

**Small Group Study Guide**  
*Stand Firm in What He's Doing*  
Philippians 1:27-30  
**February 21, 2010**

**Leader's Notes**

**PLEASE NOTE:** These "Leader's Notes" are a resource to the Small Group Leader to help you in preparing for this study. They are meant to be supplemental. You do not need to cover all the information in these notes with your group. They are simply provided as a resource to you.

**Welcome and Introduction:**

- Encourage group members to bring their study guide with them that they use on Sunday to take notes on the sermon, but also have extra copies available in case they forget.
  
- Open with prayer.

**A Closer Look:**

Take some time to read back through the first chapter of Philippians. It is important to bring in the context of verses 1-26 when it comes to your study of these last few verses in the chapter.

The following notes are to help you better understand the passages you will be looking at in this study.

**Notes from *ESV Study Bible on Philippians 1:27-30* :**

**Phil. 1:27-30** Encouragement to Walk Worthy of the Gospel. Paul's sacrifice will be futile, however, if the Philippians do not continue to live in a way that is "worthy of the gospel of Christ."

**Phil. 1:27** The phrase **be worthy of the gospel** translates the Greek word *politeuesthe*. As the esv footnote indicates, the Greek can also be translated as "only behave as citizens worthy [of the gospel of Christ]," a phrasing that nicely captures Paul's play on words here and in 3:20 ("our citizenship [Gk. *politeuma*] is in heaven"). Philippi prided itself on being a Roman colony, offering the honor and privilege of Roman citizenship. Paul reminds the congregation that they

should look to Christ, not Caesar, for their model of behavior, since their primary allegiance is to God and his kingdom. They need to stand together with one another and with Paul in **striving** for the gospel. Paul's emphasis on unity may suggest some division within the Philippian congregation (cf. 4:2–3). Perhaps the disunity is one reason he mentions the “overseers and deacons” at the outset of the letter (1:1), for they are required to minister in a way that promotes unity.

**Phil. 1:28** As the Philippians maintain courage in the face of their **opponents**, these opponents will realize that such remarkable strength could come only from God, and thus anyone who continues to oppose God's people will be marked for **destruction**. “Destruction” (Gk. *apōleia*) here means eternal destruction, hence these are different opponents from those who antagonized Paul in vv. 15–18, who seem to have been Christians. A different city is in view as well, for here Paul speaks about what is happening in Philippi, while in vv. 15–18 his opposition is (presumably) in Rome. But God's sustaining grace amid trouble will assure the believers of their own final **salvation**. Paul follows the teaching of Jesus here (Matt. 5:10–12), reminding them that persecution is a sign that they belong to Christ.

**Phil. 1:29–30** Troubles will come, because the reality is that believers in Christ will **suffer for his sake**. Paul teaches that both suffering and faith are gifts of God; for both, Paul says, have **been granted to you**. Suffering for the sake of Jesus is a great privilege (see Matt. 5:10–12; Acts 5:41). Paul again holds himself out as an example of one who has maintained his joy while experiencing the **same conflict** (i.e., opposition from hostile unbelievers).