

# Pressing on in Christian Maturity, Part 2

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     So go ahead and open up your Bibles to Philippians chapter 3. We're going to read that passage. The passage we'll be looking at this morning in just a minute. But I wanted to start with something. Has anybody ever been in a position where something that you own in your house or maybe your car or a lawnmower, it broke and you need to fix it?
- You don't really want to pay somebody else to fix it. You want to try to save some money. Maybe it's your dishwasher. I've had my dryer go out. And you need some help.
- So one of the things that you can do when you need some help fixing something is you can open up the manual. And read through the manual. But sometimes it just doesn't help.
- You're still somewhat confused. So what is it that a lot of people go to today instead of the manual or on top of the manual?
- Google it. I heard Google it. What else? YouTube. YouTube. Right? YouTube has been tremendous for fixing things. Because you can always find something.
- [ 1 : 0 8 ]     I always find it amazing. It doesn't matter what it is. I can look. For example, I've had to change the headlight on my car. Well, how do I do this? Some of them are pretty easy.
- Some of them are a little bit more challenging. But I can search for the exact model car in the exact year. And I can find somebody who has a five-minute video of how to change the headlights on that specific car.
- It's pretty amazing. And why do we find that so valuable? And why do we find that so valuable? I think even about experts. Because, you know, when you're fixing something like a dryer in your house, it's probably something you've never done before.
- But even people who are experts in somebody. Maybe they're an expert in woodworking. But they can find value, right, of watching somebody else work on wood through a video.
- By seeing examples of what they do. And so today, one of the things that we're going to consider is the value of having examples.
- [ 2 : 1 3 ]     People demonstrating to us how to live the Christian life. Last week, we talked about the importance of a race that we are in.
- The Bible says that, and what we talked about last week, is that when we start our Christian lives, when we trust in Jesus Christ, and we are given the free gift of salvation, the free gift of eternal life, that's not the end of our Christian walk.
- It's not the end of our Christian life. It's just the beginning. And we are running a race, a race to grow in Christ. To be more like Him.
- And so, but the question is, how do we grow? How do we grow to be more like our Lord? And there are instructions in the Bible, right? The Bible is our manual for life.
- But is it just the Bible that we have to look to? Is it only God's Word? Well, if it was, that would be sufficient, I think, right? But God didn't just leave us with His Word.
- [ 3 : 2 1 ]     As it's described here in this passage, as Paul gives instruction, we also have examples that we can look to. We have the example of Jesus Christ Himself that's described in the Bible.

But we also have people in our lives. People who are part of what the Bible calls the body of Christ. It's that Christian family that we all belong to.

And so, we can look to those who are mature, who have grown in their walk with the Lord, and they can be examples to us as well.

Examples of practically walking out the Christian life. But, as we'll read this morning, we do have to be careful about the examples that we follow.

So, let's go ahead and read Philippians chapter 3 and verse 17. And we're actually going to go into verse 1 of chapter 4. You know, when the Bible was not originally written with the chapter and verse, those were added in later.

[ 4 : 27 ] And sometimes, I think they usually do a really good job, I think, of dividing things up. But sometimes, I think they might be off in their divisions a little bit. In this case, I think verse 1 of the next chapter really goes well, or best with the end here of chapter 3.

So, we're going to include that this morning. Philippians chapter 3, verse 17. Brethren, join in following my example. And note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things.

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body, that it may be conformed to his glorious body, according to the working by which he is able, even to subdue all things to himself.

Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. You know, in Philippians chapter 2, the chapter right before this one, we are told to emulate our Savior, Jesus Christ, in what he did, in his example of his condescension from heaven to become a man, and also in his death for our sins.

[ 6 : 00 ] He demonstrated a love and a humility that we all should emulate. But you know, it can be kind of intimidating, for all of us, right, that us, mere mortals, us who are, quote, only human, to try to emulate, you know, the perfect God of heaven.

To live up to that kind of standard can be hard for us to really wrap our minds around. And for some people, you might think, well, living the Christian life is just an impossible endeavor.

How could I attain to that kind of life? And you know what? Growing in spiritual maturity does take time.

But I think we do need to understand that that growth is attainable. That becoming more like Christ is something that we can attain to.

Now, Paul says, specifically, and we looked at this last week, he says, I have not yet attained, I haven't fully made it there. I don't know that he would expect that he would ever make it completely to being like Christ.

[ 7 : 21 ] But he says what? He says, I press on to that goal of the high mark or the high calling in Jesus Christ.

And here, he's giving some encouragement to his brethren and telling them that they don't just have Jesus as an example. Even though Jesus is the perfect example, but we can actually find examples in our daily life with those who are around us.

Paul gives himself as an example, but then he says, hey, anyone who walks in the same manner. You know, Paul is actually fairly generous in asking people to emulate him.

Now, to me, that's kind of an intimidating thing. In 1 Corinthians 4, verse 15, Paul says this, he says, for though you might have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers.

For in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you to imitate me. And you know, that word imitate is actually the same word as we just read in this verse, to follow, to follow me.

[ 8 : 39 ] That word imitate and follower are many times translations of the same Greek word. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 32, Paul says this, give no offense either to the Jew or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men and all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved.

And he finishes up with this, imitate me just as I also imitate Christ. He just gave some instruction and an example and he uses himself as the example for them to follow.

In 2 Corinthians, chapter 3, verse 6, Paul teaches this. He says, but we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.

There are some people that you need to withdraw from. And he says this, for you yourselves know how you ought to follow us. Withdraw us from some people and follow others.

for we are not, for we were not disorderly among you, nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day that we might not be a burden to any of you.

[ 10 : 06 ] Not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. Paul was giving an example there.

He says, hey, when we were among you, we weren't there just to get your stuff. We were there to minister unto you and we did it without asking much from you.

And you should walk in a similar way, not demanding from others, even if you might have the authority to do so like we did, but being generous with what you give.

So we can follow Paul as he follows Christ, imitate Paul as he imitates Christ, but there are also others that we can imitate.

You know, no Christian lives the Christian life perfectly, but you know what? Many Christians live the Christian life well, and that's what we all should strive to do.

[ 11 : 13 ] So why are examples important? You know, the Bible is a big book, right? Some people will attempt to read the Bible in a year and it takes some dedication.

If I remember correctly, I think it takes about 20 minutes a day, 20 to 30 minutes a day depending on your reading speed to get through the entire Bible in a whole year. That takes some time.

And the Bible is a big book. And there are actually lots of examples of people's lives in the Bible that we can look to. And the Bible itself, the Bible is a sufficient resource and guide for all of life.

It is all that we need. But you know, the Bible cannot address every single situation in life.

It cannot answer every question at least directly. It provides principles for just about everything that you can imagine. But even, I think about the end of the Gospel of John.

[ 12 : 18 ] The very last verse of the Gospel of John says this about the life of Jesus. You know, Jesus, his life was an example to us. But it says, John says this, he says, there were many things that Jesus did but the world could not contain the book that would be written if we were to include everything that Jesus did.

And so we have, besides the Bible, we have the lives of other believers, mature Christians, who can help expand the Word of God for us through their demonstrating the principles of God's Word in their daily life, in their daily living.

Applying it to the time and the place where we live. Applying it to the cultural context of our lives. And then just the specific circumstances.

I think of just a few examples. You know, the Bible says that we do not grieve as those without hope. Right? But still, grieving is difficult when you lose a son or a brother or a parent.

When us as mature Christians, we can demonstrate to those around us what it looks like practically to grieve not with despair but with hope, with our trust and hope in the Lord.

[ 13 : 53 ] I think about examples like when somebody is living paycheck to paycheck and money is tight and you lose a job and life is difficult and demonstrating how in that kind of a situation that you can put your trust in the Lord regardless of what's going on around you.

Dealing with the hostility that might be in our culture against us as Christians or the values that we hold. Some people do it well and some people don't do deal with that so well.

Another one I think that is very unique today in this day and age that I don't know has been really a thing at any point in human history is there is this rebellion against biology today and the Bible doesn't really speak to that.

What happens when people don't know the difference between a boy and a girl? The Bible doesn't really speak directly to that issue but there are principles right? and so when you are in a work situation and somebody says well I don't want you to refer to me as he or she I want you to refer to me as they or there or whatever nonsense really that people make up.

How do you as a Christian deal with that in a workplace situation? and you're not going to find a chapter and a verse for it but there are principles and you can look at the example of others and how they deal with situations like that.

[ 15 : 31 ] So back to our text Philippians 3 17 again he says brethren join in following my example and note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern just a couple of language things again I mentioned this a little bit ago but when he says join in following my example that word following is actually a word that means to imitate or to emulate the actual Greek word looks a little bit like mimic because that's that's kind of what it means so it very literally means to mimic my example do the things that I'm doing he's saying and then he says and note those who so walk note those take note just notice one but that word is actually in some translations I think the King James uses the term mark mark those kind of put a pin in it right mark those and interestingly enough it's the same word mark that we see in verse 14 where

Paul says that we need to press forward to the mark of the goal of the high calling that we have in Jesus Christ so you're running a race and there is this marker out there right and that's the goal that we're running to and so we can look at those who are a good example and we can see that as a mark that we set we're going to mark that we're going to note that that is the lifestyle that they're living that's the kind of lifestyle that I want to live they are doing a good job and living like the Lord would want them to live so pay attention to those who are around you mark take notice of who's living the Christian life well and also who's not doing a great job whose example do we not want to follow we'll get to that more in a second and that by the way might feel to you to be judgmental right and there's a lot especially in the culture

I think the one verse that everybody knows whether they're Christian or not is from Matthew I think it's Matthew chapter 7 judge not but they only know the first two words of that verse right and so it's especially used to try to bully Christians into not making good judgments about the world around them right but is that what we're supposed to avoid as Christians is making good judgments no not at all we need to make good judgments and that includes just paying attention to those who are around us who's living the Christian life well!

that doesn't mean that we need to hold up a big sign that points to our neighbors saying they're not doing a good job right but hey we can take notes mental notes we can even write things down if we need to for ourselves we need to know who are those who are worth following now when it comes to evaluating people to follow leaders in the faith it requires discernment and how do you know if somebody's living a godly Christian life if what they're teaching is good and true well really there is only one way and it's by applying their life to the standard of what of God's word it makes me think about the Bereans described in Acts chapter 17 Paul came to the Berean he came to this city called Berea and he was teaching them some actually these were

Jews he was teaching them these new ideas about Jesus and what Jesus was all about and it says that they they listened to him and they considered it and that they went to the scriptures to see if the things that he was saying was supported by the Bible Acts 17 11 it says these were more fair minded than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness and they searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so you know but I think as we there have been many people who I have looked to for emulation to walk after to follow after to be like over the years and you know for some of them maybe years later I realized that was a mistake I made a mistake I shouldn't have followed that person at least in this thing or that right and that will happen as we grow and look for godly examples in our lives when it comes to following godly examples

[ 20 : 52 ] I think there's kind of two groups that I think of those who are distant maybe even those who've passed on who aren't even here in the earth anymore but you can read a good biography right from a Christian's life and it can be an example to you you can read a book that they wrote whether somebody living or dead or listen to a sermon that somebody preaches but I think it's always best the best kind of examples are those who are right in front of us those who are in our lives those that we walk with on a regular basis we spend time with them and we can learn their way of life and we can if things come up ask them questions and seek counsel from them about how would you do this and the other thing that this brings up as we look at following those who are good examples examples is that it is important for there to be good examples in the body of

Christ so not only should we follow those who are good examples but we need ourselves to be the good example to others and so we can ask the question right now I think we should all ask this question can we say like Paul did can we say to others I want you to follow me as I'm following Christ I want you to emulate the way that I am living my life and if we and I think everybody's going to feel some level of discomfort right because we just don't live the Christian life perfectly but can we can we do that in general right hey in general even though I make some mistakes is the my way of life something that is worth other people emulating in when Paul was writing to Timothy he gave this exact instruction 1st Timothy 4 2 he says this to

Timothy let no one despise your youth but be an example to the believers and he gives a list in word in conduct in love in spirit in faith and in purity especially if you're a leader of some kind and that includes most of us because we're all leaders right in some kind of way even just a parent right is a leader mom and a dad and so we need to be an example not just instructing our children for example but also showing them the way and in being an example it's hard to be an example if you're not involved in the lives of those around you if you just kind of spend a lot of time alone by yourself people can't really see the demonstration of your life in front of them and so it's important that we be involved in the lives of others all right next verse here verse 18 you just talked about those that we should follow we should note those who are good examples and now he's going to talk about we should do the same thing with those who are bad examples note them as well verse 18 for many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ whose end is destruction whose

God is their belly and whose glory is in their shame who set their mind on earthly things just a few notes again on the language here or just a few things to point out with what he's saying I find it interesting that he says for many walk this is these these are people who are not walking as they should he said there are many bad examples in fact from my observation there are many more bad examples of how to live the Christian life than there are good examples that's unfortunate but we need to be discerning and be aware and then the other thing that is interesting is that when he talks about these people who are bad examples who are not living the Christian life well or maybe not at all maybe they're complete frauds is he says I tell you even weeping this is something that causes Paul great sorrow tremendous sorrow and one he doesn't want these people to be walking that way and two

I'm sure it causes great sorrow because of the bad influence that they have on others this kind of warning by the way is not unique to just this passage I'd like to look at another one that is very very similar this is in Romans chapter 16 Romans chapter 16 verse 17 Romans 16 17 he says this now I urge you brethren to note those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you learned and avoid them for those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple there's a phrase that there are certain people that you need to mark and avoid there's some that you need to mark and follow and others you need to mark and avoid and that's what this passage in

[ 27 : 06 ] Romans is getting at we need to mark certain people again we don't have to put up a neon sign for everybody else even though sometimes that's appropriate right we can give a warning to people about others that you should not listen to or follow but at the very least mark in your mind make a mental note and avoid those people alright so a big question from this verse chapter or verse 18 who exactly is Paul talking about here is he talking about unbelievers is he talking about believers believers well it's actually this has caused a lot of people some matter of confusion right so if you're kind of feeling like you have a question here about who he's talking about you're not on your own there are many Bible commentators who have debated about who exactly Paul is talking about one idea is that he's talking about some of these

Jewish believers that he referenced early on in chapter 3 here those that he actually calls dogs and mutilators of the flesh those who we call Judaizers who are teaching Christian believers that in order to either be saved or have a more perfect relationship with God you had to be circumcised they wanted to apply the Jewish law to the new Gentile Christian Christians and so that's one possible group and the other is just really more on the Gentile side those who would be you might call them libertines those who would use the Christian liberty as a means to just do whatever you want to throw off all constraint to live with loose morals in your life and so

I think we should consider both because I think they both apply regardless of whether Paul had one in mind or the other or maybe he actually had both in mind we're not sure but we can consider both because I think both are equally dangerous people the other thing to ask is Paul here talking about like complete frauds wolves in sheep's clothing or is he talking about people who are actually true believers you know as you read this it seems that Paul is speaking in very black and white terms right he's indicating just going back to that verse many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are enemies of the cross of Christ that seems like a very black and white term there's the side of good and the side of evil and they're on the side of our enemies and then he mentions that their end is destruction sounds like people who are headed to hell and I will say this that there are plenty of complete frauds fakes phonies con artists who masquerade as

Christians even in Christian churches sometimes they stand behind a pulpit but they are not legitimate Christians they are in it for money or power or some other ends but I also think that we need to be aware that even genuine Christians can lead us astray even genuine Christians can at least for a moment act as the enemies of the cross and they can teach or give an example towards some kind of thing whose end is destruction even genuine believers can do such a thing and I actually have one example it's a shocking example in the

Bible it's in the book of Galatians if you turn to Galatians chapter two and this is a story about two apostles Paul the apostle to the Gentiles and Peter who from what we read in Acts chapter 15 kept his ministry for the most part to the Jewish people but Paul describes a conflict that he had with Peter in this letter he wrote to the Galatians as he was encouraging the Galatians to avoid to mark and avoid Judaizers people who would teach them that they needed to keep the law of Moses and he told this account about him and Peter and I'll just read a few verses from this account Galatians chapter 2 verse 11 now when Peter had come to Antioch I withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed for before certain men came from James he would eat with the Gentiles but when they came he withdrew and separated himself fearing those who were of the circumcision and the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him so that even

[ 32 : 40 ] Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy now we don't know exactly what was going on there but in general this was this was at the church at Antioch which was primarily Gentile huge Gentile population or a large Gentile population in that church and there were some Jews from James from Jerusalem that came to visit who were still keeping the law of Moses because that's what they had been instructed to by the way by the Lord Jesus Christ in his earthly ministry but God had raised up Paul to do a new thing to take the gospel to the Gentiles and there was this agreement made in Acts chapter 15 this thing called the Jerusalem council in which the Jewish believers said hey we recognize that what God is doing in your ministry Paul is legit and we agree that we are not going to put these Gentile believers under the law but it still happened right and so something that

Peter did while he was there in Antioch he did something he acted in such a way to undermine the gospel of the grace of God to make those Gentile believers feel that they were not adequate because they were not Jews and at least on that day Peter himself became an enemy of the cross of Christ and it says that Paul withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed and so even somebody by the way Peter is somebody that we can emulate in his life isn't he now he made he made previous mistakes to this too right we can think about when that cock crowed after he denied the Lord Jesus just like all of us Peter is not perfect so we'll all make mistakes and even any one of us as a Christian at any moment could become enemies of the cross by undermining the grace of God through our speech or through our behavior so we ought to be careful and so I think regardless of whether Paul is here talking about people who are complete frauds or he's just talking about anyone even believers who can undermine the grace of God or God's you know or the righteousness that God teaches that we should walk and so we ought to be careful

I think of a few examples that we can consider today one of the ways we follow people is on social media right usually there's actually a follow button right oh I want to follow this person because I like what they have to say Facebook Instagram TikTok and even YouTube and there's a lot of good content and a lot of not so good content and you know what a lot in between and do what do you think that Paul would be making a warning here if what he's warning about is watching YouTube videos of people asking you to worship demons with them he probably wouldn't be providing this warning right that would be a little bit too obvious because what what we need to warn Christians about is the subtleties the subtleties and so I think of just a few examples I think about in conservatism right there's a lot of we we are conservative culturally right there's a battle between good and evil right and wrong in our culture between

Christian values and worldly pagan values and so there are a lot of people fighting that battle fighting that fight but some of them even though we align with them on many many values they will be the kind of person that will undermine Jesus Christ the gospel of Jesus Christ people who might even quote Bible verses right but they reject the gospel of Jesus Christ even even conservative Christians you know even among Christianity there are conservative churches and there are what we would call today woke churches right liberal churches progressive and so we want to be on the side of those that have biblical commitments to what is right and good and pure but just because somebody is on the side of traditional values does not mean that they uphold good doctrine that they uphold the grace of God

I have met people who I can stand with when it comes to right and wrong in the culture but they teach a very explicit works based salvation that you have to do this and this and this in order to be saved and so we have to be careful discerning with those that we follow and on the other end there might be those right who actually teach a very clear gospel message but they compromise in another area they compromise when it comes to issues of worldliness they actually bow when it comes to moral issues that the culture has capitulated on and so in any of those cases right we need to be discerning and watch who we follow all right

[ 38 : 44 ] Paul here lists in verse 18 five different features of a bad example and I want to talk about these and really kind of look at whether whether we're looking at a Jewish like Judaizer or maybe a Gentile who is loose kind of in their morals the first phrase that he uses he calls them enemies of the cross an enemy of the cross is not somebody who's against crosses right this is somebody who is going to undermine what Jesus accomplished on the cross the purpose of the cross of Christ Paul talks about the Jews in general right not all Jews but in his day in Romans 11 he says this Romans 11 28 as regards the gospel he's talking about the Jews they are enemies for your sake but as regards election they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers when it comes to the gospel he said they're enemies they're still beloved of God but they are enemies when it comes to the gospel and so there are some who undermine the cross and the grace that God has given us and I think those are more on the legalistic side and then there are those who just undermine the cross completely because they think Jesus is just doesn't really apply to them and then he uses the phrase whose end is destruction whose end is destruction and like I said earlier does that mean that they are bound for hell where for many people that is that is true that's where their end is but I don't think that's necessarily like we talked about with Peter the example that he was providing was towards destructive ends that doesn't mean that he was headed to hell but people can do things and live a certain lifestyle that tends towards destruction in some kind of way even a Christian if they are headed to heaven they have eternal life but they are living a lifestyle that leads to at least not eternal destruction but temporal destruction in their life you can destroy your family for example then the next phrase that is used the next feature he says their God is their belly their God is their belly you can just imagine people worshipping their stomach and there are two things

I think if we look at the Jews and how the Jews who were introduced to Christ would worship their belly what did that look like well I think about the food laws and they they put a lot of emphasis on what you eat and then on the Gentile side you have people who just give in to all of their fleshly appetites and a lot of times when the Bible talks about uses the belly as a term it's not just talking about your appetite for food but any kind of fleshly appetites that you have and giving in to those so there are Christians who can put too much emphasis on what they eat be legalistic about it and then there are those who can have absolutely no restraint when it comes to their fleshly appetites and then he says this their glory is in their shame their glory is in their shame now how would a



Judaizers have glory in their shame well some people have made this observation they think about what's the one big thing that the Jews these Jewish Christians were trying to get the Gentiles to do it was to circumcise right their huge focus was on somebody's private parts the shameful parts of them and so some have observed that may be what he's talking about that they glory they boast in something that you hide something that is more shameful in private parts in Galatians chapter 6 verse 13 Paul makes mention of this he says for not even those who are circumcised keep the law but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh I want to boast in your flesh but then on the other end

Gentiles might be proud about their immorality and Paul addressed this when he was with the Corinthians if you remember remember that in Corinth there was a young man who was having relations or got married to his father's wife and he says this 1 Corinthians chapter 5 it is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles that a man has his father's wife and you are puffed up you're proud about it and have not rather mourned that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you so there are two ways we can glory in our flesh right we can be proud of our immorality or we can be proud of our legalism and then the last thing that he mentions is he says these are people who set their mind on earthly things for Jews the earthly things was things of the flesh all the rituals that they did part of the law of Moses and then for Gentiles in a similar manner like we just read

Paul's letter to the Corinthians sinful pleasures they set their mind on you know getting pleasure in life the comforts of life and that whole really how we how we set our minds is actually a key to living a mature Christian life instead of setting our minds on earthly things we need to be setting our lives on heavenly things and that's what he speaks to in verse 20 he says this Philippians 3 verse 20 for our citizenship is in heaven from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to his glorious body according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things to himself

[ 45 : 56 ] Paul after talking about who to follow and who not to follow and he gives this final example of the kind of people that you don't want to follow it's the people who have their minds set on earthly things whether it be these Jews who are focused on all these legalistic rituals that they need to perform or if it's the Gentiles who are focused on fulfilling every desire of the flesh both are focused not on heaven but on things of the flesh and what he wants Christians to do here his instruction is to instead of setting your mind and your focus all of your attention on things of the flesh to set your eyes up to the heavens that he says this is where our citizenship is this is where our home is this is where we have all of our life is lived in the heavenlies and then he describes it a little bit further and he says hey this is this is where our savior is this is where he's coming from in the heavens and then when he comes he's going to do something in us we have a hope for our future in which he comes and he's going to transform us to be like him our bodies that ache and decay and aches and pains will receive a body like his that will be immortal a glorious body and then he will use that same power that he uses to give us these new bodies he will use it to subdue all powers all things to himself every kingdom every power that sets itself up against him he will subdue them to himself and so

God has done incredible things in us he has given us a position he has given us eternal life he has made us righteous he has set us up in a position in the heavenlies we are seated with Christ in heavenly places the Bible says and so from that position and from the hope that we have we can what's the theme of Philippians rejoice in the Lord rejoice in what he's accomplished for us rejoice in the hope that we have in the heavenlies and so because of that hope we can live our brief earthly lives in gratitude and awe for what he has done in us and we can imitate our savior in Corinthians chapter excuse me

Colossians chapter 3 verse 1 Paul says this if then you were raised with Christ seek those things which are above where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God set your mind on things above not on things on the earth for you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God when Christ who is our life appears then you also will appear with him in glory therefore put to death your members which are on the earth fornication and uncleanness passion evil desires and covetousness which is adultery hey because of who you are because of where we live because of what God has done in us because he has made us his children let's act like it let's put away these other things these worldly things we're not of the world anymore God just he pulled us out of the world he took us out of the kingdom of darkness the Bible says and set us into the kingdom of his glorious son we have a new life let's act like his!

let's lack let's lay hold up again going into the next chapter but it ties in verse 1 Philippians 4 1 therefore my beloved and long for brother my joy and crown so stand fast in the Lord beloved you know as we run the race full tilt running towards Christian maturity and godliness being like our savior we rest we stand in a confident place knowing what god has done in us knowing our position in god's family we can stand fast in his love for us we can stand fast in the truth of god's word we can stand fast in the gospel of our salvation we can stand fast in the hope that he has promised us we can stand fast in all the virtues that he has commended toward us that we ought to live in let's let's finish let's go ahead and stand let's stand and ask god to help us to stand fast while at the same time running a race right let's ask him to help us to follow the right examples and to be the right examples for others father this morning as we take instruction from your word may we take inventory of our own lives in ways that we need to grow bad habits that we need to get out of our lives good habits that we need to bring into our lives give us the guidance and the wisdom that we need to follow your word but then also to follow those who are good examples give us the wisdom that we need father to avoid those who might be bad examples to us to mark and avoid those work in us father to be that example to those who are around us and help us father to run that race that we might each and every day get closer and closer to that high calling in

Christ Jesus of becoming more and more like our savior doing it from a place of confidence in Christ you have made us a part of your family you have given us eternal life but we can reach forward lean in to lay hold of that eternal life that you given us we thank