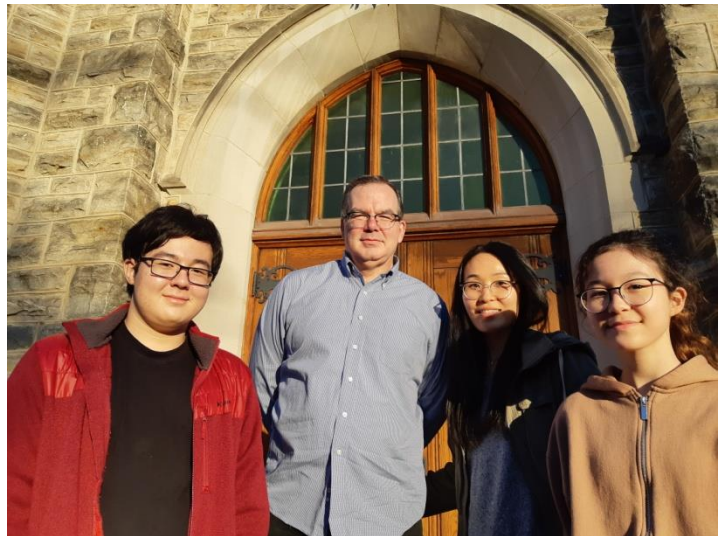


St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
May 30th, 2021
Rev. Stephen Dunkin
Trinity Sunday

Announcement

Dear Members and Adherents of St. Andrew's, Perth:

In 2019 the Session set up a Search Committee to begin the process of looking for the next minister of this congregation. During the time since, the search has been a matter of fervent prayer within our congregation. Unfortunately, the search process has been hindered due to the turmoil in the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. However, since the time we began to list this position on the PCC website under "Vacancies" we have received many profiles from ministers inquiring about St. Andrew's. The Committee declined to interview any of the applicants because they did not feel that any of them fit the criteria of what the congregation was looking for in a minister. Recently we receive an application from Mr. Gerry Gallant who is a new graduated of Knox College. After reading his profile, the Committee was "cautiously optimistic" and asked to be able to view some of his services online. The Committee then requested a Zoom interview with Mr. Gallant. They were very impressed with his commitment to Christ, his Scripture centred preaching, his willingness to openly and honestly answer any questions put to him and his humility (among other things). The Committee, through the Interim Moderator, then invited Mr. Gallant to come to Perth (he lives in London) with his family (Gerry and his wife Evie have two children, Daniel almost 17 and Kaelyn going on 12) so that we could meet them and they could have an opportunity to see the town and St. Andrew's. During their visit, all the members of the Session, the Search Committee and many members of the Board of Managers had an opportunity to meet the Gallants and to ask them questions.



On Thursday evening, May 13th the Committee recommended to the Session that Mr. Gerald L. Gallant be invited to Preach for a Call to St. Andrew's. The Session, meeting later that evening, concurred and agreed to issue an invitation to the Gallant family to come to Perth the weekend of June 5th and 6th and for Mr. Gallant to Preach for a Call to the congregation of St. Andrew's

Presbyterian Church. In terms of worship services, it appears that the present restriction is 10 people including the minister. Gerry is willing to do multiple services and I will help him. We would like as many members and adherents of the congregation to hear Gerry preach and to meet him and his family. To arrange this, I will be meeting with the Session and Search Committee by Zoom on Thursday, evening May 27th to finalize times and to set up a schedule to contact members and adherents. This is the schedule of services:

Saturday: 11:00AM, 2:00PM, 4:00PM and 7:00PM

Sunday: 9:30AM, 11:00AM and 1:30PM (this last one if necessary)

You will be contacted by a member of the Search Committee to see which service you will attend.

With this announcement I am also calling a Congregational meeting to be held on Sunday, June 6th at 4PM. That meeting will be held by Zoom. Those not having internet will be able to call in by phone.

One further thing needs to be dealt with at the Congregational Meeting and that is reaffirm our Trustees – Rob Allan, Walter Gemmill, David Oliver and Stuart McKim.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Stephen G. Dunkin
Interim Moderator

Call to Worship (Romans 5:1-5)

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Through him we have also obtained access by faith
into this grace in which we stand,
and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings,
knowing that suffering produces endurance,

**and endurance produces character,
and character produces hope,**

and hope does not put us to shame,

**because God's love has been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.**

Prayer of Invocation

Blessed is the kingdom
of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit now and forever.

O Lord God, your power is incomparable!

Your glory is incomprehensible!

Your mercy is immeasurable!

Your love for human beings is inexpressible!

Unto you are due all the glory, honor, and worship
to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever,
and even unto ages of ages. **Amen.**

Hymn #290:

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfu1dqKCGd8>

1. Immortal invisible God only wise
In light inaccessible
Hid from our eyes
Most blessed most glorious
The Ancient of Days
Almighty victorious
Thy great name we praise

2. Unresting, unhasting
And silent as light
Nor wanting nor wasting
Thou rulest in might
Thy justice like mountains
High soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains
Of goodness and love

3. To all life thou givest
To both great and small
In all life thou livest
The true life of all
We blossom and flourish
As leaves on the tree
And wither and perish
But naught changeth thee

4. Great Father of glory
Pure Father of light
Thine angels adore thee
All veiling their sight
All laud we would render
O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor
Of light hideth thee

Call to Confession

God's Word assures us:

If we say that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins,
he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

In humility and faith let us confess our sin to God.

Prayer of Confession

Triune God,
 we praise you as the God of love and life.
 Though Jesus prayed that we would be one,
 we confess that we fail to live in unity with each other and with you.
 We break our communion through hostile words and unkind actions.
 We long for your Spirit to heal us and to correct us.
 We long for you to help us experience communion
 with you and with each other
 as we gather around your Word.
 Even now, dependent on your grace, we commit ourselves
 to live more fully in the unity you desire.
 Through Christ, our Lord, **Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon (based on Romans 8:15-17)

You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
 but you have received a spirit of adoption.
 When you cry, "Abba! Father!"
 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit
 that we are children of God,
 and if children, then heirs,
 heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, we are forgiven.
 Thanks be to the triune God.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
 Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
 Forever and ever. Amen**

Responsive Reading (Psalm 137, New King James Version)

By the rivers of Babylon,
 There we sat down, yea, we wept
 When we remembered Zion.

**We hung our harps
 Upon the willows in the midst of it.**

For there those who carried us away captive asked of us a song,
 And those who plundered us *requested* mirth,
 Saying, "Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion!"

**How shall we sing the LORD's song
 In a foreign land?**

If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
 Let my right hand forget *its skill!*

**If I do not remember you,
 Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth—
 If I do not exalt Jerusalem
 Above my chief joy.**

Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom
 The day of Jerusalem,
 Who said, "Raze *it*, raze *it*,
 To its very foundation!"

**O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed,
 Happy the one who repays you as you have served us!**

Happy the one who takes and dashes
 Your little ones against the rock!

Ministry of Music: "The Lord Is My Salvation", Keith and Kristyn Getty
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzZaeKr3PD4>

1. The grace of God has reached for me
 And pulled me from the raging sea
 And I am safe on this solid ground
 The Lord is my salvation
 2. I will not fear when darkness falls
 His strength will help me scale these walls
 I'll see the dawn of the rising sun
 The Lord is my salvation
- Chorus
- Who is like the Lord our God
 Strong to save faithful in love
 My debt is paid and the victory won
 The Lord is my salvation
3. My hope is hidden in the Lord
 He flow'rs each promise of His Word
 When winter fades I know spring will come
 The Lord is my salvation
 4. In times of waiting times of need
 When I know loss when I am weak
 I know His grace will renew these days
 The Lord is my salvation

Chorus

Who is like the Lord our God
 Strong to save faithful in love
 My debt is paid and the victory won
 The Lord is my salvation

5. And when I reach the final day
 He will not leave me in the grave
 But I will rise He will call me home
 The Lord is my salvation

Bridge

Glory be to God the Father
 Glory be to God the Son
 Glory be to God the Spirit
 The Lord is our salvation

Ending

The Lord is our salvation
 The Lord is our salvation

Scripture Reading

Philippians 3:17- 4:1

17 Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Prayer for Illumination

O God, you have spoken to us your divine and saving words.
 Illumine the souls of us sinners
 to comprehend what has been read,
 that we do not become simply
 hearers of your spiritual words, but doers of good deeds,
 true pursuers of faith, having a blameless life
 and a conduct without reproach in Christ, our Lord,
 with whom you are blessed and glorified,
 together with your all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit,
 now and forever and to the ages of ages. **Amen.**

“Stand Firm!”

Philippians 3:17-4:1

When we are studying Scripture, particularly the New Testament epistles, it is important to pick up on words or phrases that are repeated or used frequently. Repetition doesn't demonstrate that the author has a poor or limited vocabulary, but rather that he is emphasizing something important. This is true whether it is the same word used a number of times in the space of four or five verses, or a phrase which is repeated frequently in a particular epistle or in a number of epistles.

The title of my message this morning is taken from a two words that occur several times in the book of Philippians. They are the words “**stand firm**”. Being used two times does not necessarily point to this phrase as being significant. However, when we find it used 10 times in the epistles of Paul, along with words like **take your stand** and **stand your ground**, then it strikes me that this is indeed an important admonition. Here are the two places where it is used in Philippians.

1. [27](#) **Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel...** (Ch. 1)
2. [1](#) **Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!** (Ch.4)



When I hear the words “**stand firm**”, “**stand your ground**” or “**take your stand**”, what immediately comes to mind is someone in a defensive posture. I picture an individual or a group that is digging in, in preparation for an attack, so that they will not lose the ground or position they presently hold. This is not someone who is going on the

offense. The one who **stands firm** is not looking to take new ground but to hold on to something that he or she already has. As Christians, we are called to **stand firm in the Lord**. We are called to not let go of the position that we already have in Christ.

I want to point out one other thing before we turn to look at our Scripture lesson as a whole. It is one thing to tell a person or a group of people to stand firm. It is

something very different to tell them how to stand firm. Paul writes, **1 Therefore ... stand firm in the Lord *in this way***. In other words Paul is saying, “This is the way in which you stand firm.” Our passage today is a “how to manual” focusing on the ways we are to go about standing firm in our faith. Standing firm involves:

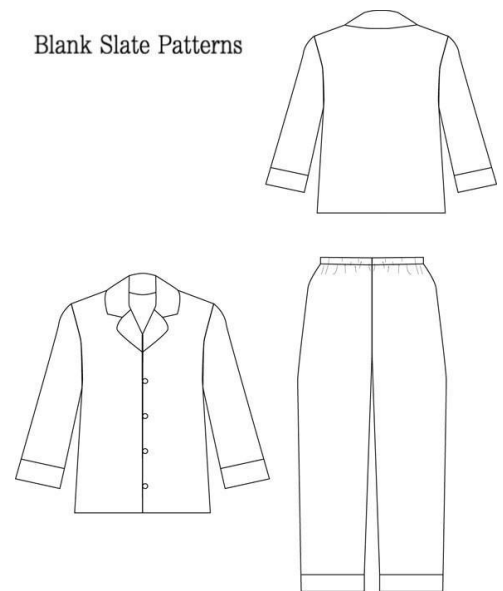
1. **A Call;**
2. **A Warning; and**
3. **An Assurance.**

A Call

17 Join with others in following my example, brothers and sisters, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. The first step in standing firm is to follow an example. If we read only the first part of the verse, it appears that Paul is setting up himself as the ultimate example to follow. Someone could say, “That is extremely egotistical.” But Paul is not holding himself up as the only or supreme example. We are told to take note of the lives of those who live **according to the pattern we gave you**. The “we” refers to people like Timothy and Epaphroditus who appear earlier in this letter. I would be remiss if I did not point out in addition, what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11. **1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.** So ultimately, Jesus is the supreme example we follow. It just so happens we can see what that looks like practically in the lives of ordinary Christians when we look at the lives of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus. The English Standard Version uses the word “imitate” where most translations use the word “example” the first time it appears in verse 17.

In the same verse we then come to the Greek word **typos** which can be translated “pattern, model, example, type, a visual form to be copied. Personally I like the word **pattern**. There is nothing wrong with using example or model, but I personally relate to the word **pattern**. My mother did a lot of sewing. When I was young she made many of my clothes. She stopped doing that as I grew older, but right up until the year before her death, there would be a homemade pair of pajamas for me under the Christmas tree. Now my mother would not just grab some cloth and a pair of scissors and make up my PJ’s out of her head. She always used patterns. Sometimes she used the same pattern for years. She might use different fabric, but the PJ’s always fit because each pair was made following the same pattern.

Blank Slate Patterns





I spent many summers in Muskoka which is famous for the wooden boats that were built there in the first half of the 20th century and some are still being built there today. In the shop of any Muskoka boat builder, you would find patterns for many boat parts. Boat builders like Duke and Seabird in Port Carling, Gravette in Gravenhurst and Ditchburn out of Minnett would build a number of each model of boat. Pictured here is a Duke Playmate.

Hundreds of these boats were built between

1933 and 1954. There were some variations but they all looked pretty much the same, because they were built using the same patterns. This particular model is very special to Susan and I. In 2010, Susan rented one for my birthday present and we spent the weekend touring the Muskoka Lakes with it. It only had a 42HP Buchanan Midget engine, but it carried us around for 2 days in great style. It was a memorable experience.



Verse 17 is a call, not for every Christian to design their own way to stand firm, but to follow the pattern or example already established by committed believers who had gone before them. All of the men spoken of were seeking, not their own interests, but also the interests of others.



We all know that we learn by watching others. You may think that is true for most of us, but not true for very creative people who rise to the top of their profession or craft. I am sure that you are familiar with the name of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Bach has been regarded as one of the greatest musical composers of all time. Orphaned at the age of 10, Bach moved in with his eldest brother Johann Christoph Bach, the organist at a large church. While there, young Bach studied, performed and copied music, even his own brothers, despite being forbidden to do so.

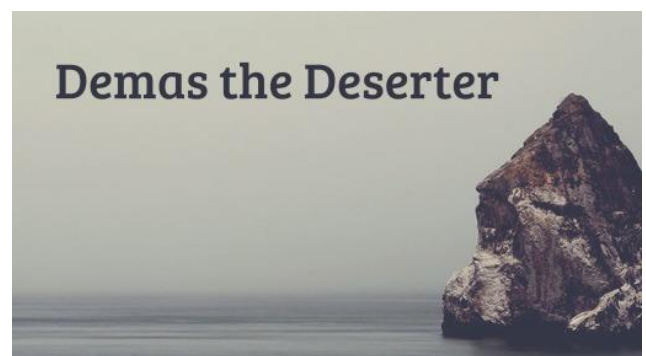
Now here is another name from that period. Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707). Have you ever heard of him? I doubt it, yet he would have been well known to our Ann Savage. In 1750, 20 year old Bach walked 250 miles to listen to some music by Buxtehude who was renowned throughout Germany and was the organist at St. Mary's Church in Lubeck, Germany – one of the most coveted positions in the land. Bach had a one month leave but he stayed for four. During that time, he met Buxtehude, played organ and even copied the master's musical scores which he carried back to his home church. When he returned, Buxtehude's influence on his music was felt immediately and would continue to influence the music that Bach went on to compose. By the way, some of Buxtehude's musical scores only survived because Bach copied them. They became a pattern for some of his greatest works. Bach also got sacked from his job because he played truant for three extra months!

As Christians, we need the pattern of a Paul to build our lives on. Paul's words reverberate to this day. **10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.** We need to hear the resolve of Paul as he says, **13 But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.** We need the pattern of more modern Christian's like Eric Liddell, the Olympic runner who in 1924 put his Christian faith ahead of his Olympic opportunity and eventually died a missionary in China.

In turn our lives become patterns for younger Christians to build their lives upon. Only those who pursue Christ will produce disciples who pursue Christ with the same fervor.

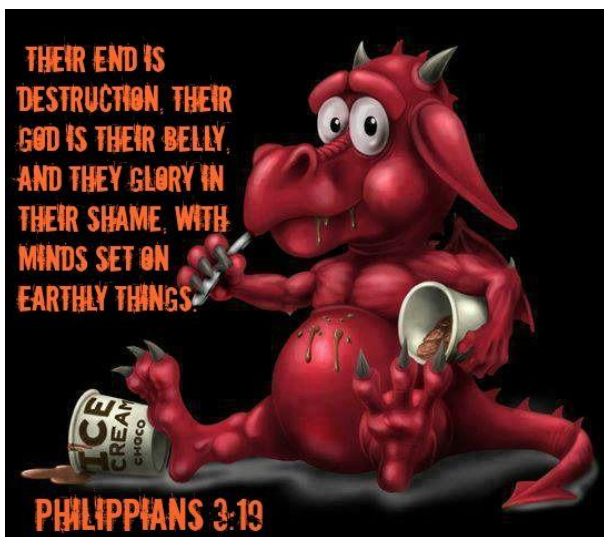
A Warning

Paul now gives us a warning. It is a warning about living one's life as an enemy of Christ. **18 For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.** I don't doubt that Paul shed tears over those who never knew Christ and stood opposed to the Christian gospel, but he shed many more tears over those who once had known Christ but now had fallen away and lived **as enemies of the cross of Christ.** There is a name for such people. They are called **deserters**. We find a number in Scripture who fit in this tragic category. The one that comes most readily to mind for me is a man named Demas. You may never have heard of him. He is only mentioned in three separate verses but he was one of Paul's fellow companions in the work of the gospel. We know this because Paul



says in Philemon 1: **23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, 24 and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.** The first person mentioned was a fellow prisoner with Paul – Epaphras. The next four, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, Paul refers to as **my fellow workers**. Paul obviously thought highly of Demas. In Colossians 4 he is mentioned again. **14 Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas.** His final appearance is in 2 Timothy 4 and to me it is one of the saddest verses found in Scripture. You can hear the brokenness in Paul’s voice. **9 Do your best to come to me soon. 10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.** Maybe you feel that Paul is being overly harsh. There were other times when Paul was harsh when someone left a mission. John Mark was one. Yet in this passage Paul has something very different to say about Mark. **11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.** Is it not possible to extend a little lenience? These men were working in trying and risky conditions. After all, Paul is in prison. Even associating with him could be dangerous.

No, it is the reason for Demas leaving that is all important. He was **in love with this present world**. Here was a man who was not willing to pay the stiff price of discipleship. In 1 John 2 we read: **15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.** Jesus said: **38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.** (Matthew 10)

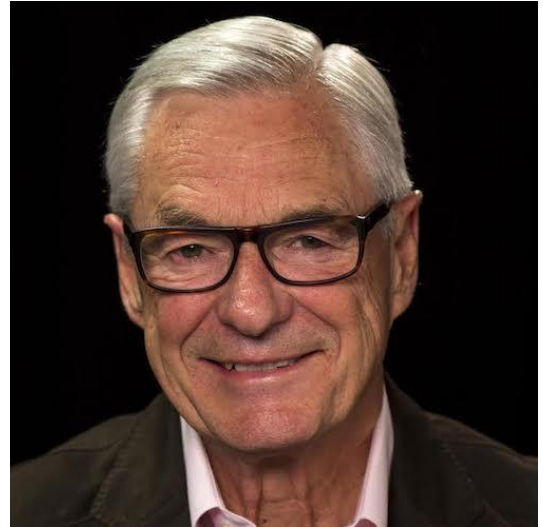


In Philippians 3, Paul has more to say about those who have turned their backs on the Christian life and become enemies of the cross of Christ. The lifestyle of these individuals is a repudiation of the Christian gospel. Everything that we do has consequences. Becoming an enemy of the cross of Christ has eternal consequences. Paul writes: **19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.** Everyone has a destiny and the destiny of those who

reject the way of the cross is destruction. Everyone has a “god”. For enemies of the cross of Christ, their god is their bellies.

This does not just refer to pleasures of the stomach as the above caricature suggests. The god these individuals worship is the god of bodily desires and physical pleasures. It is hard to read a novel, watch a movie, listen to the radio or read a magazine where the god of sensual pleasure is not lifted up and worshipped. Kent Hughes puts it this way.

The pursuit of creature comforts displaces the pursuit of Christ and the cross. Today the professed Christian whose own physical and personal needs come before the Lord (what and where he eats, how and where he lives, and what he spends to satisfy his own pleasures) displace the cross, had better take note because his god has become his belly. Beware of any pleasure that impedes the passionate pursuit of Christ.



Paul sums up this verse by one final observation. **Their mind is set on earthly things.** Jesus referred to such individuals as being like the **seed that fell among thorns.** [22](#) **The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful.** (Matthew 13) It has been my misfortune over the years to have known a number of former Christians who fit in this category. They started out well. They had a zeal for Christ and serving him. Unfortunately, they lost that zeal and today by their lifestyles they declare themselves to be enemies of the cross of Christ.

What is true of individuals can also be true of denominations. Now I find myself watching a denomination that has lost its way and through its rejection of Biblical theology, is well on its way to becoming an enemy of the cross of Christ. By enshrining in church law the acceptance of unbiblical lifestyles, it is encouraging its members to reject the strong moral claims of the gospel of Christ. The majority of the members of the denomination stand in agreement with this chosen direction. From many of the pulpits across the land, ministers now preach another gospel, but certainly not the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There can only be one end to this choice – destruction.

An Assurance

We need Godly man and women after whom to pattern our lives. We need to be warned of the dangers of desertion and how easily we can become enemies of the cross of Christ. But we also need to be assured of the value of staying the course and standing firm in the Lord. [20](#) **But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21](#) who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.**

Standing firm in the Lord is worth it. I have already referred to 1 John 2 where John writes that we are not to love the world. He closes the passage with these words. **17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.** The world that God created is not bad, but worldly ways – life apart from God – certainly is. If you align yourself with that part of humankind that rejects God, then you are aligning yourself with a system that will pass away. However, **whoever does the will of God lives forever.** If you have chosen to follow Jesus, then you have an assurance that the benefits of standing firm for Christ far outweigh the sensual delights this world has to offer. In the short term worldly delights seem to offer so much pleasure, but that pleasure is transient and fleeting.



We have a choice. We can be citizens of this world or citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our allegiance can be to the standards of this world or to the standards of the Kingdom of Heaven. In Philippians 1 Paul writes **27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.** The words underlined are a translation of the one Greek word *politeuesthe*. In our text we read, **20 But our citizenship is in heaven.** The Greek word used in this verse is *politeuma*. Forget trying to

say or even remember these words. Both have the same root – *polis* – which means “city”. We get many English words from this Greek word: police, metropolis, political, politician. What Paul is saying to the Philippians is this. “You may live in the Roman *polis* of Philippi, but you are citizens of the *polis* of heaven. You are not full Roman citizens of Philippi, but you are full citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.” They may have been looked down on by full Roman citizens. They may have been marginalized in terms of this worldly city, but they were not marginalized members of the Kingdom of Heaven. This was a present reality and it was worth standing firm for. This is a present reality for us as Christians and it is ground which we hold. It is worth defending.

Our passage closes with the verse we first looked at. **1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!** Let me close with this prayer adapted from Kent Hughes.

May the Body of Christ provide you with many Godly “patterns” to follow.

May the lives of the enemies of the cross be cause for tears and alarm.
 May the wonders of your citizenship in Heaven dance in your soul.
 And may you **stand firm** as you [14](#) ... **press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called you heavenward in Christ Jesus.**

Hymn:

“By The Rivers of Babylon”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYK9iCRb7S4>

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
 Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion
 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
 Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion

There the wicked
 Carried us away in captivity
 Required from us a song
 Now how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

There the wicked
 Carried us away in captivity
 Requiring of us a song
 Now how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

Let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart
 Be acceptable in Thy sight here tonight
 Let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts
 Be acceptable in Thy sight here tonight

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
 Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion
 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
 Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
 Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion
 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
 Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3)
 We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer.

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspertchoffering@gmail.com Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Offertory Prayer

Generous God, you have given us life,

a place to live in, and people to live with.
 Open our eyes to each other and to all our brothers and sisters,
 especially the poor, the oppressed, the alienated.
 Make us humble enough to help and comfort them,
 so that your love and justice and peace may come to them.
 We make bold to consecrate ourselves and our gifts
 to you and to the service of others,
 through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer

Triune God,
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
 we adore you for your Threeness and Oneness, a holy mystery.
 We are in awe of that the same unfathomable mystery reflected in the
 creation around us. We feel so privileged to live where we do in this lovely
 county and to behold the variety and beauty which we see all around us.
 From the flowers to the trees; from the smallest birds to the variety of
 waterfowl and raptors; from the squirrels and chipmunks to the deer and
 occasional bear; we acknowledge that you, Lord God, have made them all.

When we look at our bodies we observe the marvelous complexity with
 which we are made. Even when we are sick and aware that one system is
 not working the way it should, yet we see that most of the rest of our body
 functions as it should. We say with the Psalmist,

**13 For you created my inmost being;
 you knit me together in my mother's womb.**

**14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
 your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (Psalm 139)**

Triune God, surely the most wonderful thing we experience is the way you
 work in our lives. In light of the infinity of your creation, your care and
 concern for each one of us is unfathomable. When I think of all the billions of
 people that occupy planet earth, I am reminded of the song we sing which
 expresses so well your care for each individual.

I have a Maker, He formed my heart.

Before even time began, my life was in His hand.

Chorus

He knows my name; He knows my every thought.

He sees each tear that falls and hears me when I call.

As we look at our lives, may we be aware of the number of times you
 intervene on our behalf. Even when things don't work out as we had hoped,
 you are still work out all things for our good. We confess that Your ways are
 higher than our ways, and your thoughts greater than our thoughts. We
 acknowledge that we do not always understand your ways, yet we will

continue to offer you prayers for our own needs, but also the needs of others. We pray especially today for Irene Nesbitt whose mother passed away this past week at the age of 104. We pray for Colleen Richardson as she recovers from hip surgery. And we pray for Ruth Dobbie who had a stroke and who will be in hospital for the next six to eight weeks.

Today we especially pray for St. Andrew's and the community of faith that gathers here. We are aware of the marvelous way you have provided for our needs over the last four years of our vacancy. We know that the events of this next week are possibly going to have a huge impact on the future of this church as Mr. Gerry Gallant comes and preaches for a call next weekend. Grant him your powerful presence as he preaches for a call. Grant us discernment to be able to listen to your still small voice that we may know in our hearts if this is a true gospel call and Gerry the man of your choosing for this congregation.

We pray this in the strong name of the Trinity,
by invocation of the same,
the Three in One, the One in Three,
of whom all nature has creation,
eternal Father, Spirit, and Word,
from eternity to eternity. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: "How Firm A Foundation", Sovereign Grace Music
(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTqRiP2w0_8

1. How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word
What more can He say than to you He hath said
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled
2. Fear not I am with thee O be not dismayed
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid
I'll strengthen thee help thee
And cause thee to stand
Upheld by My righteous omnipotent hand
3. When through the deep waters I call thee to go
The rivers of grief shall not thee overflow
For I will be with you your trouble to bless
And sanctify to you the deepest distress
4. When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie
My grace all-sufficient shall be your supply
The flames shall not hurt thee I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine

5. The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
I will not I will not desert to its foes
That soul though all hell should endeavor to shake
I'll never no never no never forsake

Benediction

Go out and in all of life, worship the Lord.
Entrust yourself to the winds of God's Spirit;
put to death selfish desires,
and offer yourself for God's mission in the world.

And may God give strength to you and to all;
May Christ Jesus bless you with peace;
And may the Holy Spirit, whispering within your hearts,
give you assurance that you are God's children.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.