

Whose Example Are You Following? (Part 2)

Philippians 3:17-21

I. Don't Follow the Example of Fake Christians (vv.18-19).

A. We need to be on guard against Fake Christians in the church.

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For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. (v.18)

B. We know who some of the Fake Christians are because they show no signs of spiritual life.

1. They focus on satisfying their physical appetites.

their god is their belly

2. They are proud of what they should be ashamed of.

they glory in their shame

3. They have a worldly view of life.

with minds set on earthly things.

“Earthly things are not the practical affairs of everyday life, but things that characterize worldly life in opposition to God.”

- Frank Thielman

C. We know that Fake Christians are not
Real Christians because they end up in
hell.

their end is destruction (v.19a).

II. Follow the Example of Faithful Christians (vv.17, 20-21).

A. We need to identify faithful Christians in our church and learn from them.

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Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. (v.17)

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Imitate us (2 Thess.3:7)

This is to be every Christian's commitment:

Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. (3:15)

B. We need to identify the qualities of faithful Christians that make them worthy of imitating.

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keep your eyes on those who live as we do.
(v.17, NIV)

“If we Christians are responsible for finding suitable examples to emulate, then of course when we do, we shall become suitable examples whom others will emulate. Not all ministry in the church is verbal; not all ministry is prominent. But all Christians are called upon to set a standard of talk and life that influences a new generation of converts in a godly and Christ-honoring way.”

– D.A. Carson

C. We can be confident that, as faithful Christians, we are citizens of the kingdom of God now, and will be forever (vv.20-21).

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We are at this moment, citizens of heaven as well as citizens of the USA.

But our citizenship is in heaven (v.20a)

“Paul chose an appropriate figure to express the truth of the Christian’s dual citizenship. Philippi was a Roman colony. A Roman colony was the city of Rome transplanted into some part of the Empire. The colonists [lived] with the pride [and privileges] of Roman citizens.”

– Ray Robbins

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Their end is destruction (3:19a).

Or,

Will we live according to the eternal values
of God like committed Christians do?

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Jesus Christ . . . will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (3:20b-21)