out to someone. And while you're at it, reach out here online. In

the comments below, share a burden, so we can encourage and pray for you. We are in this struggle together, so let's join hands and win the day.