

Outline and Theme of Philippians
By Larry E. Miller
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Title: **The Advance of Authentic Christianity – With Joy**

Theme: **Supreme Value of Knowing Christ**

Salutation 1:1,2 “Grace to You”

I. **CHRIST’S GOSPEL (The True Gospel) OUR PRIORITY 1:3-26**

A. **Joyful Prayer Because of the Gospel 3-11**

1. Thanksgiving for Past Partnership in the Gospel 3-8
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B. **In Face of Self-Centeredness: Be Christ-Like 2:1-30**

C. **In Face of Destructive Doctrine of Self Reliance:
 Be Focused on Supreme Value of Knowing Christ 3:1-14**

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III. **CHRIST OUR STRENGTH 4:1-20**

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Conclusion 4:21-23 “Grace Be with You”

Gems from Philippians
Coast Bible Conference
July 8, 2007
Larry E. Miller

Paul's Priority of the Gospel
Philippians Chapter 1

Title of Philippians: **The Advance of Authentic Christianity-with Joy**
Theme of Philippians: **Supreme Value of Knowing Christ**

Outline of Philippians:

- I. CHRIST'S GOSPEL OUR PRIORITY - 1:3-26**
(The True Gospel)
- II. CONDUCT WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL - 1:27-3:21**
- III. CHRIST OUR STRENGTH - 4:1-20**

Outline for Today

- I. Priority of Partners (or Partnership) in the Gospel - 1:5,7,27**
 - A. (1:27) The Gospel is the Gospel of Christ - 1:27
 - B. (1:5) Thanksgiving for their close association in Gospel Advance
 - C. (1:7) They Were partakers of Grace Together
- II. Priority of Defense of the Gospel - 1:7 and 16**

Defense from *apologia* from which we get apologetics.
Some debate about the importance and place of apologetics.

- A. But Paul considered it a priority.
- B. We ought to be prepared to do so and give a defense for the gospel when we have opportunity.

Today's Cultural challenges

Modernism and Postmodernism

Rationalism
Naturalism
Relativism
Hedonism
Pluralism
Tolerance
Literary Deconstruction

III. **Priority of Gospel Advance (or Progress) at All Cost** - 1:12-26

- A. Greater Progress of the Gospel – Even if It Means Suffering and Affliction (12-14)
- B. Proclamation of Christ – Even When the Motive Is Impure (15-18a)
- C. Exaltation of Christ – Whether I Live or Die (18b-20)

IV. **Priority of the One Main Thing** - 1:27

- A. This may be Paul's main point in the entire epistle.

And here is the point: **“conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel”**

- B. We will come back to this in a subsequent message but for now.

- 1. “conduct yourselves”

Dr. Wuest, “We are citizens of heaven with a heavenly origin, a heavenly destiny, with the responsibility of living a heavenly life on earth in the midst of ungodly people and surroundings, telling them of the Savior who will save them. (This is) a duty to discharge as citizens of a heavenly kingdom and as subjects of a heavenly king.”

- 2. “worthy of the gospel of Christ”

In other words, we are to recognize our position as a citizen of a heavenly kingdom and realize our responsibility to obey because of our privileged position. The implications are far reaching.

Wow!

Gems from Philippians Series
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Priority of Gospel Advance At All Cost
1:12-26

Main Thot: **Priority of Gospel Advance at All Cost - 1:12-26**

I. **GREATER PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL – Even if It Means Suffering and Affliction (12-14)**

A. Term “progress” in 1:12 = “to cut before”

B. Much opposition in Philippi.

C. The good results

1. Remarkable witness to “whole praetorian guard.” vs. 13
2. Timid brethren made bold – vs. 14

Apply!

1. Do we impact others this way?
2. Our own boldness. We have the truth! Do not hide it under a bushel!

II. **PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST – Even When the Motive Is Impure (15-18a)**

A. Two factions

1. Improper motivation – vs. 15
2. Proper Motivation - vs. 16

B. Proper Attitude in Face of This Situation – vs. 18a

1. Rejoice when Christ is proclaimed!!!
2. Further application of this point “Proclamation of Christ – Even When the Motive Is Impure”
3. But keep in mind the important point:
Success of the message is what is important rather than the success of the messenger.

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Conduct Worthy of the Gospel

Phil 1:27 ff

I. Priority of the One Main Thing - 1:27

A. **This may be Paul's main point in the entire epistle.**

B. And Here Is the One Main thing: **“conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel”**

1. “conduct yourselves”
“conduct” from *politeuo* from which we get politic or political.
The term here means “live as a citizen.”

Dr. Kenneth Wuest, “We are citizens of heaven with a heavenly origin, a heavenly destiny, with the responsibility of living a heavenly life on earth in the midst of ungodly people and surroundings, telling them of the Savior who will save them. (This is) a duty to discharge as citizens of a heavenly kingdom and as subjects of a heavenly king.”

In other words, we are to recognize our position as a citizen of a heavenly kingdom and realize our responsibility to obey because of our privileged position.

2. “worthy of the gospel of Christ”

Wow!!

II. Two of the Responsibilities We Have As Citizens of Heavenly Kingdom

A. Standing Firm in the face of opposition to the gospel - 1:27b; 1:28b

B. Being United 1:27b

Paul seems to be saying that if to stand firm, it depends at least in part on the measure of our unity as believers. Someone has observed that God has purposefully made us weak so that we have to depend on HIM and we have to depend on others.

Apply:

1.

2.

3.

Other-Mindedness Is The Attitude That Fosters Unity!
Philippians 2:1-5

Coast Bible Conference Session
Larry E Miller/Equippers Ministry

Introduction

- Life lived as worthy of the gospel of Christ will manifest itself in two major areas:
 - 1 Standing firm against gospel opposition
 - 2 Living with unity as you strive together for the faith of the gospel
- Let's note the kind of people that made up the church in Philippi.

Jews and Gentiles with very different religious backgrounds.

Ethnic differences

Social and cultural differences

Business woman, slave-girl, jailer

Probably some clans/extended families within the church

Probably some cliques within the church

Different spiritual gifts

Different personalities

Different ministry priorities

And Paul said **unity**? You maybe thinking such unity is really impossible.

I. Unity Can Be Our Joyful Experience – 2a

II. Relationship with Christ Is The Basis of Unity – 1

Four facts expressed in first class or fulfilled conditional clauses. Could be translated “since.”

Our common sharing in Christ is the basis of and motivation for unity.

A. Encouragement in Christ

B. Consolation of Love

C. Fellowship of The Spirit

D. Affection and Compassion

III. Description of This Unity - 2b

- A. “maintaining (or having) the same love”
- B. “united in spirit” Note small “s.”
- C. “intent on one purpose”

IV. Other-Minded Is the Attitude That Fosters Unity – 3,4

Typical mindset of today illustrated by this commercial numbers of years ago, “Next to myself I like Bud’s best.”

We could say “Next to myself I like _____ best.”

A. vs. 3 - Ourselves or Others as No. 1 - Negative then Positive

- 1. Negative
 - a. No selfishness
 - b. No empty conceit (vain glory)
- 2.. Positive
 - a. Humility or lowliness
 - b. Consider others your superior

B. vs. 4 – Supported by further exhortation to unselfishness

- 1. Negative
 - “to consult one’s own interest (first)” - Don’t do it!
- 2. Positive
 - In contrast, give attention, be focused on the interests of others.

Imagine what it would be like if we all were busily engaged focused upon and seeking the interest of the other believers about us.

So it appears that esteeming others as more important than ourselves is essential to unity. Being other-centered or other-minded is a central focus in this passage.

Helpful Amplifications

The Ultimate Example of an Other-Centered Mind, Our Lord Jesus Christ
Or
Another Title such as The Kenosis
Philippians 2:1-11
Coast Bible Conference
Larry Miller

Introduction

1. A major emphasis in Philippians is the person of Christ. There are at least 45 references to Jesus Christ in this short epistle. And we have come to one of the most significant and impressive passages about Him in the entire New Testament.
Robert Lightner, “A grand statement on Christology.”
Dr. Kenneth Wuest of the famous Wuest word studies, “perhaps the greatest Christological passage in the New Testament.”
Gordon Fee, “(It) is at once one of the most exalted, most beloved, and most discussed and debated passages in the Pauline (literature). Here is one of Paul’s finest hours, which serves to both exalt Christ and to prod the Philippians to the emulation (of Christ’s attitude), while assuring them of Christ’s exalted position—including over Caesar himself (and for us today over any person, system, philosophy, economic system, value system, religion, etc. on planet earth).

2. Hebrews 12:3 “consider Him” (Jesus)
Term means to “think over; consider by weighing, comparing; to take into account and reckon to be something (or someone).”
Examples:
 Jury is to consider the evidence and reach a verdict.
 View, evaluate a very expensive diamond purchase.
 Me, 50 th Anniversary

3. In the context of Philippians, Paul is urging them regarding the importance of unity as they need to stand firm in the face of opposition.
He has just declared other-centeredness rather than self-centeredness as central to the unity of believers.
And here he presents Jesus Christ as the ultimate example of such an other-centered attitude.
One person (Max Anders) entitled the entire chapter two “The Power of Humility,” and then quoted C. S. Lewis re pride and Harry Ironside re humility.
 Lewis said of pride, “Pride is the mother hen under which all other sins are hatched.”
 Harry Ironside, well –known preacher and author of a previous generation, Pastor of Moody Church, used to tell the story of his struggle with humility. He asked an elder friend what he could do about it. His friend counseled him to make a sandwich board with the plan of salvation in Scripture on it and to wear it as he walked through the business and shopping district of downtown Chicago for one entire day. Ironside did it and found it to be a humiliating experience. As he was taking the sandwich board off, however he caught himself thinking: “There’s not another person in Chicago who would be willing to do a thing like that.”
 Yes, humility is a difficult thing. Just the moment you think it, you’ve lost it.

4. Note the example of Christ's voluntary exchange of glory for humiliation for our benefit!!
Jesus Christ moved from exaltation to death to exaltation.
He moved from position as God in His glory to incarnational servanthood and humble obedience.
Among scholars it is known as the Kenosis passage, speaking of the self-emptying of the Son of God as He became incarnate in humanity, the word *kenosis* being the Greek word meaning "to empty."

(Much of this outline copied from someone. Don't remember who.)

I. THE IMPERATIVE OF A CHRIST-LIKE MINDSET –vs. 5
It is possible!!

II. EXAMPLE OF GLORY TO HUMILITY - vss. 6-8

A. Preincarnate Glory – vs. 6

1. In Preincarnate Existence Jesus Christ was the Expression of Divine Essence – 6a
.
2. Furthermore, (NASB) "(He) did not regard equality of God a thing to be grasped." Or
NIV is similar but KJV, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

It is certain the text is saying that the preincarnate second member of the Godhead who became through incarnation the Lord Jesus Christ, was, and always was, equal in essence to God the Father.

B. Voluntary Humiliation - 7,8

1. The kenosis from *kenoo* translated "emptied"

Some believe He ceased to be Deity but this is not accurate.

He:

- a. Waived, rather than asserted, His right to ongoing expression of the essence of His Deity.
 - b. And/or gave up the outward expression of His Deity. Ill. Like a king who may temporarily put on a peasants clothing.
 - c. And/or willingly veiled or covered over so normally did not see His true glory.
 - d. And/or voluntary non-use of certain attributes normally during His earthly life.
Ex. Did not use His divine knowledge to make life easier. In His divine nature, He knew every invention that would ever be made, but was inconvenienced by their lack.
2. "form of a servant" He always had a nature to serve but now the outward expression of such, His humility. Ill. John 13

3. “likeness of men” - likeness means that which is like something else so he was in fact “human,” with human characteristics.
4. “appearance” – He really looked human because He was! The God-man. He was born. He was a Jewish baby. He grew physically.
5. “humbled” = to bring low and He did it Himself. Self-humbling.
6. How low? “obedient unto death” He was obedient to the Father, even to the point of dying (Cf Luke 22:42). “even death on a cross” –kind of death.

III. SUPER-EMINENT EXALTATION OF CHRIST JESUS - vss 9-11

- A. Exhibited by the Name Given – vs. 9
 1. “highly exalted” means to raise to supreme majesty. Never a man so exalted.
 2. “name” The name in view must be “Lord” (vs. 11)
This the august title of God, Jehovah. No rivals to His throne. He is above all pretenders.

It is “above every name” or highest name.
Jesus Christ is sovereign. Jesus rules as God rules.

- B. Elicits a Universal Response – vs. 10

Understand this to be future.
The arrogance of men will be ended.
Everyone will admit that truth is truth, even though many (most) may hate God for it.

All created beings will pay homage. When?
Beings in heaven - angels (Cf. Rev. 4,5) and/or saved individuals who have died.
Beings on earth – mankind and/or those still living on earth
Beings under the earth – demons and those who reject the gospel

- C. Elicits a Universal Recognition – vs. 11

Confess = to agree with and to publicly declare
Some day the entire universe will agree with God the Father re the testimony which He has given to His Son.

Jesus Christ is who He said He is!!
“every tongue” some voluntarily and some probably with compulsion.

Glory to God.

Implications:

1. The exaltation principle
Note Luke 14:11 First half active verb – We must humble ourselves
Second half passive verb – The individual is exalted by God.
Jesus Christ the supreme example.

2. The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ
Jesus Christ is the Unequaled One

1. The only man who walked planet earth who had an eternal past existence.
(See above)
2. The only man who was also God. (See above)
3. His Origin – John 1:1
4. His Preincarnate Work of Creation - John 1:3,10; Col. 1:16,17
5. His Miraculous, Supernatural Incarnation - John 1:14
6. His Self-Declaration of His Deity - John 5:17,18; 10:30-33
7. His Saving Work - John 1:12; 3:17,18; 19:30
8. His Resurrection, Proof of His Identity - John 2:16-22
9. He is the Christ, The Anticipated Old Testament Messiah
John 4:25,26 (Plus Mark 1:16; 16:15,16,20; 27:17; Luke 2:11)

3. The Great Parabola from parable
In Isaiah 14 Satan said I will go up.
Yet his actual destiny “Yet thou shalt be brought down.”
Phil. 2 a counterpart to Satan’s words
Descent of Lord Jesus Christ from the highest position.
Down. . . down. . . down to His death on the Cross
And then up again to the throne of Glory.

I will go up ...up...up... said Satan.
“You will be cast into hell” God answers.
“I will go down to the Cross” said Jesus.
“You will be given a name that is above every name,” said God our Heavenly Father.

The way up is down.
The way to joy and unity is to be other-centered like Jesus Christ! **He** is the great example!!

Confess!!
Worship!!!

Coast Bible Conference
 Gems from Philippians Series
 3:1-11
 Right Response to Wrong Doctrine
 Or
 Glory in Christ Jesus and Put No Confidence in the Flesh
 Larry E. Miller/Equippers Ministry

Main Thot: Destructive Self Righteous Religion Versus Supreme Value of Knowing Christ

Issue of opponents at Philippi. Mentioned several times – 1:15-17; 1:28; 3:1-4; 3:18,19
 One student of the epistle listed 18 different scholarly suggestions as to the identity of the opponents in chapter 3 alone.
 Maybe the most doctrinal portion of Philippians.
 Moises Silva, “Profound theological yet intensely personal (and practical)”

I. IDENTITY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE OPPOSERS – JUDAIZERS 3:1-6

A. Paul on The Offensive 1-3

1. He was greatly concerned about wrong doctrine

2. Description of the Opposers
 “dogs” A term Jewish religious people used to describe Gentiles or unbelievers in the one true Jehovah God of Israel.
 A strong, despicable description.
 - “evil workers” or “evil doers”
 - “false circumcision” or “mutilators of the flesh”
 - Had “confidence in (their own) flesh” achievements as a religious philosophy and way to achieve eternal life.

3. Identity - Almost certainly Judaizers who were professing Christians of Jewish origin who preached that the law was to be kept either to get into the Christian community or to stay in or both.

4. Why did Paul consider this danger so horrible
 At the core of authentic Christianity is the issued of justification by faith. Note Paul in Galatians 1:8,9 and 2:16

5. Who might be like this today?
6. How we ought to relate to them and treat them, particularly considering that we live in a postmodern world of pluralism and tolerance.

B. Mock Boasting 4-6

One might ask, "Why did Paul include this material?"

The Judaizers who threatened the Philippian church no doubt appealed to their impressive Jewish credentials in support of their message which was one of meriting righteousness, or self righteousness, or works-righteousness.

So perhaps Paul felt the need to remind the Philippians that his background was second to none.

1. "circumcised the eight day"
Sets Paul apart from pagans and perhaps groups that did not circumcise rightly.
2. "of the nation of Israel"
God's chosen people and even within Judaism not a proselyte who were sometimes perceived as sort of "second-class."
3. "of the tribe of Benjamin"
He was even of distinguished Benjamite descent. He could trace his descent and it was from this highly regarded tribe.
4. "a Hebrew of Hebrews"
Though Paul was born in Tarsus among pagans and Hellenized Jews, his parents made sure he spoke Hebrew (or Aramaic), not Greek.
He remained pure from the contamination of the culture in Tarsus.
His parents sent him to Jerusalem as a young boy and he entered the school of Gamaliel during his teens.
In other words he had the right upbringing and pedigree.
5. "as to the Law, a Pharisee"
He chose a religious lifestyle that left no doubts about his commitment.
6. "as to zeal, a persecutor of the church"
Per Gal. 1:13 "I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure (or with intensity) and tried to destroy it."
7. "as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless"
"righteousness . . . in the Law" probably refers to a code of conduct based on the Old Testament, an observable way of life.

Clearly Paul is making the point: **Put no confidence in fleshly works as a means to getting right with God.**

II. **RIGHT RESPONSE: THE ESSENCE OF PAULINE THEOLOGY** 3:7-11
 Word about doctrine and life, not one without the other.

A. 7-8 **Spiritual Bankruptcy**

1. vs. 7 The very things (vss. 5,6) that were formerly considered gains I came to see and see now as actual losses.

Major application: Two religious systems in the world.

One in which human beings try to do something to appease God, to gain favor, including eternal life with Him.

The other is authentic Christianity - right with God based on the Cross work of Christ, and the gift of salvation by grace through our faith response, not one ounce of works meriting righteousness.

2. vs 8 enlarges on the clause "for the sake of Christ" in vs. 7

He had not made an emotional impulsive decision to break with the past. It was a deep-seated resolution that he had never regretted. We are approaching the core of the Apostle Paul's theology. I almost feel like it is hallowed ground. Let's pay close attention.

Vs. 8 an unusual construction in the Greek language with powerful descriptive language.

3. "All things" are worthless in comparison to "gaining Christ" and "the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord"

- "gaining Christ" is parallel to "be found in Him" (vs. 9) and "knowing Him" (vss. 8, 10)
 And "surpassing" the idea of "rising above, excelling, greatness, the ultimate in life"
- "knowing Christ"
 1. The idea of objective truth about Him
 2. And a deeply personal subjective intimacy with Him and a love for Him.
 3. It includes both the initial knowledge of Him as Savior as well as the growing intimacy with Him that is available to anyone who chooses. And such a choice far surpasses the value of any other choice that can be made.

B. 9-11 **Spiritual Wealth** - Paul explaining what it means to "gain Christ."

1. **Justification** (or positional sanctification or saved from the penalty for sin) - vs. 9

Gaining Christ begins with being found in Him.

When judgment day comes Paul wants to be found in Christ, and will because already in Him. Looking back at the past.

Will not face God with self righteousness but the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ.

Martin Luther re the centrality of doctrine of justification to authentic Christianity
"It is the article by which the church stands or falls."

2. **Sanctification** (or progressive sanctification or being saved from the power of sin, or knowing Christ in a growing experiential way) - vs. 10

- Gaining Christ continues through the process of knowing Him better and better, more completely and fully.
- Being "conformed" is a present tense so process, qualifying the preceding in vs. 10. So Paul speaking of the present.
- Know through the experience of suffering difficulty and through it experience resurrection power.
Within the suffering can experience the life-giving power of God, the kind of power that brought Jesus Christ forth from the dead.

3. **Glorification** (complete sanctification or saved from the presence of sin, or knowing Christ in a perfect or complete way) - vs. 11

- Paul looking toward the future, to the *parousia*, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
While it is his great ambition and goal to increasingly experience the resurrection power of God in this life (vs. 10), here in vs. 11 he is saying that he is looking forward to the future resurrection of the body.
He does not merely look forward to bodily resurrection. He knows the process of being conformed to Christ in the suffering and resurrection sense is a process that will be completed for Paul at the *parousia*. He knows that resurrection represents perfection at every level of his existence (emotional, mental, spiritual, etc., as well as physical), the culmination of his spiritual pilgrimage.
- What about the language "in order that" or "in some way" or "and so, somehow" that begins vs. 11
Seems to imply some uncertainty about his own future resurrection. But this would be inconsistent with the confidence he expressed in 3:9 as well as 1:23 and 3:20,21.
According to Peter O'Brien, the construction can actually be "an expression of expectation." Also, what may be in view is the certainty of resurrection but the way or route to it is unclear.
Perhaps more suffering, even martyrdom?
Christ may come back before death?

Gems from Philippians VII

3:12-21

Destructive Self-Indulgence or Hope of Future Glory

Coast Bible Conference

July 8-13

Larry Miller/Equippers Ministry

Issue of maturity. Different ways to look at it.

1. Some have likened maturity to the “spiritual man” of I Cor. 2:14-15 versus the “natural man” (vs. 14) or the “fleshly men” or “men of flesh” (3:1)
2. Some have said a mature man is one who knows and understands sound doctrine (Eph. 4:14).
3. Then others point out that Hebrews 5:14 which says “solid food is for the mature, who because of **practice** (emphasis mine) have their senses trained (or exercised) to discern good and evil.
4. And also it can rightly be pointed out that Paul pens in Ephesians 4:13 that maturity of a person is measured by how much or far he has progressed toward Christlikeness. And all these certainly have some validity.
5. Let me suggest that we just may see in the Philippians 3:12ff passage another way to look at maturity. The mature person, like Paul, is he who knows he has not come to know Christ nearly as well as could and is committed, focused, determined to keep making progress in that direction.

Silva calls this section practical theology. Need to bring behavior in life with doctrinal commitment.

Main Thot: 3:12-21 **Destructive Self-Indulgent Living Versus Life Motivated by Future Glory**

I. THE MATURITY OF PRESSING FORWARD – 12-14, 17

A. The Major Goal of Paul’s Life

1. Vs. 12-14 all speaking of the same thing. Really helps to understand the passage. “obtained” or “attained” or “obtained it” in vs. 12 vs. 13 “laid hold of it” or “apprehended it”
2. What is he speaking about? Very important to get this right to understand the passage. What is “the prize?” (vs. 14)
It must be the full and complete gaining of Christ. Vs. 8
It must be “to know Him fully” vs. 8 and 10 amplifying what ultimate gaining of Christ is. It would be to be in perfect intimacy and fellowship with Him. It is the “surpassing value” that is so great that Paul says in comparison everything else is a loss. It is to finish well as indicates in passages like I Cor. 9:24-27; II Timothy 4:6-8.

B. Note the Amazing Focus Paul has toward this goal, this prize.

Don’t know about you but I am sort of “blown away” or a bit timid as I consider the language here. Paul was clear-minded; no fuzziness. He knew where He was going and remained on course.

1. Note the negatives in 12a and 13a - He knows he has not reached full maturity or perfection.
2. Then note his ongoing determination expressed as positives in 12b and 13b
 - a. “lay hold of” vigorously pursue like a basket ball player; seize, take a firm grip like tackling a speedy halfback

because he “was laid hold of” (same word) by Christ.
 Perhaps speaking of his conversion on the road to Damascus
 The risen and exalted Christ had mightily arrested him and turned him around.
 According to Pauline doctrine he had:

- Left the glory of celestial heaven to come to sin torn planet earth
- Humbled himself to become a man like us
- Chosen to die voluntarily a sufficient Substitutionary death
- Risen from the dead to give life to spiritually dead people
- Sent God the Holy Spirit who convinced
- Sent God the Holy Spirit who enabled faith
- Sent God the Holy Spirit to regenerate and seal
- Made the way for God the Father to lavish on us the riches of His grace

Paul knew these things to be true of him so he was vigorously reaching out and forward.

- b. In 13b this “one thing I do” He was focused.
 Often we are too busy today to have such a focus.
 He declares singleness of focus and concentration of effort.

He does not look back to see who he is beating so can be proud.
 He does not look back to see how he has been sacrificing and serving
 so can relax and stand still.

He does not assume that he has arrived thus can sit smugly as though
 there is no more reaching and growing to do.

No he keeps straining forward toward the finish line like a runner in a race.

Note in 15a is the clincher where Paul clearly declares the above attitude to be the attitude of maturity.

II. THE DISTURBING SELF-INDULGENT GROUPS WITHIN - 15-19

Per vs. 15a the mature would adopt the same attitude.
 But there are other types in the church at Philippi -15b

A. The “False Maturity” Group - 15 -16

1. Perhaps some that thought they had arrived and were mature.
2. Perhaps some who believed they had graduated to some sort of sinlessness therefore they did not need to be concerned about sin.
3. Need God to internally reveal such wrong and immature attitude.

B. The “Licentious Living” or “Antinomian” Group - 17,18,19 Or we might say the fleshly living overt sinful lifestyle group.

1. Paul is the model for right behavior.
2. Paul exhorts others to observe and follow him and the group walking like him – vs. 17
 Note the importance of setting the right example and following the right example.

3. Then Paul moves on to another group, a group including many (“many walk”)in the church, and you can sense his sadness.
Per Moises Silva, “These verses are charged with considerable emotion.”

It is a group that caused Paul to “weep” = loud expression of pain;
His grief was intense; deeply concerned for both these enemies and the danger to the congregation. These were professing Christians who lived in such a sinful, licentious manner that they appeared to be “enemies of the Cross.”

Either denied the necessity of the Cross or perhaps did not deny it’s necessity, but they did not think it meant anything as far as daily living is concerned.

A major danger and issue among even supposed “born again” Christians today.

Could there be any such people here today? Thanks be to God for the opportunity of confession and return to intimacy with Christ.
We do not really want to be seen as “enemies of the Cross” do we?

4. See their description in 19.

Four short, frightening statements about their character and destiny.
And remember these are within the church but actually behaving as though they are enemies of the Cross.

- “whose end is destruction” come back to this destiny
- “whose god is their appetite” = NIV “stomach,” KJ “belly”
This is their present attitude.
Probably figure of speech referring to their inner person or own fleshly impulses.
Would be interested chiefly in pleasure and those things that momentarily make one happy.
Would include bodily desires and sensual delights such as gluttony, drunkenness, inappropriate sexual behavior.
So speaking of people who regularly serve such self-centered impulses, in other words are regularly dominated by self-indulgence.

Here is a quote from Greek literature of the day, the thinking of the Cyclops in Euripedes.
My flocks which I sacrifice to no one by myself, and not to the gods, and to this my belly, the greatest of the gods; for to eat and drink each day, and to give one’s self no trouble, this is the god of wise men.

- “whose glory is their shame”
Either:
 - a. They take pride in the things that should be shameful.
They behave as they choose and their moral practices are shameful.
 - b. Or This shame describes the fate of those who are rejected at the last judgment.
God’s glory will be manifested but they will be covered with shameful disgrace.
They deny a lifestyle of practical righteousness and awake to God’s sentence of destruction when it is too late. Sobering!

- “who set their minds on earthly things”

Or “their whole orientation is earthly”

It speaks of their mind set, their mental attitude, their disposition and basic aims, chief focus. It is on “earthly” issues rather than “heavenly” issues. Cf.. vs. 20

The mindset here is on that which is only temporary and passing away rather than that which lasts for eternity.

It can also refer those who are influenced or dominated by anti-God worldviews.

Sitting at my desk 6/5 thinking about this portion of the inspired text penned by the Apostle Paul. It is such strong and powerful language. O God, I do not ever want to lead people astray; to teach non truth. But then it is my role to mine this material, to dig it out for us with focus and accuracy. And ultimately I can trust God to make clear to each individual the application he or she is to make of it. Remember in 3:15, “if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you.”)

Major Issue: Are these professors true believers?

Their lifestyle would imply they are not.

They, within the church, and probably professing Christians, are living such as was so as to boast of their liberty and freedom.

Be a bit careful here but I am confident we can identify 3 possibilities.

1. Could be true believers who are for the present period of time living lives that are dishonoring to God, destructive to themselves and the witness of the Cross of Christ. Solution is to confess, repent, be restored to intimacy.
2. Could be true believers who are in the same error as Paul addressed in Galatians 5:1ff. They have misunderstood or misused grace as though it allows for liberty that leads them to license. And do not understand that this liberty needs to be subordinated to the law of love (Gal. 5:13) “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” Gal. 5:14 Cf. Lev. 19:18; John 13:24, 35 And remember Jesus Christ said if you love me keep My commandments. John 15:10a, “If you keep My commandments you will abide in My love;”
3. Could be within the church but not really believers at all. (My understanding) “whose end is destruction” Commonly understood as referring to eternal condemnation. The term *apoleia* means this in 1:28 and in most of the its 18 NT usages. A couple of other examples include John 17:12; II Thess. 2:3; Rev. 17:8

So these, though probably professing Christians, who are behaving as enemies of the Cross, are probably really unbelievers, unregenerate thus headed into a Christless eternity.

III. CONTRAST BETWEEN TWO DESTINIES - 19-21

Two messages on Heaven and Hell forthcoming.

Hell
Coast Bible Conference/July '07
Larry E. Miller
Equippers Ministry

Issue of hell and preaching on it.

1. Steve LoVelette, Pastor of Faith Church in Cincinnati, Ohio
Story about family leaving the church because in the past 5-6 years had not preached on or mentioned hell once. The day I was there, January 8, 2006, he did an entire sermon on the subject. Some of the material below from that sermon.
2. According to a U.S. News and World Report article many of the Main Line Denominations do not talk about hell any more.
3. Over my years as a Pastor I have struggled with speaking on the issue, not for the same reasons as those above, but because it is a deeply moving subject for me.
 - a. To think long about the reality of such a place, how absolutely awful it will be, is a mental and emotional challenge.
 - b. And to think about people I know or have known who are or will almost certainly be there, including family members and friends, is almost unbearable.
4. It is helpful to note that Jesus Christ addressed the subject of hell more than anyone else in scripture. Someone has determined that about 13% of all that he taught dealt with the subject of hell. So if it was that important to Him, it certainly must be to us.

As we come to the conclusion of Philippians chapter 3 we see indeed a reference to both hell and heaven. So an amplification with this message on hell and next one on heaven.

Philippians 3:19-21 a **CONTRAST BETWEEN TWO DESTINIES**

- A. Destiny of Destruction - 19
A Horrific Prospect
- B. A Destiny of Glory - 20,21
A Glorious Prospect

Today the **The Destiny of Destruction, or Hell, a Horrific Prospect**

I. **THE FIRST SHOCKING TRUTH MAY BE THAT**, Yes we would expect pagans to go there but here we see many professing Christians, many within the church, will go there. Now note well that I said professing Christians who are a part of the church, not those who are genuinely born again, in the body of Christ, etc.

- A. Note from vs. 18 that “many walk” as though they are enemies of the cross of Christ.
Reasons why we conclude these are within the church?

B. Their Destiny Is Eternal Condemnation, Hell Itself

Note the phrase “whose end is destruction”

1. Word meaning here is the idea of “ruin, destruction, particularly in the sense of eternal perdition.” Perdition means in this usage “the loss of the soul, damnation, hell.”
2. Note some other usages:
 - John 17:12 of Judas
 - II Thess. 2:3 used on man of lawlessness often called the antichrist.
 - II Peter 2:1,3 – false prophets and false teachers
 - Rev. 17:8,11 Cf. Rev. 20:20
3. Because of the above and because they behave as enemies of the cross and because of the contrast starting with Phil. 3:20, it is almost certainly a reference to Eternal condemnation, eternal judgment, damnation, hell.

II. WORDS TRANSLATED HELL AND OTHER DESCRIPTIONS OF Hell

Issue of whether these are to be taken literally or not. I am inclined to think so. But even if they are figures of speech, metaphors - this is like that- these are horrific descriptions.

- A. *genna* – 11 times and 10 of these by Jesus Christ
Couple of examples:
 1. Mt. 23:33
 2. Mark 9:43
- B. *hades* – 10 times and 5 used by Jesus Christ
Note this memorable passage - Luke 16:23
- C. Synonyms or horrible descriptions of Hell

[Sitting at my desk AM Saturday, 6/9 thinking through some of this material. My mind was challenged. I looked out my window and saw a beautiful “sego” plant. The trees were a beautiful green color. The sun was rising in the east ; the sky was beautiful. The homes are beautiful, landscaped. It was still quite early on a Saturday. Families were relatively safe, some enjoying young children who are so beautiful, smiling, playful, and affectionate. Thought of Robert Browning’s poem, “God is in heaven and all is well on the earth.”]

So I was/am challenged, “Do I really believe the revelation from God, the holy scriptures, the Bible, the words of Jesus Christ? And though the subject is sobering the answer is **yes, I do believe!** Note these descriptions:

- “furnace of fire” - Mt. 13:42
- “unquenchable fire” - Mark 9:43
- “flame of fire” – II Th. 1:8

full vengeance or “retribution” (from God) - II Thess. 1:8

“eternal destruction” - II Thess. 1:9

“away from the presence of God” - II Thess. 1:9

“weeping and gnashing of teeth” – Mt. 13:42; 22:13

“outer darkness” - Mt. 8:12; 25:30

“lake of fire and brimstone” - Rev. 20:10

“tormented . . . forever and ever”- Rev. 20:10

amplify - strongest way in Greek language to eternity future

“forever and ever and ever and ever”

Eternal judgment and condemnation

III. NOW WANT TO ANSWER A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT HELL

Indebted to Pastor Steve LoVette for much of the following material.

Questions # 9 What was God’s original purpose in creating hell?

Question #8 Who has the power to send someone to hell

Question #7 What will hell be like?

Question # 6 Will hell really last forever?

Question #5 Will there be degrees of punishment in hell?

Question # 4 What about the person who has never heard of Christ?

Question #3 Does hell help us understand that justice prevails in the universe?

Question #2 Is it true that Christ endured hell to display his love for the world?
Think so.

Question #1 Does God offer a pardon form hell?

Absolutely!! And the fact that anyone would refuse it is utterly amazing. It testifies to the pride of man's heart and the darkness of his mind.

Someone with the wherewithal paid the penalty, paid the price in our place.
God can now be just and offer a pardon. Bur we have to receive it; to accept it.

What did Jesus Christ come to save us from?

From a life lacking purpose?

From an unhappy life?

From a non abundant life?

No, ultimately from **Hell!**

The better we understand the reality of hell and what we truly deserve, for eternity.
Then the better we grasp and appreciate heaven, grace, the love of God.

Conclusion

The church is different things to different people.

But please do not forget, it is a lighthouse, operating a rescue operation.

Invitation:

To those who have not received this pardon, drop to your knees.

Not a fanatic. Heaven and Hell are real.

Good people do not go to heaven.

Forgiven people go to heaven.

The truth will set you free.

There are two destinies, eternal destinies!

To which world do you belong?

And how much do you appreciate the gracious and loving God who delivered you?

And remember, as citizens of a different kingdom, the heavenly kingdom, one of our responsibilities is to give a high priority to the advance of the gospel.

Heaven
Cost Bible Conference/July '07
Larry E. Miller
Equippers Ministry

I. Musings About Heaven

A. Common views about heaven

1. Typical view of non-Christians

2. Even Christians often have serious misperceptions about heaven.

B. Certainty of Death and Post Death Existence

“As human beings we have a terminal disease called *mortality*. The current death rate is 100 percent. Unless Christ returns soon, we’re all going to die. We don’t like to think about death; yet, worldwide, 3 people die every second, 180 every minute, and nearly 11,000 every hour. If the bible is right about what happens to us after death, it means that more than 250,000 people every day go either to Heaven or Hell.”

And Heaven is not our default destination. For every American who believes he’s going to Hell, there are 120 who believe they are going to Heaven. However, no one goes there automatically. Unless our sin problem is resolved, the only place we will go is our true default destination . . . Hell.

C. Almost everyone believes in a heaven

D. Fear of death is common

E. We really desire what God promises to those who are in Christ Jesus: a resurrected life in a resurrected body, with the resurrected Christ in Heaven, including the New Earth.

II. (Reasonably) Clear Biblical Teaching About Heaven

A. Heaven Will be Our Future Glory – Phil. 3:20,21

1. There is Hope as we eagerly await the final salvation that will certainly be brought by our Lord Jesus Christ.

So there is presently, now **hope, certainty because of who Jesus Christ is and because we are in the kingdom of heaven already.**

Application: Note how elsewhere we are exhorted regarding the change in current behavior that should occur because of this hope.

I John 3:2,3

II Peter 3:14

Romans 15:11-12

I Thessalonians 5:4-6

2. The feature of the Lord's saving activity at the *parousia* is the transformation of our weak mortal bodies into the likeness of His own glorified body. So a new kind of body.

3. The power to do so is the same as the power of Jesus Christ to subject all things to Himself.

B. Where will Heaven Be?

1. It will be a place - John 14:1-3

Hints – The third heaven – II Cor. 12:2

Paradise – II Cor. 12:4

John 14:1-3 Where Jesus Christ is and will be, with us

Holy City, Jerusalem – Rev. 21:9-22:5

2. One possibility - We will live eternally, at least in part, on the new earth.

- a. God's redemption includes all that has been cursed, including mankind and the earth. Romans 8:20,21

- b. Alcorn, The new earth will be a continuation of this present earth with all the effects of the curse removed. God intends to renew, to recover, to return, to restore this cursed earth to its original design and intent.

Note II Peter 3:13; Rev. 21:1

Debated.

Many see the destruction of this earth and a totally new and different kind of earth created. Example : Dr. John Walvoord

Many understand otherwise. Let me just stretch us a bit today.

- c. For third bit of evidence note the language of Rev. 21:10, 22, 23,24 and 22:3,4,5

III. **What Will our experiences and Activities Be Like in Heaven?** Wow!

Remember we will be a totally transformed being including a new body.

1. **We will never again experience sorrow**, death, tears, disease and all the results of the curse and living in a sinful and cursed world – Rev. 21:4
2. **We will be delivered from the very presence of sin**, including the sin within our own bosoms. I John 3:2 permanently, forever
3. **We will be in the presence of God the Father and the Lamb** - Rev. 21:3; 22:3b
 - Wherever we go in heaven we will be in the immediate presence of the full glory of God; we will enjoy the complete manifestation of God's presence.
 - God will bring with Him the New Jerusalem—Heaven's capital.
Note Hebrews 11:16
4. **We will see the face of God** – Rev. 21:4
A real challenge to get our minds around this one.
 - We may imagine we want a thousand different things but God is the one we really long for. God's greatest gift to us is Himself.
 - To see God's face in this life is utterly unthinkable.
Ill. Moses Ex. 33:18-33; and note I Timothy 6:16
 - To behold His face means something radical must happen between now and then. This is the wonder of redemption.
 - We get foretastes now
Hebrews 10:19; 4:16 The blood of Jesus Christ has bought us full access to God's throne room and His most holy place. Even now welcomed there in prayer.
Prayer group experience

5. **We will serve the Lamb of God, our Lord Jesus** – Rev. 22:3 (Cf. 7:15)
The Lamb and his servants are forever together.

6. **We will reign with the Lamb** - Rev. 22:5 (Cf. 5:10; 20:4-6)
 - a. Yes, will reign during the millennium - Rev. 20:4
 - b. But will also reign for eternity – Rev. 22:5
 - c. There will be land, countries, cities.

7. **We will worship God the Father and the Lamb forever** – Rev. 22:9

Note the command in 22:9

And it will all be for eternity. ☺

Conclusion

1. God is resurrecting, renewing, reestablishing Paradise Lost, His Edenic place and as redeemed mankind we will live there eternally.

Some questions about the nature of this place but come back to what we know and **be thankful and worship.**
2. Remember that we are the bride awaiting the coming of the bridegroom for the consummation of the marriage to our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. We are a displaced people, longing for our home. C. S. Lewis said, “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”
4. Nothing may be more often misdiagnosed than our homesickness for Heaven. We think that what we want is sex, drugs, alcohol, a new job, a raise, a doctorate, a spouse, a large-screen high definition TV, a new car, a cabin in the woods, a condo in Hawaii. What we really want is the person we were made for, Jesus Christ, and the place we were made for in Heaven.
5. Invitation “Come” in Rev. 22:17-21

Remember the two destinies. **Thank God for His grace!!!** Otherwise we each and all would face the horrific Hell for eternity.