

The Book of Philippians

Lesson 11

Study Notes

The Joy of Maturity

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Text: Philippians 3: 16-21.

Introduction: I am sure you have heard the expression do as I say and not as I do. Paul so lived his life for Christ he had no problem with telling the Philippian believers to follow his _____. The apostle here again places himself before his readers as an example; become imitators, of me brethren, and watch diligently those walking thus as you have us as types to follow. All true Christians will be glad to be imitators of the apostle, to follow his example. The more advanced Christians are, they are in turn patterns for the _____ to model after.

Philippians 3:16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

We need to continue in the same straight path in which we have been walking, guided by the same divine truths and the unchanging principles of _____. We need to strive to go _____ in our walk with the Lord.

I. The Example.

Philippians 3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

That is, live as I do. A minister of the gospel, a parent, or a Christian of any age or condition, ought so to live that he can refer to his own example, and exhort others to imitate the course of life which he had led. Paul could do this without ostentation or impropriety. They knew that he lived so as to be a _____ example for others; and he knew that they would feel that his life had been such that there would be no impropriety in his referring to it in this manner. Paul is asking them to _____ his good example. Paul lived and preached Christ; and it was on this basis he wanted the Philippians to imitate him. They would have other good examples to follow like that of _____ and Epaphroditus.

II. The Enemies.

Philippians 3:18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

When Paul preached in Philippi. He was not afraid to speak of church members when they did wrong, and to warn others not to imitate their example. He did not attempt to _____ or _____ guilt because it was in the church, or to apologize for the defects and errors of those who professed to be Christians.

Paul's message was one of weeping; this is the true spirit with which to speak of the errors and faults of Christians. It is not to go and blazon their inconsistencies abroad. It is not to find _____ in the fact that they are inconsistent. We should rather speak of the fact with tears; for, if there is anything that should make us weep, it is, that there are those in the church who are hypocrites, or who dishonor their profession, those who may have been _____ by the enemy.

A. The enemies of the cross of Christ:

The Judaizers were the "enemies of the cross of Christ" in that they added the _____ to the work of redemption that Christ wrought on the cross. Paul is not talking about erring Christians, but non-Christians. He referred to the anti-legalist, those who were a _____ unto themselves. They confessed Christ with their _____, but denied Christ with their _____. They taught and practiced loose living; they confused liberty with license. They taught freedom from sin, but really meant _____ to sin. They loved the world and lived after the flesh.

B. The end of the enemies of the cross of Christ.

Philippians 3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

The word translated "destruction" is sometimes translated "_____." Judas is referred to as the "son of perdition" and we know how his life ended. Paul states a plain, terrible fact that their end is _____ and _____ and eternal ruin from the presence of the Lord.

2Thessalonians 1:8-9 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

"Whose God is their belly" They worship _____; they live for self-indulgence, for comfort and convenience.

"Whose glory is in their shame" they glory in _____. They are proud of what they should be ashamed.

"Who mind earthly things" they are living for this world; they are occupied with the material, not the spiritual; with the earthly not the _____.

III. The Excitement.

Philippians 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

A. Our conversation.

The Greek word used here for "conversation" is _____ any other place in the entire New Testament. It pertains to life as a citizen, and the full meaning of the Greek is "any public measure, administration of state, the manner in which the affairs of state are administered. The church is really a _____ of heaven: our names are enrolled in heaven; we are under heaven's government; we share heaven's glory; we enjoy heaven's _____.

B. Our looking for the Savior.

True believers wait with eager expectation for the Second Coming of Christ. This expectancy should spur us on to _____ and _____ living. Christians of the first century anticipated that the Lord's second coming would be in their lifetime.

We should the more be expecting Him when we consider the signs of the times we are experiencing.

We have seen the rebirth of Israel, the rise of Russia and China; the coming together of the nations of Europe in a collective consciousness not known since the fall of the Roman empire; the spread of atheism and humanism; a permissive society; the widespread use of illegal drugs; the toleration of pornography and perversion; the increasing fascination of the occult; the spread of false religion; apostasy in the church; widespread famines; emergence of deadly diseases resistant to all known drugs; an increase in earthquakes; terrorism; and persecution of Christians.

C. Our change that is to come.

Philippians 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

These old earthly bodies are subject to disease, death and decay. They are not suited for the next world so there is a necessity of change. Our vile body also means "our body of _____" we are humbled by this body's needs and limitations.

We will be given a body fashioned like the body of Christ. The Greek reads, "the body of _____," meaning the body he now has, in His glorified state, seated at the right hand of God the Father.

I Corinthians 15 gives us good description of the change that is going to take place.

1Corinthians 15:42-44 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1Corinthians 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

D. Our guarantee.

"According to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

To work such a change in these vile bodies demands _____ that only the Almighty God has. He can mold the body as well as the mind and heart into His own image. That we should live at all is a miracle. That we should live again is an even greater miracle. The God who made us once can just as easily make us again.

Unbelief looks at the corpse; faith looks at the Creator. Unbelief sees a dead body in a coffin; faith sees a risen, triumphant, omnipotent Christ. He is the unconditional guarantee of our belief.

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.