

Philippians: Gospel Partnership A Contrast and a Conclusion

Open your Bibles => Not at the end yet!

Philippians 3:18-4:1 ESV [18] For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. [19] Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. [20] But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. [1] Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

INTRO

Inclusion/Inclusiveness

↳ everyone is the same... no distinctions

↳ no "US" and "THEM"

↳ All religions are the same - ISLAM + XIANITY

↳ Boys and girls

• Inclusion is often a very nice thing, but not when it's arrived at by blurring all distinctions

• The Bible can be inclusive... all have sinned

• But the Bible also makes distinctions

Contrast and Conclusion

Philippians 3:17 ESV [17] Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

Due to this contrast, Paul should be imitated... What follows is why they need to imitate him

"FOR"

There is a significant difference between US (citizens of heaven) and THEM (enemies of the cross) AND the difference is HIM (Jesus Christ).

→ Because of Christ, and the difference, we ought to imitate Paul + others who imitate Christ

Contrast: 5 descriptors for enemies of the cross

Enemies of the Cross - For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

- Their identity is far from obvious
- Professing believers who walk unworthily...they didn't pursue Christ, they pressed on in the pursuit of other things
- To not go the route of the cross is to be an enemy
- Note Paul has compassion on his enemies...even with tears, he is concerned – maybe because he was an enemy of the cross~even as all of us were => DO WE HAVE COMPASSION FOR OUR ENEMIES?
- But gospel partners, or citizens of heaven, have a cross-shaped mindset and live a cross-shaped life

Their end - Their end is destruction

- Final outcome = destruction = utter and hopeless loss of all that gives worth to existence => TOTAL RUIN
- Their Christ-less path leads to a joy-less finish line
- Gospel partners, citizens of heaven, have an upward call that results in perfection that they might "attain the resurrection from the dead." Philippians 3:11 ESV

Their God - their god is their belly

- Those given over to their appetites, focused on earthly things
- Belly – seat of their inward life, their feelings and desires
- Their appetites and desires that arise from their inner person exercise control over them to such an extent that those desires are gods to them
- Citizens of heaven are "filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." Philippians 1:9-11 ESV

What are your appetites? Possible idols!!
↳ hunting, fishing

→ G.K. Chesterton → Neighbour/Enemies
"The Bible tells us to love our neighbours, and also to love our enemies; probably because generally"

→ Many of us have known Christians who now walk as enemies of the cross → betrayed by a spouse, parent, child, friend, pastor
Do tears come to your eyes? Or just bitter thoughts of malice and revenge?

The contrast begins w/

Their glory - and they glory in their shame,

- They boast in what they should be ashamed of
- They are famous for what they should be ashamed of
- They were not fighting sin, they were reveling in it ⇒ Young people - we all fall and sin ... but those who glory in it
- Citizens of heaven rather "worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh..."

Philippians 3:3 ESV

↳ What do you boast in? Home? Kids? The sacrifices you make in serving the church?

Their mind - with minds set on earthly things

- They do not just think about earthly things, rather, their minds are set on them
- This, as it follows chapter 3, is the fundamental problem
- Paul's mind on Christ, their minds on earthly things
- They pursue an earthly prize
- Gospel partners have their minds set on Christ and they "press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14 ESV

A total of 5 descriptors—enemies of the cross, their end is destruction, their god is their belly, they glory in their shame, their minds are set on earthly things—which will be mirrored when he speaks about the Philippians. However, his immediate rejoinder is not the citizens but Christ ⇒ this is the comparison that points to a CONTRAST ⇒ When we compare Christ, we always win!

Citizens of heaven - But our citizenship is in heaven

- Playing on their Roman citizenship – we are a colony of heaven, we belong to the heavenly commonwealth
- The realm where God dwells and rules

This is REMARKABLE:

but

- Citizens of heaven focus not on ourselves, but on our Saviour; who he is, what he has done, and how he does it \Rightarrow The real contrast is seen and caused by Jesus
- * This should humble us...and generate gratitude

Savior - and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

- Who is our saviour? "The Lord Jesus Christ" \rightarrow As we make distinctions in the public square we must get to Jesus
- What has he done? He has made us citizens of heaven...he "began the good work" (Philippians 1:6) in us and he will complete it. He will "transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body."
- Glorious bodies:
 1. Continuity (scars) and discontinuity (appearing in a locked room)
 2. Not subject to sin, suffering, disease, or death
 3. Like Jesus's
- How does he do this? He does it "by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."

in the public square we must get to Jesus
some sex parents

Commentator

- "The same divine power that is at work in the lives of believers to produce growth in godliness now will one day complete its work by transforming our bodies."
- Await = eagerly await – fishing with Spud and Tommy

CITIZEN OF HEAVEN + AWAITING A SAVIOR

- Where do I belong? GOSPEL
With the enemies of the cross? or with the one who died on the cross

Conclusion:

relationship affection desire posture treasure

5 descriptions:

my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

Conclusion - Therefore

- Since we are citizens of heaven and not enemies of the cross, we should stand firm in the manner Paul has described.
- Stand firm thus
- Stand firm in this way – In what way? 1:27-3:
 - let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ
 - standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.
 - believe in him but also suffer for his sake,
 - being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
 - Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
 - Have this mind among yourselves, ... yours in Christ Jesus,
 - work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
 - Do all things without grumbling or disputing,
 - holding fast to the word of life
 - Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
 - Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord
 - Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh
 - Let those of us who are mature think this way,
 - let us hold true to what we have attained.
 - Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.