**First Baptist Church Taylorsville**

**May 26, 2019**

***[Pressing Onward: Steadfast and United]***

**Philippians 4: 1-3**

**Verse 1:**

The word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tells us that we should look both backward to what Paul has already said *and* forward to the commands that follow this text

Paul’s love for this church is evident. Although he has given them some hard truths and difficult commands throughout this letter, he knows the truth of what God’s word says is the best and most loving thing he can share with them.

The most loving thing that you and I can do for others is to give them the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God’s Word.

The use of the possessive *“my”* by Paul shows that he is personally invested in them and their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The phrase *joy and crown* are meant to invoke the imagery of a laurel wreath placed on the head of a victorious athlete (think Olympics or the Boston Marathon).

They are his joy because of what he will feel when they stand with him in Christ having ran faithfully and seeing God’s good work began and finally completed in them.

Paul says that they are his crown - like the laurel wreath placed on the winner’s head - because their progress means he did not “run in vain” but they received the Word of God and His truth and ran the race faithfully.

As the people of God, we too should be connected and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the progress of our brothers and sisters in the church.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ like we see here is a heart concern for the spiritual well being of others.

The Christian life is to be so unified, connected, and personally invested in one another that we can look at others as our *joy* and *crown*.

Each Christian should have someone we look to as our joy and our crown.

Who is your joy and crown?

Who is it you have invested in - poured the Word of God into?

Who is it you have seen veering off the path so that you’ve come along aside them and gently and lovingly given them the truth of God’s Word?

Who is your one?

To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is the call to hold your position in the battlefield.

Standing firm \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ means resting in the strength of the Lord and understanding the power is ours because we belong to Christ.

Standing firm in Christ means resting in His love, concern, care, and providence overs our lives.

When we stand firm, we look to the example of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Philippians 2: 5-11).

**Verse 2:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can hinder the unity of the church and its witness.

One of the greatest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ against the mission of the church can be conflict between believers.

As the people of God, pressing onward and standing firm, we should be people of peace and unity.

When we have conflict, we should seek to find agreement and harmony on the matter within our common ground in the Lord.

**Verse 3:**

Paul calls within the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to come along side and help these two women who are in conflict.

By using the word συνλαμβάνου (help), Paul is speaking to the danger of the conflict within the church and the necessity of resolution.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the family of God is not honoring to God.

**Application:**

If you are currently finding yourself in conflict with another brother or sister, let me encourage you - entreat you - to seek reconciliation if you have not already.

If you are not currently in conflict, let me ask you to make the following commitment. If you find yourself in conflict, do not be resigned to stay there. Be eager to listen, slow to speak, and quick to ask forgiveness where needed. Be resolved to offer forgiveness when forgiveness is requested.

As a church, I want to ask us to also pledge we will be peacemakers in conflict, just like the true companion Paul calls on in our text. We will seek to arrest and to help the situation, and give wise counsel when our brothers and sisters find themselves at odds, in order to bring peace when conflict arises

Christians are only able to forgive like this because of the grace and forgiveness we have ourselves received from God through the work of Jesus Christ.

***Blanks: therefore; truth; progress; concerned; love; stand firm; in the Lord; Christ; Conflict; attacks; church; division***