



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Be An Example

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**The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians** (60-62 A.D.), Paul is imprisoned (one of four Prison Letters, the others being Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon) in Rome addressing the established Christian (mostly Gentile) church in Philippi, the first founded by Paul in Europe. In this letter, Paul, having a fondness for the people of the church of Philippi, because of their faithfulness and generous nature, wanted to thank them for their gifts, letting them know why he was returning Epaphroditus to them, sharing his situation in prison, urging unity in church, and warning them against false teachers. While false doctrine had started to plague many of the churches, he wanted to provide encouragement for practical living and support for sound doctrine. While much of the letter deals with spiritual growth, the tone throughout is that there is joy in Christ and Paul rejoices in Christ being proclaimed regardless of his circumstance and that they also must conduct their lives, suffer and press on in and for Christ. Paul uses himself as an example. (Php 3:17- 21 NASB)

*“Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.” (3:17-19)*

**Follow my example.** Brethren, Paul is speaking to the fellow believers in Philippi, the goal of every Christian is to be like Christ, to be Christ-like. In previous verses Paul speaks about how he, as a Pharisee, had many goals, rules, and distractions; however, now he has one goal and focus and that he has not reached the goal but is pressing toward the goal. He said he is about one thing, to pursue a Christ-like life. He now tells the believers in Philippi to be like him in his example. Not that he, Paul, was perfect but rather he knows the true model of Christ-like pursuit and directs the fellow believers to follow his and “... those who walk ...” in true pursuit and patterns of Christian behavior. Paul realizes that people need flesh and blood examples of a Christ like life behaviors patterns or restated, believers need Christian role models to help them in their walk toward the goal of being Christ like.

**Paul warns the believers of enemies of the cross.** Paul believes that there are many that will try to lead a believer astray or off the path of the goal to be Christ-like. These enemies may act, speak or walk as though they are followers of Christ. However their motives are selfish and prideful and the believer is to be discerning. Paul throughout many of his letters, warns believers of false prophets and teachers. Paul is so concerned about this issue that he was weeping as he shared this warning, the only time scripture shares that Paul wept. The result of the enemies’ work is destruction and their motives are selfish, prideful, fleshly and earthly works focused. What is the true citizenship of the believer?

*“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.” (3:20-21)*

**A Christian’s citizenship is heaven.** Paul continues to share that his ultimate goal is not only to be like Christ but also to be with Christ, which is his and the believers’ Savior and Lord. Citizenship is used in these verse is as; ‘a belonging to or sharing in the status of.’ Paul is stating that the believer belongs to Christ and will be transformed by Christ after the ‘upward call’. (3:14) The upward call is eagerly awaited by Paul either through his death or Christ’s return. The believer’s home is heaven and Paul state that the believer is to have that security and perspective.

### For Your Consideration:

- Are you an example of a believer that others might follow?
- Are you discerning and avoid enemies of Christ?
- Is your citizenship in heaven?

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## BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: SESSION OR HEARING WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE RM. 44

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44