

PHILIPPIANS: REPLACING SELFISH AMBITION WITH GODLY ACHIEVEMENT

Part X: God's Call To An Otherworldly Walk

(Philippians 3:15-21)

I. Introduction

- A. As we have often noted in this lesson series, the Philippian believers lived in a culture marked by selfish ambition and strife, what tempted them to relate to one another in a sinfully selfish way, cf. Philippians 4:2.
- B. Having countered this way of life by presenting the godly route of self-sacrifice for God (Philippians 3:4-14), Paul directed his readers to a walk that pleased the Lord, offering invaluable guidance in Philippians 3:15-21.
- C. We view this passage for our insight and edification (as follows):

II. God's Call To An Otherworldly Walk, Philippians 3:15-21.

- A. God calls us to please Him by a walk marked by *conformity to Christ*, Philippians 3:15-16:
 1. Paul urged that as many of his readers who were "perfect" (KJV), that is, spiritually "mature" (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Philippians 3:15), to "take such a view of things" (NIV), Philippians 3:15a.
 2. That "view of things" was presented in Philippians 3:8-14 where Paul wrote of his passion not selfishly to hold onto the things of this life that are exalted by the world, but to lose them all and instead experience by grace the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ in his walk.
 3. In other words, God calls His believers in Christ to please Him by counting what is gain in this earthly life as loss that they might experience the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ in their experience like Paul did. This involves living by faith in the Lord, what will involve suffering and loss for righteousness followed by God's renewal like Paul experienced in 2 Corinthians 1:8-20 and Acts 14:18-20.
 4. Indeed, Paul added that if any of his readers did not agree with such a viewpoint of living, God would provide the insight needed on it that they might mature, Philippians 3:15b-16; *Ibid*.
- B. God calls us to please Him by a walk marked by a *holy lifestyle*, Philippians 3:17-19:
 1. Paul also urged his readers to be followers of himself and others like him and his missionary team, marking them as examples of Christian living, Philippians 3:17.
 2. He gave this example in *contrast* to what his readers were **not** to follow in *holiness* in Philippians 3:18-19:
 - a. Paul's readers were **not** to follow those who were enemies of the cross of Christ (Philippians 3:18), likely referring to "profligates in incipient Gnosticism who trusted in their own attainments and not in the sufficiency of Christ alone," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 662. These false teachers were dedicated to a self-centered life of indulging the lusts of the body and salvation by works versus salvation by faith alone followed by a life of selflessness and experiencing the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, *Ibid*.
 - b. These false teachers exhibited qualities that **contrasted sharply** with godly examples, Philippians 3:19:
 - i. They were destined for destruction in hell as unbelievers, Philippians 3:19a.
 - ii. Their god was the gratification of their own physical desires, Philippians 3:19b.
 - iii. Their glory was seeking praise for themselves versus the praise of God, Philippians 2:19c.
 - iv. Their basis of merit with God was earthly things rather than Christ's merit, Philippians 2:19d; *Ibid*.
- C. God calls us to please Him by a walk marked by a *heavenly destiny*, Philippians 3:20-21:
 1. The believer's "conversation" (KJV), actually "citizenship" (*Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Phil. 3:20) is in heaven, from which the believer "eagerly awaits" (*apekdechometha*) the coming of His Savior, Jesus Christ, v. 20.
 2. When Christ comes for the believer, He will change the believer's "body of humiliation" (*Ibid.*, fn. to Phil. 3:21) in mortality into the form of Christ's glorious resurrection body in accord with the power by which Christ as God Incarnate is able to subdue all things to Himself, Philippians 3:21.
 3. Thus, God directs us believers eagerly to await the rapture and the positive blessings it will bring!

Lesson: (1) God calls believers in Christ to a walk marked by conformity to Christ in His suffering, death and resurrection power that focuses on relying on the Lord through life's trials for victory in those trials. (2) God also calls us to a walk of discriminating holiness where we imitate mature believers and NOT apostates who live selfishly for this world's lusts and in reliance on man's futile merit before God. (3) God also calls us to live in eager expectation for the rapture when Christ will change our earthly bodies into bodies that reflect His glory!

Application: (1) May we live in conformity to Christ in His suffering, death and resurrection power through life's trials, trusting God that we might overcome them. (2) May we imitate mature believers and not apostates who live

selfishly for this world's lusts and reliance on man's futile merit before God. (3) May we live in eager expectation for the rapture when Christ will change our earthly bodies into glorious, powerful bodies to the glory of God!