

Hallelujah Anyway, Part 7

Pastor Steve Berger May 17, 2015

Hallelujah Anyway

...having a faith that no matter what happens in your life, you continue to trust and praise God, knowing that God, and no circumstance, has the final word over you!

Paul's challenges

Last week's conclusion — *"I'm going to come to you and you're going to thank God because I'm going to help you progress in your joy and faith." "I'm coming, and heaven's coming with me."*

Philippians 1:27-30

Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

1. Worthy conduct

- Philippians 1:27
 - conduct worthy — behave as a citizen
 - Philippians 3:20
 - citizenship is in heaven

Live your life on earth as a faithful citizen of heaven, *"thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" means in and through our lives on earth as citizens of heaven!*

2. Ambassadors for Christ

- 2 Corinthians 5:20
 - we are ambassadors for Christ

An ambassador is someone who acts in someone's stead, on someone else's behalf. We are citizens of heaven, on earth, acting as ambassadors for Jesus, pleading with the world to be reconciled to God!

- 1 Peter 2:9
 - chosen generation
 - royal priesthood
 - holy nation
 - His own special people
 - to proclaim His praises
 - calling out of darkness into light

As faithful citizens of heaven, we're ambassadors, chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special people, to proclaim His praises for calling us out of darkness and into His marvelous light!

**Be a faithful citizen, a pleading ambassador,
and a praising priest! Always!**

3. Stand fast in one spirit

- Philippians 1:27
 - stand fast in one spirit
 - stationary, unwavering, immovable in the faith
- Ephesians 4:14
 - no longer be children
 - carried about with every wind of doctrine
 - with cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting

Don't be immature children, tossed around by every doctrine that blows into church! Remember, there are seducing spirits promoting doctrines of devils! Stand fast in the ancient, historic, orthodox doctrines of the Christian faith!

- Acts 20:22-24
 - chains and tribulations await
 - none of these things move you

Don't let persecution or tribulation move you...

- 1 Corinthians 15:57-58
 - God gives us the victory
 - be steadfast
 - immovable
 - always abounding in the work of the Lord

4. With one mind striving together

- Philippians 1:27
 - striving together — team wrestlers
 - personally standing is awesome; wrestling together is glorious

Who are you wrestling with? — Not against, WITH? What team are you on where you are striving together, wrestling together, for the furtherance of the gospel?

**The vision and definition of our roles as servants of Jesus...
faithful citizens of heaven, pleading ambassadors of Christ,
praising royal priests, immovable followers, and team wrestlers!**

5. Applying these characteristics to define our lives

The church in America needs to start applying the aggressive characteristics used in the scriptures to define our lives — wrestling...

- Jude 1:3
 - contend earnestly; agonize for the faith
- 1 Timothy 6:12
 - fight good fight
 - lay hold; seize; grip

**Striving, wrestling, contending, agonizing,
fighting, seizing, gripping,
mandatory!**

6. Not terrified by adversaries

- Philippians 1:28
 - not terrified by adversaries
 - to them proof of perdition
 - to you proof of salvation

**it is a foregone conclusion in Paul's mind
that living as a faithful citizen of heaven,
you will have adversaries on earth**

- People who hate God, His truth, His people
 - your faith confronts their doubt and hatred
 - they come after you

Berger thought: ... Tired of blaming the church for sinners' continued rejection of Christ, "if the church would just do _____ or _____, then sinners would come to Jesus." Jesus Himself was in their midst and they crucified him, they didn't receive Him! Their solution usually involves some degree of compromise and NOT speaking truth in love.

Don't be terrified of your adversaries, what they say about you, what they do to you, what they threaten you with — quit worrying about what people say about your commitment to Jesus, what opportunities that commitment might cost you, what fears the devil tries to move you with **AND LIVE AS A FEARLESS CITIZEN OF HEAVEN!**

**When you live as a fearless citizen of heaven,
it's proof to them of your salvation —
and their perdition!**

7. The greatest thing to fear is not someone killing you

- Matthew 10:28
 - fear the one who is able to destroy both the soul and body in hell
- Luke 6:26
 - fear when everyone speaks well of you

**Living as a faithful citizen of heaven
requires us to live as fearless citizens of heaven!**

8. The fellowship of His suffering

- Philippians 1:29-30
 - granted —to suffer for His sake

**We don't think of suffering as a favor granted,
we think of it as undeserved punishment...
the Bible teaches otherwise...**

- Matthew 5:12
 - rejoice when persecuted; great reward in heaven
- Philippians 3:10
 - fellowship of His sufferings
 - conformed to His death
 - shaping you into image of Jesus

Romans 8:16-18

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

**Faithful suffering produces reward, conformation, glory —
suffering...
Hallelujah Anyway!**

Pastor Steve's challenge for us to speak and believe: *“I am determined to live as a faithful citizen of heaven, a pleading ambassador, a royal priest, an immovable believer, a team wrestler, a fearless witness, and a rejoicing sufferer.”*

Discussion Questions

1. What things do you bring with you daily, that God can use to change circumstances, to make a difference?
2. “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” Is this just what we request of God, or does it require any action on our part?
3. Read 1 Peter 2:9. What is our purpose as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people?
4. What intentional agendas in our society do you recognize as trying to get us and our family pulled away from our faith?
5. What are some of the teachings blowing through the church, that are pulling people away from ancient, historic, orthodox, doctrines of the Christian faith?
6. What team are you on where you are striving together, wrestling together, for the furtherance of the gospel?
7. To walk worthy as a citizen of heaven, we are to strive, wrestle, contend, agonize, fight, seize, grip — all mandatory! What does this mean to you as an individual?
8. Do you personally have any adversaries, because you are walking as a faithful citizen of heaven? How does this make you feel? How does it make you act or react?
9. Read Luke 6:26. What did Jesus mean when He said this?
10. Read Romans 8:16-18. When we do not feel like suffering is worth it, how do we keep on going?
11. At the end of the discussion, have someone read aloud Pastor Steve's challenge.

Click on "House of Prayer" on www.gracechapel.net to fill out a prayer request.

We pray for requests for one month, and at our weekly prayer meetings.

**Please come join our House of Prayer,
Tuesday, May 19th at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.**