

**Today's Message: "A New Year's Wish"**

<sup>7</sup> So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. (Philippians 1:7, NLT)

<sup>15</sup> 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, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. (1 Peter 3:15-16, ESV)

<sup>13</sup> But the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. (Isaiah 8:13, ESV)

<sup>32</sup> So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, <sup>33</sup> but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 10:33, ESV)

**Greek:** *apologia* "defense" or "testimony"

"Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me."  
**Martin Luther (1521)**

*A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*  
(Proverbs 15:1, ESV)

"A New Year's Wish"

Dr. Jim Platt

Dec. 31 & Jan. 1

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**Small Group or Personal Reflection Questions:**

1. Discuss ways in which you might be able to identify with Paul's experience of imprisonment described in Philippians 1:7.
2. What does it mean to you that "in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy" and what practical outworkings should that have on your life?
3. During the sermon, we considered the application of the Greek word *apologia*. In what ways are we called to live lives as a "testimony/response" to the Gospel? Cf., Also Philippians 1:7.
4. Do you agree with the assessment that all too many Christians are not particularly capable of offering a response to a challenge to their faith? Discuss this. What is the answer to this problem within the Christian faith?
5. We are all called to make a defense based upon a spirit of gentleness and respect. How does this practically impact a reasons for faith interchange?
6. What would your response be to one who asks you for the reason for the hope that is in you?

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