CAPITOL COMMISSION
Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders

TikTok

April 23, 2024

Dr. John Battaglia • Missouri State Minister • P.O. Box 891, Jefferson City • Missouri, 65102 • (573) 355-4161 • pray1tim2.org

Weekly Bible Study Schedule
Tuesday, April 23, 7:00-7:45 AM
House Hearing Room 3
All Welcome!
Capitol Commission is NON-PARTISAN and NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Introduction

Today's Bible study is from the book of Philippians chapter three verses seventeen to twenty-one.

3:17 – Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example.

Paul's first church is in eastern Europe. Paul and the Philippian believers were friends, and partners in the ministry, and more than that they were family. When a community of faith operates in unity and peace the bond love glues their relationship. When a community of friends and partners suffer together a vicarial connection is established that lasts a lifetime. In Acts 16, God redirected Paul and his team away from Asia, then Mysia, and Bithynia. So from Troas (modern-day Turkey), they waited for direction. While waiting, undoubtedly praying:

> *"Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!"* (Acts 16:9)

The Spirit of Jesus prevented them from going to Asia to start, and visit existing, churches. God fearing Jews were asking God for help and spiritual guidance.

It would seem the God-fearing Jews in Philippi were also praying for spiritual direction. Both Paul and the Philippians were redirected to each other. If you don't know what to do, ask God for help, and wait on Him to direct you.

The idea of imitation is like a thread throughout the book of Philippians. Here Paul tells them to pattern their lives after him as He patterns his life after Jesus. Moreover, learn from your peers: Timothy, Epaphroditus, Lydia, and more. There is a blueprint to live our story into Jesus' story. Paul was living life the Jesus way: surrendered to the will of God; loving others; sharing faith in grace and truth; thinking with the mind of Christ; knowing the power of His resurrection; and knowing the fellowship of His sufferings. Juxtaposed to living the world's way. One cannot have it both ways. You either conform to the pattern of the Jesus way or you conform to the shape of the world's way.

> *Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.* Romans 12:2, MSG

3:18 – For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ.

It is not clear who are the opponents. Likely, Libertines: those who shame Christ by their licentious ways. Less likely is the Judaizers who live a lifestyle that negates salvation alone through Christ. With depth of emotion, Paul sheds tears. What are his tears saying? How much he loves the Philippians, that he does not want them to be deceived. He does want them to discern between who is of the light and of the darkness. Don't believe what people say, believe what they do. Look for the fruit of the Spirit.

3:19 – They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth.

I love sweets, especially Ice Cream, but that is not the appetite that Paul is talking about. A few examples are the gratification for self, yielding to sexual impulses, gossip, destructive thoughts toward oneself or others, lack of self-control...Their god is their earthly and sensual appetite. They magnify their indulgences giving no thought that the life lived in the "now" determines the life lived on the other side. Eager anticipation for the Lord's return guards one from the lures of earthly and sensual appetite.

> *Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone.* James 14:4

God is the one who provides for His people. To understand the nature and goodness of God will help us have an appetite for Him.

Most people know about the Ten Commandments. What might it be like if we see them as the "Tender" commandments?

⇒ *"Thou shall not steal"* (LOUD) – "You do not need to steal because I will provide for you." (soft) God is generous. He loves to give to His people.

⇒ *"Thou shall honor the Sabbath"* (LOUD) – "You do not need to strive for I will give you rest." (soft) We all need to reflect and recharge. On the seventh day of creation God rested. (Gen. 2:2)

⇒ *"Thou shall not murder"* (LOUD) – "You do not need to kill because I am peace." (soft) Where relationships are broken He wants us to seek reconciliation not revenge. In a world where peace is a scarce commodity, God offers a peace that only He can give; one the world can't give or take away. (John 14:27)

The commandments reveal the character and nature of God. (Exodus 20:1-20) They show us what is important to God and the character He wants to develop in us. Not only do we imitate Paul but we are to imitate Jesus. To model Jesus is to reflect His character and nature. God is our appetite.

3:20 – But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.

We have a passport for heaven with all of its rights and privileges. The residents of Philippi had all the rights and privileges of Rome. Religious worship to the Emperor, military protection from the Roman army, economic advantage not having to pay taxes. The Christ follower's privileges include a personal relationship with Jesus, the worship of King Jesus, to be His daughters and sons who receive His provisions, and a promise to dwell with Jesus in the transcendent place called heaven. One day we will pass through a door from earth to heaven, from knowing Jesus in part to know Him fully.

> *For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known.* 1 Cor. 13:12

When my daughter was little, I remember how eager she was for me to come home from work. She waited by the window asking her mother 'when is daddy coming home?' When I arrived she would run into my arms and we'd embrace. Eager is not passive, it is active. It is looking and ready for the return of Jesus.

The Kingdom of heaven is like Ten virgins who prepared to meet the bridegroom by filling their lamps with oil. Five were prepared and five were not. At midnight, there was a cry that the bridegroom is here. The bridegroom symbolized Jesus.

The five virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. The five who had no oil for their lamp left to purchase oil then returned with oil but it was too late, the door had already closed. They called out to the Lord to open the door but He said: "'Truly I tell you, I don't know you.'" Matt 25:10-12

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour" of the return of Jesus. Matt 25:13 We don't know the day or hour we will meet Jesus. Will His door be opened or closed to you? Does your life demonstrate preparedness?

3:21 – He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.

One day our mortal bodies will become glorified. Mortal bodies are temporary, they decay, and eventually rot. Glorified bodies are perfected. When Jesus is glorified by the power of the Spirit believers will be glorified by the same power.

> *We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created. For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels—everything got started in him and finds its purpose in him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment…He was supreme in the beginning and—leading the resurrection parade—he is supreme in the end.* Col. 1:15-20

Keep Watch