

Following the Right Example

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[0:00] Philippians 3, begin in verse 10 and read through the end of the chapter.! Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it, but one thing I do, forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

All of us who are mature should take such a view of things, and if on some point you think differently, that God too will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. For as I have often told you before and now say again, even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Their destiny is destruction, their God is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 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.

How long has it been since you've watched a little girl playing house? There's the dolls all propped up in the chairs at the table, and the teacups and plates all in place, and she's just having a great time.

[1:59] How does she know how to do that? Well, she saw her mommy do it that way once, and she just quite naturally imitates her mother.

I even remember once seeing a certain young boy lining up the chairs and preaching at the chairs. You see, we're an awful lot like that little boy and little girl.

We all are imitators. Young people, as independent as you might like to think of yourselves, you too are imitators.

Why do you wear your hair the way you do? Why do you wear the designer clothes that you wear? Because you've learned, you've seen others, and it looked good on them, and you imitated. You learned very early what was in and what's out, and how to dress like those that are in.

Even in the way you talk, you're an imitator. Hey. Hey. Hey. Where did we get that? You heard somebody say that.

[2:59] Hey. And you imitated them. It used to be that things were groovy. Remember that? And then they were cool. And then they were awesome.

And now I think they're sweet. And tomorrow there'll be something else. But these words, they come up into the common parlance, and people pick them up and use them almost unthinkingly. Because we're imitators, every one of us. Advertisers know that and try to make it work to their profit. See this young lady.

Doesn't she look good in this dress? Wouldn't you look nice in this dress? You need this dress. Buy this dress. Wouldn't you look good driving this car?

And so, imitation is a powerful principle. Now we not only imitate each other in words and in dress and cars and playing house, but in the very essence of how we live our lives.

[4:01] Every aspect of our lives. The things we value. The things we pursue. The stakes are high. And the Apostle Paul is aware of this power of imitation and therefore of the importance of following the right examples.

The right patterns. Because not all patterns and not all examples are worth following. Some are actually dangerous to follow. He'll even tell us of some examples that are damning to follow. And so, in this passage, Paul is urging the saints at Philippi to follow his example. And not the example of those who are heading for destruction.

Jesus said it. There's a broad road and there's many people on it. And if you're going to follow the example of those people, you're going to end up in destruction. Nothing's more common than following the example of those on the broad road to destruction.

Paul's going to warn us against following dangerous examples. So, there's two questions that you need to keep asking yourself this morning.

[5:11] Number one, what example am I following? And two, what example am I setting? Because the truth is not only that I am following others' examples, but I am also leading others who are following my example.

Parents, is it not one of the most humbling things about parenting to remember and to realize that your children are imitating you? And that they imitate our faults far more easily than they imitate any of our strengths.

And it's a sober call to examine what kind of example am I setting? As well as the question, what kind of examples am I following? So, here in verse 17 of Philippians chapter 3, the Apostle Paul says, Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

We want to look at this command and see three things about it. And it is a command. It's the imperative mood. Follow my example. That's the first thing we see. Follow my example.

The pattern we gave you. This is a command Paul gives to many of the churches. We can read in 1 Corinthians 4, where he says, Imitate me.

[6:35] Imitate my way of life in Christ Jesus. And right away, someone says, That sounds egotistical. What is Paul doing setting himself up as the model, the pattern, the example for others to follow?

Well, we need to understand what he means when he says, Follow my example. Consider what he says in 1 Corinthians 11.1, if you would understand the heart of this man.

He says there, Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ. Imitate me as I imitate Christ. There's no question in the apostle's mind that Jesus Christ is the ultimate example. He would say, I'm just a copy of him. And a very imperfect one at that, he's told us in this very chapter.

It's him we are following. And apart from him, there's nothing good in me to imitate. It's only insofar as Christ is being formed in me, Galatians 4.19, That there's anything good in me to follow.

[7:45] Christ, or Paul has already set Christ before them as the pattern in chapter 2 and verse 5. It's our memory verse for this week. Say it with me. Where he says, Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

You see? Follow his example. Imitate Jesus. Not only in your actions, but in your very attitudes.

In your humility. Imitate him. So Christ is the ultimate pattern. But it's interesting that Paul doesn't stop there. Later on in the chapter, He holds up Timothy and his example, doesn't he?

I know a man like him, Who naturally cares for your state. Everybody seeks their own interests. Not Timothy. Be like him. Epaphroditus. Look what he's done. And so, Christ, yes.

But also Timothy. Epaphroditus. And here he says, Follow my example. Because those who belong to Christ are becoming more and more like Him. From one stage of glory to another, They are being transformed by the Spirit of God into His very likeness.

[8:57] They're being recreated in the image of God. Colossians 3.10. And that means then that there is something of Jesus Christ to be seen in every Christian that is to be imitated.

Something to be copied. Something to be copied. To be followed as an example. Follow my example, Paul commands.

He's an apostle. He's sent by Christ. Not only to speak words from Christ, But to give an example of what those words mean.

By His very life. Aren't examples helpful to us in all aspects of life? Where would we be without examples? Kids, you might be coming to a new chapter in math.

And there is being explained to you some new concept in math that you've never seen before. And you're puzzled. You're confused. And then they give two or three examples.

[9:56] And you're able to follow them through. And you say, Well, now I see. I understand now what they were explaining. And it's that way with the scriptures also.

At times we come and we hear precepts and principles and commands of God's word. And we wonder, Well, what does it mean to me?

And then an example is given to us. A living example. And it brings that principle right down into my world. And now I see. And now I understand what it means.

When the scriptures say such and such. Well, every preacher's life is to be an example of his preaching. And every parent's life is to be an example of their instruction.

And every Christian's life is to be an example of their profession of faith. And so Paul can write to the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 3 and say, For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example.

[11:00] We were not idle when we were with you. Nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.

And we did this not because we do not have the right to such help. But we did it in order to make ourselves a model. A pattern for you to follow.

Follow my example. Now in this place in scripture, when Paul says that, he's referring to the example that he's just spoken of from verses 7 through 16.

He's just given a testimony of his own personal experience. And he's been saying to them what he has done and what he is doing. And now he says to us and he says to them, you do what I'm doing. Be like me in this. Don't put any confidence in the flesh. Renounce all self-righteousness. All self-help religion. Be done with it.

[12:02] Consider everything a loss for the excellency, the greater excellency of the knowledge of Christ. And being found in him. Not having a righteousness of your own that comes from keeping the law.

But a righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. The righteousness of God that is by faith alone. Follow my example in this, he says. I want to know Christ.

I want to know the power of his resurrection in my life. I want to know the fellowship of his sufferings. I want to be made more like him. I want to attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Follow me in this. Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. Pressing on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called you heavenward.

Come on, follow me. Follow my example in this. Be done with all laziness. Be done with all self-satisfied complacency. Run with me. Come on, follow me. There's more of Christ to know.

[13:06] There's greater likeness to him to be reached in this life. So let this be the one thing that characterizes you in every aspect of your life. To be like Jesus. This my song.

In the home and in the throng. To be like Jesus all day long. I would be like Jesus. But Paul, you're an apostle. You're a missionary.

And I'm just a mother. Or I'm just a school teacher. Or I'm just a factory worker. Or I'm just an accountant. Doesn't matter. The one pattern fits all callings and situations in life.

Be like Jesus. Press on. To know him. To be like him. And be content with nothing short of perfect likeness to him.

I will be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. Paul is not egotistical here. He's running after Christ.

[14:05] And he's told us he's not doing so perfectly yet. He's not arrived. He wants more. And he wants us to run along with him. So here's the example to follow.

Here's an example. Follow Paul. Because he's running after Jesus. But not just follow me. And follow my example.

Secondly, he says. Follow those who follow my example. First thing we've noticed of the command. Follow my example. But he says secondly. It's not just my example.

I want you to follow those who follow my example. Notice how he says it in the end of verse 17.

Take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

Take note of them. Mark them. Observe them. Follow them as well. Who? Those who live according to the pattern we gave you. It's not just me that's to be followed. It's all those who are following me.

[15:03] And following that pattern of Jesus Christ that we set before you. You see, Paul couldn't always be there with them. They wouldn't always be able to look at Paul and see how Paul did things.

How does Paul do family? How does Paul do finances? No, but there were others who were following the apostolic pattern of Paul who was following Christ that were right there in the

congregation of Philippi.

And they were to follow them too. And notice here at the end of verse 17 that the example is also called a pattern.

Follow those who follow this pattern that I delivered to you. The example, the pattern. My mother used to make her own dresses and dresses for my sister.

My sisters. And she would lay out the material on the table. And then she would take the pattern out of the little envelope and unfold it and spread it out flatly on that material.

[16:03] And then she would pin it all around the edges. And then take the scissors and cut off whatever material was hanging outside of the pattern. And she would work her way all the way around the pattern.

At the end of that time she could unpin the pattern from the material. And there was a match. You had a piece of material that looked in just the same size and shape as the pattern itself.

Jesus Christ is the ultimate pattern. And He is laid down over our lives. And we must have cut off everything that is outside of the pattern of Christ in our lives.

And folks, you're finding, aren't you, that there's some material that is awfully hard to cut. In fact, nothing but the scissors of the Holy Spirit can cut it. If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you will live.

Well, Paul wasn't the only one following the pattern of Christ. There were many right there in Philippi. And Paul says, follow them too. All who are following after the pattern that we delivered to you. The pattern of Christ Jesus.

[17:10] Folks, that means that we need to look around us in this church. There's others who are following the pattern of Christ.

We need to mark them, the Scripture says. To observe them. Take note of them. And then follow them. Learn from others how to become more like Jesus Christ.

And then the third thing we're told about this command is that it's something that we're to do together. Not just in isolation by ourselves, but we're to do it together. The last almost infers that, doesn't it? If we're following the example of Christ that we see in others.

But this very beginning of verse 17. Join with others in following my example. He's calling on the whole church at Philippi to link arms in following the Apostle Paul.

Remember one of the problems at Philippi was unity, wasn't it? That's why Paul's continually hammering the theme of unity. Amazing how following the same example goes a long way toward uniting people.

[18:18] If we're all following the same example, then there's a certain sameness about us. The very sameness that he commanded in chapter 2 and verse 2.

When he tells us to be of the same mind. Think the same things. To be of the same love. To be of the same spirit. To be of the same purpose. How is that possible? Well, it's possible as we're all following the same pattern.

And as we're doing that together, there will be this unity. This glorious unity. unity. That we'll have. As we have this same mind.

Same love. Same spirit and purpose. That's why when you meet people from half a world away. Brothers and sisters in Christ. Many things different about them. But you have this glorious sameness. About you.

The same pursuits. And purposes. And reasons to live. And rules for the Christian life. And all this. Well, should we be surprised? We're all following the same pattern. The pattern of Christ.

[19:18] Laid down in apostolic teaching. In our Bibles. So follow such examples.

And do it together. That you might be united. In Jesus Christ. So there's the safe example to follow. Follow those who are following the pattern of Christ Jesus.

Now before we go on to see those that you're not to follow. I want to make a plea for the fact that we need Christ-like examples today.

Wanted. Christ-like examples. We need them in the home. We need them in the church. We need them in the schools. We need them in the workplace. We need them in this world in every place. Christ-like examples.

Truth needs to be preached. It needs to be proclaimed. God has chosen the proclamation of the truth from our mouths. We must be proclaiming the truth. But right alongside it. The Bible calls on us to live that truth.

[20:17] And to show by our lives what that truth means. There are children. Growing up in your home. Parents. That need to know what it means.

For a husband to love his wife as Christ loved the church. There are little girls that need to see an example. What it looks like for a woman, a wife, to submit to her husband.

And everything is unto the Lord. There are siblings that need to see what it means to honor father and mother. And to obey your parents. Need to know what it is to manage your home.

To bring up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. What does it mean to work wholeheartedly as unto the Lord? They need these examples.

Lived out before them. They and others need to see what faithful churchmanship looks like. What does it mean to be a member of a church? What would that look like to be a faithful man or woman in the body of Christ?

[21:23] In a local church. What does it mean to be devoted to prayer? What does it mean to be devoted to the preaching of the word? To fellowship? To the breaking of bread?

What does it look like to keep the Lord's day holy? What does it mean to be holy in all you do? How do you witness? How do you tell others of Christ?

How do you confess your sins when you've wronged another? They need not only to hear. They need to see. These living examples before them.

What would it mean to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness? There's a thousand other things we could say. The point is. We need examples. Christ-like examples.

Needing to be observed. Seen. Taken note of. Oh for more examples after the pattern of Christ. Christ. And young person. You don't have to be old in order to be an example.

[22:23] You don't have to be old to be an example such as Paul is speaking of here. Not at all. You be an example of what it means for an eight-year-old girl. To serve Jesus Christ.

You be an example of that. You be an example to your brothers and sisters of what it means to obey your parents. And to submit to authority in your life. You can be an example of that.

Paul writes to a young preacher in the faith. Timothy. And he says in chapter 4 and verse 12 of his first letter. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young.

But set an example for the believers in speech. In life. In love. In faith. And in purity.

And if I understand the word of God alright. The age does not come into play here. You don't have to be old to be an example. You may be a younger man. A younger woman.

[23:23] And still set an example for people who are older than you. In speech. In love. In life. In faith.

And in purity. Young people. I challenge you. To be an example. To this body. Of what it means to not be conformed to this world.

But to be conformed to Jesus Christ. May God give us a rising generation. Of youth. Who will be an example.

Who will outstrip us. Who will go farther than us. In becoming like Jesus. In all aspects of life. That your lives might become a spur.

In our old hides. And excite us. To greater likeness. To Jesus. What example am I setting for others?

[24:19] What example. Am I following? What are you following? Now we need to be very careful. About the kind of examples we choose. And I would challenge. Especially some of you young people. To ask this question.

Answer it today. Before God. What examples am I following? In my life. Who am I following? You're following someone. You're following some people. Who are you following?

We need to be very cautious. Not all are safe guides. And so Paul urgently commands them. To follow him. To follow all who live. According to the pattern. That Christ has given.

The pattern of Christ given. Because he goes on to say. That not all live this way. Not all professing Christians. Even live this way. According to the pattern of Christ.

The apostolic example. Of Paul and others. Who followed him. There's another pattern. That people are following. Even professing Christians. Are following it. It's a pattern of worldliness.

[25:13] And sensuality. It's a pattern of living for the senses. Living for this world. As I studied this this week. I am troubled. By all the different versions of Christianity.

That abound in the world today. Now. We would claim to the. To be the truth. What is called. Reformed. Christianity. And we take very seriously.

Sin. And holiness. How can you. When our God is holy. And our Christ. Died for sin. And the Holy Spirit is holy. And lives in us to make us holy.

How can you not. Take sin seriously. But folks. There. There are other versions of Christianity. Being peddled out there. That don't take sin seriously. And it's troubling.

I don't say this to boast in ourselves. We have miles to go. In. In. In. Fleshing out. What holiness to the Lord looks like. In all. That we do. But I am troubled.

[26:12] By the number of professing Christians. Who have no real interest. In living holy lives. And they can find many a church. And many a preacher.

Who will make them comfortable. Not pursuing holiness. Will make them comfortable. In. Their sin. There are many such examples.

To follow. And Paul. Now. Warns them. Of them. It was troubling Paul. In his day. And so he sounds a warning. Against dangerous examples.

Found in the professing church of Christ. Verse 18. For as I have often told you before. And now say it. Again. With tears. Many live as enemies.

Of the cross. Of Christ. Who are these bad examples? Who are these enemies. Of the cross of Christ. That he warns against. Who are these.

[27:08] Examples to run from. Not to follow. Well he warned them earlier. In the chapter. Didn't he? At the very beginning. Of the Judaizers. The. They were enemies of Christ. They added something.

To Christ. It was Christ. Plus circumcision. Christ. Plus my own law keeping. In order to make myself. Right before God. They're dogs. He says. They are. They are not faithful.

Followers of Christ. They're not to be followed. But now he's warning. Against other enemies. Of the cross of Christ. Not the Judaizers. In mind. Here. But rather.

The libertarianisms. The loose livers. The antinomians. We're free from the law. They would say. And interpret that to mean. That we don't have to obey.

The moral categories of the law. We don't have to obey. The commandments anymore. We're free from the law. And then they use their freedom. To indulge the sinful nature. They turned liberty.

[28:03] In Christ. Into a license. For sin. As Paul warns against. In Galatians. They were living loose. Moral lives. All the while. Posing as Christians.

Professing to be Christians. Moving in Christian circles. Deceiving themselves. And others. Jude warned against them. In verse 4. Verse 14.

I believe it is. For certain men. Whose condemnation. Was written about long ago. Have secretly. Slipped in among you. They are godless men. Who change the grace.

Of our God. Into a license. For immorality. That's the mark of them. God is so gracious. As to forgive all my sins. And they make it a license.

For sin then. I can sin. I don't have to worry. About holiness. I'm forgiven. All my sins forgiven. So I can sin. Enemies. Of the cross.

[28:57] Of Christ. Paul puts the right label. On them. They call themselves. Christian. Paul calls them. Enemies. I doubt. That any of them. Would have put that label. On themselves. I'm an enemy.

Of the cross of Christ. They're Christians. They said. And no doubt. They preach. The cross of Christ. That's the very center. Of Christianity. But by their sinful lives.

They contradicted. The very message. Of the cross. Of Christ. For the message. Of the cross. Is salvation. From sin. It's Christ. Dying. For our sins.

To bring us. To God. That we might live. Unto righteousness. By whose stripes. We were healed. That's the message. And their lives. Totally contradicted.

The cross. Their enemies. The spirit of the cross. Is self-denial. The spirit of their lives. Was self-indulgence. There's no. Comparison. Enemies.

[29:56] Of the cross. Of Christ. And Paul says. There were many of them. Not a few. You know. If there's just one. Of these loose cannon. Running around. Then.

You say. Okay. Doesn't. It's not that big of a threat. But. But when there are many. Sounding that message. And living that way. I'm a Christian. I'm a Christian.

And yet. They. Live. Contrary. To the commands. Of Jesus. It can be confusing. And so. Paul says. These are dangerous. People.

They are dangerous. Examples. And he says. I've often warned you. And I'm going to do it again. Paul repeats the warning. It's safe for you. That I repeat the warning. He's saying. And it's an emotional warning. He can't even warn. Without tears. Coming to his eyes. To see that. The holy truths. Of God. So twisted.

[30 : 51] And distorted. Giving such a terrible name. To the cross of Christ. And true Christianity. It brought tears. To his eyes. To think of some of the saints. At Philippi. Being seduced.

By these bad examples. It's with tears. That he warns them. And then he gives. Four telling. Verbal snapshots.

It's like he took. One of these cameras. And went. And took a picture. And another picture. And another picture. And another picture. Of these. Bad examples. And then he has them. Processed. And he sets them. Before us here. Take a look. At the wrong examples. To follow. In life. Verse 19. Their destiny. Is destruction. Their God.

Is their stomach. Their glory. Is in their shame. Their mind. Is on earthly things. Let's look at them. One at a time. The first picture. Their destiny.

[31 : 46] Is destruction. I think it's important. For us to see. That the very first thing. He wants us to know. About these bad examples. Are their end. They all claim.

To be going to heaven. But Paul shows us. That their end. Is really destruction. Destruction. Their destiny. Is hell. They're not going to heaven.

As they claim. Destruction. Is not annihilation. Friends. It's utter ruin. It's everlasting. Destruction. Of being shut out. From the presence. Of the Lord. Second Thessalonians.

One. Nine. It's going away. Into everlasting punishment. Matthew 25. Forty six. Young people. Before. You ever start. Following. Someone's example.

Find out. Where they're going. Find out. What their destination is. Before you ever. Get in a car. With someone. You ought to know. Where they're going. That's just common sense. But before you ever. Follow the example. Of another.

[32 : 40] You must know. What is their. Ultimate. Destination. Destruction. Is it heaven. As they claim. Or is it hell. If you don't want to come. To everlasting destruction.

Then don't follow. The example. Of those. Who are headed there. That's the very first thing. Paul says about them. Now he shows them. In action. Different action shots. In their lives. The second thing. He says about them.

Is their God. Is their stomach. Their God. Is their belly. That is. They're. They've given themselves. Over. To their physical. Appetites. They are serving.

Their own. Physical senses. They live. To satisfy. Their desires. For good feelings. Sensual feelings. Of pleasures.

Such desires. Are not. Properly expressed. In their proper channels. They're just given. Full reign to. They serve them.

[33 : 37] As their God. Their God. Is their stomach. They give. God like status. To their appetites. Whatever they. How do we treat God. Whatever you say. I will do. Is that not the way.

We treat our God. And they treat. Their appetites. Whatever you want. We will give you. That's the first mark. And there's different ways. Of making their appetites. Their God.

Most obvious. To the description. Is gluttony. Their God. Is their belly. Food for the stomach. And the stomach. For food. Is their motto. I exist.

To satisfy. The cravings. Of my gut. Whatever it wants. It gets. Regardless. Of my health. These pleasures.

Are not to be denied. Drunkenness. Is another way. Why do people. Drink too much alcohol. Because it gives them. Certain feelings. Doesn't it? For the moment. It helps them. To feel better.

[34 : 30] About life. And all their problems. What is that? That's just pure. Raw. Sensuality. Living for. For those good feelings. That it gives.

Sexual immorality. Is another way. People making gods. Out of their sexual appetites. And they do not bridle them. But they just lay. The reins of the neck. On the.

The lust of their hearts. And let it run. Wherever it would lead. Drugs. All sorts of drugs. Today. That will give. Pleasurable feelings.

Aren't there? Oh. They're. They're blowing their minds. They're ruining their lives. Never mind that. Does it make me feel good now? Then give it to me. That's the mark. Of the wrong example.

To follow. Their end is destruction. Their God. Is their stomach. And I simply stop there. Because we don't have more time. But you can give in. To all sorts of appetites.

[35 : 26] And make them your God. Just to give you good feelings. Sensuality. The mark. Of the enemies. Of the cross. The cross. Third. Their glory.

Is in their shame. That is to say. They brag about things. That they should be ashamed. To admit. If you want to learn something.

About men. You can take an anthropology course. And study. For four hour credits. Or you can go to a waiting room.

You might be in an airport. A doctor's office. A discount tire place. And you're sitting there. And you're just observing people. You've got a two hour wait.

And so you've got your book. And you watch people come and go. And here's a red headed Irishman. Comes in. He's talking with his wife. About the last NASCAR event they attended.

[36 : 20] How much he was able to put down. And he boasted about how. An Irishman would never be beat by a German. In drinking.

His glory. His glory. His glory. Is in his shame. Boasting about things. He ought to blush about. Is that not the culture we live in?

Guys. In the locker room. Boasting about their sexual exploits. Of the weekend. Young ladies. Bragging about how sexy they look. In their new outfit.

Women. Boasting about. Whose husband they seduce. Used. Their glory. Is in their shame. People bragging about.

How much they stole. And got away with. And all these ways. We see the. The heart of these people. Their glory. Is in their shame.

[37 : 22] And lastly. Their mind. Is on earthly things. Here's the fourth snapshot. Their mind. Oh the mind. It's a telling thing. It tells all. What does the mind.

Keep running back to. Like the chickens. That come home to roost. The mind keeps coming back. To what we value most. What. What is our treasure. The mind keeps coming back to it. Oh for a while. We've got to be. Doing our job.

And then it comes back to it. And then for a while. We've got to sit in church. But then it comes back to it. What is it? Where's your mind? What's it set on? It's a telling thing.

And their minds are set on earthly things. That's the snapshot. That tells all. These folks. Are muckrakers.

In. Pilgrim's Progress. They've got the rake. And they're just. Raking through them up. For some morsel. And. Their horizon.

[38 : 15] Is just earthly things. They never look up. They never think of heavenly things. They don't even see the crown of life. That's being offered to them. They're too busy with earthly things. Earthly things.

Earthly things. It's. It's what consumes them. It's what obsesses them. It's what controls them. Earthly things. Strangely missing.

Are the heavenly things. The kingdom of God. And his righteousness. A reigning savior. At the father's right hand. A place that's being prepared. For them.

They love the world. And the things that are in the world. And they show by it. That the love of the father. Is not in them. That's all they have an appetite for. You see.

Things that will satisfy. The physical senses. Here and now. Not something by and by. Now I don't need to tell you.

[39 : 12] That all this. Is so prevalent. In our. World today. Gluttony. And alcoholism. Sexual immorality. And drugs. And all the living. For the here and now.

The sensual. Self indulgence. Of our culture. Is putrefying. But you know. That's not what Paul's talking about. At all. Here. And if that's all.

That we've seen so far. We've missed the point. Paul's not talking about it. Out there. He's talking about it. In here. In the church. These folks.

Have crept into the church. They are. They are pretending. To be Christians. They would tell you. That they're going to heaven. They've been to church. On Sunday morning. They've sung the hymns. They've given their offerings. They've joined the church. They've been baptized.

And yet. Their lives are marked. By the things of earth. Senses. Mediate. Pleasures. To the neglect.

[40:05] Of the heavenly. Can this really be. Was this really Paul's concern. Back then. I mean. You understand. It's our concern today. That there's no real difference.

In the. The polls that are taken. Between the morality. Of professing Christians. And the world. There's no real difference. Between them. Have as many divorces. As many affairs. As many lies. And cheating going on. It's no different. But was it really Paul's problem. That the church. Was threatened by this problem. Just.

Listen to what he writes. To other Christian churches. To the churches. He says. In first Corinthians six. Do you not know. That the wicked. Will not inherit. The kingdom of God.

Do not. Be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral. Nor idolaters. Nor adulterers. Nor male prostitutes. Nor homosexual offenders. Nor thieves.

[40:58] Nor the greedy. Nor drunkards. Nor slanderers. Nor swindlers. Will inherit. The kingdom of God. Such were some of you. But you were washed. You were cleansed.

But we have. Brands of Christianity. Today. Offering salvation. And I shouldn't say. Offering salvation. Telling such people. That Paul lists here. That they are children of God.

That they are going to heaven. Even homosexuals. There are many churches. That will tell them.

You're going to heaven. You're just another child of God. Every sort of sin.

Is being accepted. As acceptable behavior. In the church. And Paul says. Don't be deceived. When he writes to Corinth. Don't be deceived by that. Some will tell you.

They can be Christians. And live like the world. Don't you ever be deceived. You'll not inherit the kingdom. If you live like that. To the Galatians. He writes. The acts of the sinful nature. Are obvious. Sexual immorality.

[41:55] Impurity. And debauchery. Idolatry. And witchcraft. Hatred. Discord. Jealousy. Fits of rage. Selfish ambition.

Dissensions. Factions. And envy. Drunkenness. Orgies. And the like. I warn you. As I did before. That those who live like this.

Will not inherit the kingdom of God. He's not out on the streets. Of Galatia. Preaching that to the world. He's preaching to the churches. Don't you be deceived. To think that you can.

Live like the world. And go to heaven. Like a Christian. Don't be deceived. Ephesians 5. For this you can be sure. For no immoral. Impure.

Greedy person. Such a man as an idolater. Has any inheritance. In the kingdom of Christ. And of God. Let no one deceive you. With empty words.

[42:49] For because of such thing. God's wrath. Comes on those. Who are disobedient. And so it's with tears. In his eyes. That Paul writes. To the Philippian church. And he says.

Oh don't follow. The example of these. Whose end is destruction. Whose God is their belly. Whose glory is in their shame.

And who mind earthly things. That's not the example. That we gave you brothers. He says. It's not the example.

The pattern that we left you. There are two whole different ways of living. And now he contrasts. The right example again. Against this bad example.

Verse 20. But our. He's just said. Their. And. Their. God. Their glory. Their mind. And now he says. But our. We who are to be.

[43:46] Followed. But our. Citizenship. Is in heaven. And we eagerly await a savior from there. The Lord Jesus Christ. We.

Are not those. Who think. About things below. Our lives are not expressed by. An end with what's happening here. And how many pleasures I've got here.

Our citizenship is there. And it changes. Our whole mind. Our whole mental outlook. We're thinking about heaven. This is. This world is not my home. I'm looking for.

A new heaven. And a new earth. I'm looking for a different homeland. Our. Our citizenship is there. This saves us from being. Muckrakers below.

From being engrossed. With earthly things. It lifts up our eyes. To heaven. Because most of all. My savior is there.

[44:41] My savior is there. You can't keep a Christian's mind. Out of heaven. Not with his. Not with the one. Who bore. The crown of thorns. The curse of God. For me.

So his mind is continually. Rising to heaven. Communing with heaven. Talking with heaven. Seeking fellowship with heaven.

Pursuing heaven. Our citizenship. Is in heaven. And we're looking forward. To his coming. And what will happen. When he comes. For we eagerly await.

A savior from there. The Lord Jesus Christ. That's the mark. Of a true. Citizen. Of heaven. They're longing. For his return. And what will happen.

When he comes. You know what will happen. When he comes. The very thing. That Paul's running after. The very thing. He's straining for. What? Perfect likeness to Jesus. He wants to be like Jesus. [45 : 37] To be raised. To that newness. Of perfect likeness. To Jesus. And when Jesus comes. It will happen. I'll see him as he is. And I'll be made like him. The one we're expecting from heaven.

Is called a savior. A deliverer. The Lord Jesus Christ. The blessed hope. The glorious appearing. Of our great God. And savior. Our deliverer is coming.

He's coming. And he's going to deliver us. From all the remains of sin. Everything that holds us back. From perfect likeness to Christ. All of our enemies.

Within and without. All weakness and imperfection. All the struggle. The things that we struggle with. The sins that so easily beset us.

I'm coming to be delivered. He's coming to deliver me from those. And when his coming. Will mean destruction for others. It will mean deliverance for me. Even deliverance from the effects of sin. [46 : 38] Upon this body. I'm going to be like him. Not just in my soul. But also in my body. And that's what he says right here. Who by the power that enables him.

To bring everything under his control. Verse 21. Will transform our lowly bodies. So that they will be like his glorious body. Have you thought lately. Of the transformation that awaits you.

Brothers and sister. Even this lowly body. This body of humiliation. A body that gets sick. And diseased. And old. And ugly. And dilapidated. A body so prone to weakness.

So prone to death and decay. A body so often characterized by sin. So often commandeered by sin. For a moment. So often plagued by sin.

And this body of humiliation. Is going to be transformed. Into the likeness of his glorious body. That same body that I saw on the road to Damascus. Paul would say. Going to be like my Lord in glory. [47 : 35] Soul and body transformed. My body too will bear the image of the heavenly one. Body that is sown in dishonor. Is to be raised in glory. It's sown in weakness.

Is to be raised in power. You say. How's that going to happen? How will that be? Some Christians. Bodies were eaten by lions. And the lions were eaten by maggots.

And other animals ate the maggots. And how's that going to be? That our bodies will be transformed. This body will be transformed. Into his glorious body. And old Paul says.

Well all you need to know. Is that he has the power. To bring everything under his control. If he has the power. To bring everything under his control. He has the power. To transform our lowly bodies. Into his glorious likeness.

So listen. And I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep. But we will all be changed. In a moment. In a twinkling of an eye. At the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound.

[48 : 30] And the dead in Christ. Will be raised incorruptible. For the perishable must clothe itself. With the imperishable. And the mortal with immortality.

And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly. So we shall bear the likeness of the man from heaven. The man from heaven.

Our savior. He's coming. You can't keep the Christian's mind out of heaven. Because he's got a savior there. And he's coming. And what will happen when he comes.

Is the very thing he's running after. He'll see him and be made like him. Body and soul. Forever and ever. With his savior. So let us live then as a colony of heaven.

A colony of heaven on earth. An outpost of the king most high. Who's coming back for us. And when we see him we'll be made like him. And even our lowly bodies will be transformed. Into the likeness of his glorious body.

[49 : 29] So run on. In hope. That's the prize. That's the finish line. Run on. In hope. Don't look back.

Press on toward that. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Follow all who follow Christ. Don't follow and be distracted by all these others.

Who are running and claiming to have heaven as their destiny. But are really headed for destruction. No, no. Run with your eyes on Jesus. Run with your eyes looking and following.

Who follow the pattern of Christ. And run and run and run. Until you see him. And are made like him.
Even so. Come Lord Jesus. Amen. Amen.