

“Sharing Joy and Hope in Jesus!” #6

Chapter 3: 17 - 19

Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

- Read the verses leading up to 17 to be reminded of the “example” Paul sets in his own life. He kept pressing on to reach the goal of heaven.
- Paul issues a warning! There are many others in this world to live differently than Paul, with their mind set on earthly things!

What benefits come when Christians “join together,” as Paul encourages with the opening words. (Discuss blessings of fellowship within a local congregation.)

What does Paul point out about “enemies of the cross of Christ”?

Chapter 3:20 – 4:1

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ 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. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

- Paul encourages his readers to remember their true homeland. Remembering their heavenly citizenship will help them stand firm in the Lord.

Why was it particularly important for Paul to remember his heavenly citizenship at this time?

Why is it particularly important for us to remember our citizenship today?

What change will take place to prepare us for life in heaven? Can you imagine what that might mean?

Chapter 4:2 - 3

I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

- Euodia and Syntyche were two believing women who had some sort of disagreement. We don't have details. Paul encourages them to “be of the same mind in the Lord.”

- Earlier in the letter, Paul had encouraged believers in Philippi to “make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.” Perhaps we now see why Paul was focusing on that theme.

What sorts of issue cause disagreement in the church today, even among active and engaged members of the congregation?

What does it mean to “be of the same mind in the Lord? What doesn’t it mean?

Look at the last words of verse three. What remains true of believers even when they are caught up in disagreements? Why?

Chapter 4: 4 - 9

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- These are perhaps the best known and most often used verses from Philippians. Here Paul carefully lays out the reasons believers have reason to rejoice in the Lord at all times!

When we remember the circumstances of Paul’s life, these words of encouragement become even more remarkable. Explain.

What testimony can the believer give in times of trouble?

Instead of anxious worry, what does Paul encourage the believer to do?

God’s peace stands guard over our hearts and minds. Where do we find that peace?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me find joy and peace in you. Teach me to treasure my fellowship of faith and build others up, instead of tearing them down. Help me lead others to see you as I live in this world as a citizen of heaven. Amen.

