



Introduction: Pride Month - A Thought Experiment

What ideas are claimed to be true? What actions are portrayed as good? What things are celebrated as beautiful?

Main Point: In the face of opposition, we are called to _____, holding to the truth of Scripture and encouraging one another in the faith.

How Will We Stand Firm?

Opposition & Provision

Eph. 6:11b-12—¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

1 Pet. 5:8-9—Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

Gal. 1:3-4a—³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father

Observations About Our Opposition:

1. Our opposition has an organized _____ that they seek to accomplish in the world.
⇒ On the societal level, they work through influence, seeking to _____ or _____ that which is true, good, and beautiful.
2. Our opposition is always _____, even if we remain unaware.
⇒ On an individual level, the goal is to _____ or _____ so that we become isolated from our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Key Point: Our opposition has been largely successful because evil is _____ to our sinful minds and hearts.

“It looked at Ransom in silence and at last began to smile. We have all often spoken...of a devilish smile. Now he realized that he had never taken the words seriously. The smile was not bitter, nor raging, nor, in an ordinary sense, sinister; it was not even mocking. It seemed to summon Ransom, with horrible naivete of welcome, into the world of its own pleasures, as if all men were at one in those pleasures, as if they were the most natural thing in the world and no dispute could ever have occurred about them...It did not defy goodness, it ignored it to the point of annihilation. Ransom perceived that he had never before seen anything but half-hearted and uneasy attempts at evil. This creature was wholehearted. The extremity of its evil had passed beyond all struggle into some state which bore a horrible similarity to innocence.” —C.S. Lewis, *Perelandra*

Observations About God’s Provision:

1. God has plans and _____ that He is unfolding in the world.
⇒ In Christ, we continue to serve God _____ the world even if we are no longer _____ the world.
2. God Himself is the source of our _____ to stand firm.
⇒ God’s truth is revealed in a general way through His _____.

Rom. 1:19-20—¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Foundational Truths

(1) God is the _____ and we are His _____

(2) God made us _____ and _____

(3) God has given _____ as the context in which children are to be both conceived and reared.

⇒ God's truth is revealed in a special way through _____.

2 Tim. 3:16-17—¹⁶ *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

Foundational Truths

(1) *All of the words of Scripture originate with God (_____) and are trustworthy (_____)*

(2) *Scripture tells us of our inherent _____ as God's image-bearers.*

(3) *Scripture tells us of our _____ as Christian men and women.*

(4) *Scripture instructs us about God's purposes for marriage and _____.*

Key Point: God's revelation tells us what is _____, exhorts of us what is _____, and provides for us what is _____.

"General revelation is not enough to save us. We cannot know God savingly by means of personal experience or human reason, We need God's Word to tell us how to live, who Christ is, and how to be saved."—Kevin DeYoung

Challenges to the Truth

1. Expressive Individualism

"Expressive individualism assumes the authority of inner feelings in what it means to be an individual, which has a number of implications: To be truly oneself requires behaving outwardly in a manner consistent with those inner feelings...outward behavior that does not match inner feelings indicates that the outward, social self is not a true reflection of the real, inward self... Happiness and human flourishing tend to be identified with the individual's inner sense of psychological well-being or peace."
—Carl Trueman

2 Cor. 4:16-18—¹⁶ *Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.* ¹⁷ *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.* ¹⁸ *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

"We do not know ourselves by focusing on ourselves; we know ourselves by focusing on God, for we are created to display Him. In this sense, all of Christian theology has been about 'identity', but it is deeply Christian that Christians have not thought of it that way. Christianity has the answers to identity-obsession, but we will not find them by indulging in it ourselves. It is of our very essence to direct our minds and hearts towards God."—Matthew P.W. Roberts, *Pride*

2. Increased Cultural Pressure

"In our time, we do not have an all-powerful state forcing this on us. This dictatorship is far more subtle. Under soft totalitarianism, the media, academia, corporate America, and other institutions are practicing Newspeak and compelling the rest of us to engage in doublethink every day...*The woman standing in front of you is to be called "he."* *Diversity and inclusion means excluding those who object to ideological uniformity. Equity means treating persons unequally, regardless of their skills and achievements, to achieve an ideologically correct result...* Many Christians will see through these lies today but will choose not to speak up. Their silence will not save them and will instead corrode them..." —Rod Dreher, *Live Not By Lies*

1 Pet. 3:14-15—¹⁴ *But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,* ¹⁵ *but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,*

"It should be the Christian's natural state to feel that the times are out of joint and that we do not truly belong here. Yet, lamentation can too often become just another form of worldliness, and polemic simply a means of making ourselves feel righteous. There is an odd masochistic pleasure in always decrying the times and the customs of the day, and in that sense, lamentation and polemic always run the risk of being less prophetic and more therapeutic in their motivation and effect."

—Carl Trueman, *The Rise & Triumph of the Modern Self*

Concluding Thought

We are never alone in this fight because we are exhorted to stand firm _____ !

Phil. 1:27—*Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel*

2 Thess. 2:13-16—¹³ *But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.* ¹⁴ *To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* ¹⁵ *So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*