FUTURISTIC LIVING

Philippians 3:15-21
5-21-2025

* ***Live your life in the Future Tense!***
(Live with Heaven in mind)

How?

I. BY <u>FOLLOWING</u> THOSE WHO ARE <u>HEAVENLY-MINDED</u> (V. 17)

II. BY <u>AVOIDING</u> THOSE WHO ARE <u>EARTHLY-MINDED</u> (V. 18 - 19)

A. THEY HAVE THE WRONG DESTINY

B. THEY HAVE THE WRONG DEITY

C. THEY HAVE THE WRONG DELIGHT

III. BY <u>KNOWING</u> WHERE YOUR <u>TRUE RESIDENCE</u> IS (V. 20a)

IV. BY <u>WAITING</u> EAGERLY FOR YOUR <u>SAVIOR'S RETURN</u> (V. 20b - 21)
(2 things to look forward to at the Rapture)

A. OUR SAVIOR WILL <u>COME</u> FOR US (IN PERSON)

B. OUR SAVIOR WILL <u>CHANGE</u> US (IN POWER)

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INTRO: How strange in a letter filled with joy and rejoicing that we find Paul weeping (v. 18). Why is he crying? Is it because of his difficult situation -- No! (He has a single mind - chapt. 1; and a submissive mind - chapt. 2). These tears are not for himself at all; they are shed because of others.

Because Paul has a spiritual mind (chapt. 3), he is heart-broken over the way some professed Christians are living--people who "mind earthly things (v. 18)" (Wiersbe, p. 103)

Paul, having already warned us to look out for such people (v. 2), and having taught us to rejoice in the Lord by forgetting what was behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, now exhorts us to think the same way he does.

**READ AND EXPLAIN VS. 15 - 16.

We are to live out NOW the resurrection life!

"If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above . . . Set your affection (lit. "mind") on things above . . ." (Col. 3:1-3).

We should walk in "newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). We are to reckon ourselves as "dead to sin but alive to God" (v. 11).

v. 20 – "For our conversation (citizenship) is in Heaven

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I. BY FOLLOWING THOSE WHO ARE HEAVENLY-MINDED (v. 17)

"Follow" = imitate; mimic.

Paul is not setting himself up on a high pedestal as the final example, but is encouraging them to follow the principles he lived by and laid down in this chapter.
Nor is Paul saying to be a man-follower, but as he says in I Cor. 11:1 - "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

ILLUS: of painters who copy other men's paintings and reproduce the flaws, rather than going out and painting an original after the creation itself.

We need to copy the Creator! And follow men's examples only as they line up with Christ's and His Word.
I John 2:6 - "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself so to walk, even as he walked."

"Mark them" = look at, fix your eyes upon.

"Us" = would certainly include Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30).
It is a blessing to have many men and women of God worthy of emulating (good to read biographies of heroes of the faith).

"Ensample" = pattern, type (that which is formed by the striking [impression] of a die).
Don't follow someone's idiosyncracies - but his service and character.

Heb. 13:7 - "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

Mimic what makes them great for God.

People are following you! If everyone followed your example, what would this world be like?

People today are too lazy to read the Bible, so all they see about Christ they will see from your life.
Paul said: "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men" (II Cor. 3:2).

APPLI: We need to live lives that will not offend weaker Christians (I Cor. 10:23).
ILLUS: of a boy who was balancing perilously on an iron rail, saying, "Look at me! I bet you can't do this!" To which his friend replied, "I could do it if I wanted

to . . . but I won't because my little brother is with me." (Blair, p. 97).

II. BY <u>AVOIDING</u> THOSE WHO ARE <u>EARTHLY MINDED</u> (v. 18-19).

"Enemies" = Judaizers; those who added the Law of Moses to the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Don't follow after those who "mind earthly things"- the ones who are mentally obsessed with things upon the material earth!

Because they are heading in the wrong direction.
They have a: wrong destiny wrong deity wrong delight

A. THEY HAVE THE WRONG <u>DESTINY</u>

Before you follow anyone, ask yourself, "Where is he headed? Where will following this person lead me?" If you follow someone you will end up where they do.

"Blind leading the blind."

Prov. 13:20 - "A companion of fools will be destroyed."

B. THEY HAVE THE WRONG <u>DEITY</u>

They worship themselves!

"Whose god is their belly" - the Judaizers with their obedience to their own dietary laws actually made a "god" out of their belly. (ILLUS. of people who worship their body - bodybuilders, health food NUTS, etc.).

Our body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, therefore as a temple it should not be desecrated (ex. smoking) nor worshipped.

C. THEY HAVE THE WRONG <u>DELIGHT</u>

"Whose glory is in their shame" - the Judaizers with their emphasis on circumcision would glory in that of which they ought to be ashamed (cp. Gal. 6:13).
Avoid wrong people. Rom. 16:17-18 - "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Prov. 4:14-15 - "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way

of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

III. BY <u>KNOWING</u> WHERE YOUR <u>TRUE RESIDENCE</u> IS (v. 20a)

We should be so wrapped up in our heavenly citizenship, that when someone asks us where we live we should not reply, "221-53 92 Ave. Queens Village, NY" but rather - "I live on the corner of Pearly gate and Golden Street, at the mansion of Christ in Heaven, 77777!"

Because we are citizens of Heaven:

1) Our names are on Heaven's record - "the Book of Life" (Phil. 4:3).
Illus. of passport allowing entrance.
ILLUS. of your name being written down by someone who registers you for a banquet, etc.

2) We speak Heaven's language
I John 4:5-6 - "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

Col. 4:6 - "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

3) We obey Heaven's laws (the law of <u>love</u>)

4) We are loyal to Heaven's cause - we love the cross of Christ (as opposed to being an enemy of it (v. 18)

(see Wiersbe, p. 107-108)

This type of thinking is what true <u>spiritual</u> Christianity is all about.

`too many people wrongly think that being a "spiritual Christian" is mystical, creamy, impractical, and distant. (ILLUS. - When he prays, he changes his voice and prays things [ex. doctrines] back to God that He already knows).

To be spiritually minded means to look at earth from Heaven's point of view.

This changes your perspective about what is really important here.

It will change the way you live here.

You will <u>not</u> be as D. L. Moody said: "So heavenly minded, you are no earthly

good." This is a phony, do-nothing Christianity.

Rather you will make decisions on the basis of eternal values, not passing fads of the world.

We are aliens and pilgrims here!

Song: "This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through."

Contrast Lot (who chose the well-watered plain of Jordan) with Moses (who refused the pleasures and treasures of Egypt - Heb. 11:24-26).

We shouldn't live here like we will be here forever!

EX. of how hard it was in Minnesota and Pennsylvania to get overly serious about a choice for an apartment because our stay (while in school) was only temporary.

IV. BY <u>WAITING</u> EAGERLY FOR YOUR <u>SAVIOR'S RETURN</u> (v. 20b-21)
(2 things to look forward to at the Rapture)

Lit. "out of where also we are anxiously expecting (the) Savior – (namely) (the) Lord Jesus Christ."

2 things to look forward to at the Rapture:

A. OUR SAVIOR WILL <u>COME</u> FOR US (IN PERSON)

"Look" = to eagerly await, or expect anxiously.

You can have <u>present</u> energy, power, etc., if you keep your eyes on the <u>future</u> hope.

ILLUS: Living with great anticipation for something future (ex. engaged couple, anticipation for school to be out, Christmas, etc.) - how it changed the way you think and live.

If you are not looking forward to that blessed hope of Christ's appearing, it is because your roots are dug deep in the world.

The fact that Jesus Christ is returning is a powerful motive for dedicated living and devoted service <u>today</u>. (Read I John 2:28-3:3).

We will faithfully keep doing the job our master has given us, so that when He returns He will not find us disobedience (Lk. 12:40-48).

ILLUS: of working and being ready for your boss to pop in and see you.

B. OUR SAVIOR WILL <u>CHANGE</u> US (IN POWER)

In this verse, the anticipation for Christ's return is all <u>positive</u> (ex. of how we anticipate things and when we get them, we experience a let-down.

"Who shall change" =Christ will refashion or totally transform our bodies.

"vile body" - This is not saying that the physical body is evil, but that it is lowly; humble; insignificant compared to the glorified one to come.

"Fashioned" = to make something that conforms and fits the pattern of something else (Compare with verse 10).

When Christ appears He will do something great for us. He will totally transform (re-fashion) our lowly body to be conformed together (molded) like his glorious body.

"Working" = powerful energy (from which we get our Eng. word "energy").

The power which will transform our mortal into immortality and our corruption into incorruption is the same power which God uses to subdue or subject all things under Himself.

When Christ returns and transforms us in the "twinkling of an eye" (I Cor. 15:42-53), at that moment, all the things of this world will be worthless to us -- just as they ought to be (relatively) today! (Wiersbe, p. 110).

CONCLU: Keep your mind in the future tense!

I. By following those who are heavenly-minded.
II. By avoiding those who are earthly-minded.
III. By knowing where your true residence is.
IV. By waiting eagerly for your Savior's return.

ILLUS: of society today with its thinking--supposedly advanced, future-orientated (but from <u>man's</u> perspective), etc. They say, "Get with it! You are behind the times."

We can know that if we follow God's admonition in v. 15-21, that our thinking is the <u>really advanced</u> thinking - for we have our mind on heaven!