

Philippians 10-07-30a

This is Friday, the 30th of July, 2010. We continue our study in the book of Philippians. We are in chapter 3, and we are going to be looking at a particular concept found in verse 19.

Tonight, we'll take a moment, as we customarily do, to give each of us a chance to focus our concentration, go before the throne of grace, and ensure that there are no obstacles or impediments to the ministry of God's Holy Spirit, who is very necessary to transcend the limitations of the speaker as well as the hearers, and allow God's divine work to be accomplished for each one of us. Shall we pray? Father, we express once again our thankfulness and our gratitude for the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf. the life that he has given us, the opportunities that belong to us because of our relationship with you through him.

We thank you for this passage of scripture. We ask that you will grant to each of us the concentration and the perception to find in our passages tonight those truths that will inform us and motivate us and allow us to make application so that we can lay hold of righteousness by faith, live the life to which we have been called, and be thoroughly equipped for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Our passage is from the third chapter of Philippians. We have arrived at the point where Paul is talking about citizenship in heaven.

You might suspect from the heading in the New King James that it is just going to be a glorious review of the privileges and opportunities and blessings and so on that are ours because we are possessed of these polituma privileges. I just wanted to get the alliteration out of the way early. So what we find instead is in verses 19-21 that there is a contrast set.

Paul says, Note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern for I tell you that many walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. So the citizenship in heaven and the worthy walk, the exemplary walk that Paul has really been describing for quite some time now is set against the alternative. And he says you need to mark those who walk correctly and that includes of course noting those who are not walking that way.

And Paul says I have told you many times before there are people who have a real problem with their peripateo, their walking around, their lifestyle. This is by the way a reference to characteristic behavior, peripateo. Pateo is the little pitter patter of your feet and peri means around, it means literally to walk around, but it comes to mean your life, your behavior over time.

It isn't specifically addressing momentary failures or occasional sins, this is your trend, the climate in your life as opposed to any individual spot of weather. When he says join in following my example, this is an interesting word and it's not as easy to translate as you might at first think. This is a compound word formed from the preposition soon, anybody remember what soon means in Greek, s-u-n? One helpful thing is to remember that you becomes y when we bring

these over into English, so soon becomes syn, s-y-n.

So sympathetic, synchronicity, synchronized, synthesis, soon means with. Sympatheo means to pathize with someone, to feel pathos, to feel what they feel, sympathy. Synchronous swimming, chronos is time, soon is with, you're all with it on the same time, you're with the other person's time, you are synchronized.

So here this is soon plus mimetai, m-i-m-e-t-a-i, this is the root from which we get things like mimic and imitate and it has the idea of, here we have it translated in the New King James, follow an example. Well, here's the first quiz question of the night, you know that in Greek the word is not just mimetai, he doesn't say imitate and then use the personal pronoun, imitate me as a direct object, that's not here. He says basically become followers of me, or actually it's really rather complex because soon mimetai is a noun and this would be co-imitators perhaps or with imitators and then he has the possessive with it, become my co-imitators because this has ginemi with it, gineste is actually in the imperative here, so you all become my soon mimetai.

Okay, here's the question which has been long in coming but you needed a little background to grasp it. When Paul says become my co-imitators, what's he talking about? He's saying, here are the choices, choice number one, Paul is an imitator of Christ, you become imitators with me, become with it imitators of mine, I'm an imitator, when you're a co-imitator with me, you are also imitating Christ, does that make sense? You are a fellow imitator of mine, who is Paul seeking to follow by way of example, it's the example of the Lord Jesus we had earlier in the book, right? That's choice number one, become a fellow imitator of Christ. Choice number two, become imitators of me, Paul, together, all of you be united in your imitation of me, the Apostle Paul, that would explain the soon idea, right? Option number three, always have to have three options in a multiple choice, is that he is saying be joined together with emphasis on the joining, instead of all of you being similarly imitating me, the emphasis would be on you all need to get together in the imitation, so the emphasis is on the soon rather than the mimeti so much, he has said plenty of things where he says you all need to be like minded, be of one spirit, of one heart, so this soon would be the emphatic part, become my co-imitators, and it's really a little bit of a puzzle, and if you look at the various translations, you will find that it is translated in various strengths, if you will, various reflections of these ideas, so for example in the New American Standard, you are going to have it saying simply, let me be sure I can find it here, I am struggling manfully to master my new software with only marketing success, some people translate this as continue to join with one another in imitating me, you see the difference in joining, are you joining me in imitation or are you joining each other in imitation, so one translation says continue or keep on joining with one another in imitating me, my brothers, and keep your eyes constantly on those who live according to the pattern given to you, and in this case, Paul restates the same idea in the second part of the verse that he does in the first, when you look at the rest of the verse, where he says, note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern, you have us for a pattern, you have me for a pattern, and so he is basically saying the same thing twice, so before you decide that it is really

not worth figuring out, I will tell you what I think the answer is and why, because it is open to interpretation, there is nothing definitive in the grammar to tell us what Paul intended when he wrote this word or when he dictated this word, but based on context, what have we seen in the book, if you were going to solve this based on context and justify your answer based on context, what has Paul been talking about all along, let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus, so if he is going to suggest anybody as worthy of imitation, be co-imitators, who is the most likely candidate, based on context, based on the theme here, it is going to be the Lord Jesus, let all of you be of one heart and one mind, you all join together as those who think like Jesus, who have his same attitude, and the factor that persuades me that this is the correct interpretation is, I don't think Paul is simply going to restate the same idea in the first and second clauses of the verse, first idea, become my fellow Christ imitators, if I was going to add a word in here, that is what I would put, become my fellow Christ imitators, he has just given us in the preceding context, his own example, I count all things lost, I want to be found in him not having my own righteousness, I don't think I have already attained, I don't count myself to have apprehended, I forget what is behind, I press toward what is ahead, I press toward the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, let as many of us as are mature have this mind, what mind? The mind that he described earlier in the letter that was exemplified in Christ, and he says, that's the reason I think this way, let's all of us who are mature have this, and so he is saying now, brethren, become my fellow imitators of Christ, would be in square brackets there, and that's the first priority, look to Christ, looking unto him, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, seated at the right hand of the father, let's all join in being imitators of him, and second part of the verse, note those who so walk, what would be easier for the Philippians to verify in their personal context, is it going to be easier for them to note people in their congregation, in their periphery who are Christ-like, or who are Paul-like, the become like me idea, for Paul talking about himself, you are starting to get back over in the direction of Catholicism, let me broker your faith for you, let me show you what God is like, I will be the substitute Christ that you can look at, if you have seen me, you have seen the Lord, that's really not Paul's message, he doesn't really say that anywhere, and when he says become imitators of me, in English, when you start looking at it more closely in context, what he is really saying is, be an imitator like I am of Christ, and note those around you who are so doing, note those who so walk, who live their lives trying to be imitators of Christ, long after Paul's personal presence and memories of his visit have faded, they are going to have the scriptures, and they are going to have the Holy Spirit who imparts the truth of Christ, that's the easier standard for us to remember, I didn't ever know Paul, never met him, never saw him, know him only through his letters, and through what Luke writes and acts, but I know a lot about the Lord Jesus Christ, the entire Old Testament bears witness to him, all of the New Testament bears witness to him, in these scriptures we have the mind of Christ, so that is a standard that we can then apply more effectively, than someone's personal example, find somebody that's just like Charles Haddon Spurgeon, find somebody that's just like, name your famous semi-modern day saint, it doesn't really work so well, so not that you would ever run into it, but commentators have

real difficulty wrestling with the first part of verse 17, trying to figure out what Summa Mater really is, I personally don't think it's that difficult a puzzle, look at what the letter is about, it's about the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a great peon of praise to the Lord Jesus, right smack in the middle of what we've already covered, so, Paul says, join me as a co-imitator of Christ, and find other people who are of that same mind, who are walking that way, who are themselves seeking to follow in the footsteps of the Lord, as they peripateo, as you have us for a pattern.

So now our next question is, who is us? Is this the plural of majesty? Is this the authorial we? Why does Paul say us? Who is us? Well, he says, note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern. One thing that helps is to know what the word in Greek is, tupos, what happens to a you? Why? A type, a typos, a typical example. You've seen some typical people who are putting the things of God first.

I think the example that you pursue is the Lord Jesus, and you see types. What's the truth about Old Testament types of the Lord Jesus? We say the Passover Lamb is a type. We say that Abel, as he is slain and then Seth comes up sort of to replace him, is typological.

Joseph in Egypt, as the Savior of his brethren, is a type. The Ark of the Covenant is a type. The Tabernacle is a type.

What do we know about a type? How extensive a reflection of the Lord Jesus is the real thing is a type. It's got limits, doesn't it? A type has limits. You can only push the Lamb analogy so far.

You can only push the Ark of the Covenant so far. You can only push Abel or Joseph or any of these other Old Testament types so far. It is an aspect.

It's a glimpse. It's a reflection of one facet of that truth that it is a type of. I think this is helpful in noting the humility of the Apostle Paul, which we have seen abundantly manifest in this letter.

He doesn't say, you know, I do it right all the time. Follow my example. He says, become an imitator of Christ with me.

Become my fellow imitator and note others who are walking this way, and you have us as a type. We're a reflection. We are a shadow of that example, and there are certain elements of what we do that are effective.

Does that make sense? Paul is the type. Jesus Christ is the example. That's it in a nutshell.

That's 17 in a nutshell. Look for people who have some aspect. I know a lot of believers.

I've been around long enough, you know, excessive half a century now. I've been blessed to have a lot of wonderful Christian people in my view over the years, and I have been able to glean helpful things from their example. There's one individual I can think of that is probably the best listener and the best at engaging in conversation and asking questions and listening very

attentively to the response, which is kind of out of the norm.

Actually, I know several people that are that way, and it impresses itself on me because I am very much not that way. I am one of those people who has to fight the urge to just wait for an opening so that I can say everything that's on my mind. I have an urge to communicate, and it tends to be more in that direction than in this direction, and it takes discipline.

It takes self-control to learn to be a good listener, and you gain so much blessing and so much benefit by being patient and squelching and say, well, you know, I don't have to express every single thought that I have. That's my weakness in conversation. Yeah, I know none of you have really known this about me, but it's true.

I'm just telling you now. So you observe that facet of another believer where they're a wonderful listener, or they are very thoughtful and considerate, or they're very diligent and faithful in getting routine tasks done. They never flag.

They never fail. It's so consistent. It's like the sun coming up.

These routine chores that would just drive me insane probably drive them insane, but they just do them anyway, and they do them faithfully and do them well and do them consistently. It's an absolute fixed element. It's a wonderful thing.

These believers that have a wonderful aspect. Christ was all of these things in one person. Some of us have the ability maybe to reflect one or two of those characteristics, and that would be our tupos function.

Look around at those who walk, and you have us as a type. Glean the good elements and don't hang up on the bad ones. All of us are going to fail.

None of us can say, look, just do what I do. Follow my example. Be just as patient as I am.

Be just as restrained in conversation as I am. Be just as this and that and the other as I am. None of us can do that, and the Apostle Paul couldn't really do it either, but we can look around at believers who have a certain aspect or a certain element of that example of Christ that they really excel at, and that is an inspiration.

That is a type for us. This, I think, is what Paul is getting at. What is he talking about here in this letter? Be together.

Be like-minded. Join in fellowship. Join in mutual encouragement, and this is one of the ways without even trying that your presence among believers is a blessing and that God the Holy Spirit can minister to other believers.

I don't know if you...we don't always think about this, but there may be some place where we

really kind of shine forth the mind of Christ in a certain area. Some people, you could absolutely commit all kinds of heinous wrongdoing, and they are just so forgiving. It's just not in them to hold a grudge.

It's not in them to ever remember it and bring it up again. It's astonishing that some people just don't hold your faults against you. We say, what? A person just doesn't have a mean bone in their body.

There are people who are just generous to a fault and are self-sacrificing in an extraordinary way. Well, just by being you and reflecting the places where spiritual growth has perfected some aspect of your character to a great extent, that's a blessing. And Paul says, watch for those people.

Look for those people in the fellowship and join together in aspiring to master these conquests of our by nature not so hot characteristics. Look at the next verse. For many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping, and leave out the italics, I tell you even weeping, and it is as though Paul's throat catches and he can't even get the full sentence out.

He just says, enemies of the cross of Christ. I tell you weeping. Have you ever tried talking to a child that skinned their knee and they are trying to give you the answers to your questions between their sobs? You don't get complete sentences.

And you get the idea that Paul is very emotional about this point. You think about his career, what he has endured, what his objectives are, the daily care of the churches he lists, the things that he has been through. And he says, it just makes me want to cry to tell you that there are those who walk and I have told you about.

Why would Paul talk about these people often? There is a school of thought that says when people are malfunctioning and not living as they should or not doing as they should, we should just really not talk about that. Paul says, I have told you many times about these people. I have described it.

I have emphasized it. I have told you often about these who do not so walk. Enemies of the cross of Christ.

And it is important without being judgmental, without trying to inflict a penalty on anyone, but to note who are the people trying to walk the narrow road and who are those who have made themselves enemies of the cross. Gone exactly the opposite direction. Believers do this.

Paul would not be weeping if they were unbelievers. He is weeping because they are believers. Enemies of the cross of Christ.

And in verse 19, one way you could give a description of someone like this is to say, how did they get started this way? Who became apathetic and indifferent to the word of God? Who progressed

more and more and eventually became a, whatever you want to call them, a reverse process reversionist or a backslider or a ne'er-do-well, a rascal of some kind. But what does Paul give us right at the beginning of verse 19? He gives us the end right at the beginning. You get the description of this from your New Treasury of Scripture knowledge.

This is a figure of speech called a histeron proteron. And that's a thing you should tuck away just to trot out when you want to impress somebody. It's a histeron proteron.

This is the last first. The end is put first in order that the mind may dwell with greater horror on the things which lead to it. You know how this goes.

Did you hear on the news about so-and-so? Plane crash killed 129 people. That's the end. Oh, how did it happen? And you listen with great attention to how the plane took off and what happened mid-flight and what went wrong and the wind shear this and the pilot that and the passengers this and the speed impacting the ground that.

But the thing that got your attention was the end. It crashed and killed everyone aboard. It's designed to capture your attention for the process by which it happened.

There are other places in Scripture where this is done and you can look those up in the New Treasury. It gives you a good list beginning with Hebrews 3:8. Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion in the day of trial in the wilderness. It says as in the Meribah.

Remember that was at the end. And then you go back to the day of trial. And you've already heard about the people who fell and then you go back to see how they fell.

Many other similar examples of that. But whose end is destruction. Now this is where we are going to spend a little bit of time because these walk, many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping enemies of the cross of Christ.

And when you see walk Perry Pateo in verse 17 and you see Perry Pateo in verse 18. Note those who walk according to the example of Christ. They are good types because I tell you there are other walks and this is sort of others of the same kind if you will.

Perry Pateo ties this together and strongly implies that these are believers. I do not think Paul is weeping over the Romans or the Greeks or the Egyptians or people who are not associated with the church at all. Why is he weeping? Because these are those to whom he has been sent and has ministered to and cares about and prays for and they have just gone the other direction.

You can have an objective sense of sympathy and pity for some child that turns into a juvenile delinquent and wrecks their life in various ways at a young age. But if it is your child that brings you into the realm of weeping. I personally am not really brought to tears by the fact that ever through history there have been people who have started early in messing up their lives.

But if it is somebody close that is a different issue. This is why Paul is weeping. Enemies of the cross of Christ whose end is destruction.

The reason it is important to understand who are these walkers and are they saved or unsaved is the word destruction here is Apollia. This is the same word translated perdition and connected to Judas. The son of Apollia whose God is their Coelia and glory in their shame.

Hatheos he Coelia. It doesn't get much better than that and it doesn't get much worse than swapping something else in for God. First commandment in the ten is what? Say it.

Thou shalt have no other gods. In Greek that is Hatheos. Thou shalt have no other Theos.

Of course there it is Theoi plural. No Theos before me. Here it is Hatheos he Coelia.

It doesn't have the possessive that you find in the English there. You notice it says their belly and their is in italics. Whose God is emotion.

Whose God is feelings. I suggest you scratch out their because it is not limited to their. There is group emotion.

There is the desire to bring about emotional highs or lows for other people. They believe that emotion defines spiritual content and it is bigger than just how they feel. It is God.

Not just my God inside. God is emotion and it transcends the individual. And glory is in their shame.

Doxa is uniformly the glory of God. The doxology. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end.

Amen. Amen. Daniel recognizes that.

That is the Methodist doxology. That is what I learned in the Methodist church. Doxa.

Glory. And their glory is in their own shame. Here you do have the pronoun.

En auton te iscune. Iscune is a word for shame. You have shame in terms of causing someone to stumble.

You have shame in the sense of being embarrassed. Ashamed that you be not ashamed at his coming. Here iscune is an element of wrong in it.

It is not just you opened the door and I wasn't dressed kind of shame. This is culpable shame. This is the shame of being discovered doing something shameful.

This is the kind of shameful behavior that is spoken of in the latter part of Romans 1. In contrast

to some of the other words that you might have in Greek, this has the idea of being liable for judgment. You bring yourself into judgment because of this shameful act. And in most cases where you find the verb form *iscuneistae*, it is talking about experiencing the judgment of God.

To be ashamed at his coming is to experience his judgment at his coming. So even in the Old Testament, Isaiah 45.24, he shall say, Surely in the Lord I have righteousness and strength. To him men shall come and all shall be ashamed who are incensed against him.

If you are not for him and you are against him, you are going to be ashamed in the sense that there is going to be a consequence. There is going to be a penalty. There is going to be a judgment.

So it isn't just that when Jesus comes back, these people in the church who have made emotion their God are going to be embarrassed. Oh, we really messed that up. This means the things that they consider to be glory are going to be judged.

It is going to be a profound negative whose glory is their penalty, judgment, confounding is the idea. So it is a little bit stronger than it comes across in English. So it is pretty easy to understand those who make emotion, who make feelings their God and who are going to be judged for things that they think they are going to be rewarded for.

You think about the Pharisees and the things that they thought were signs of righteousness and how much they were looked up to for things that they did and they will be judged for those things. They will be ashamed. But of these three initial descriptions, the one we have not really delved into is whose end is *Apollia*.

What does that mean? Because traditionally *Apollia* destruction is associated with the lake of fire and with good reason. There are several scriptures where the fire and sulfur or fire and brimstone are associated with *Apollia*. So we want to ensure that we understand this.

If this is talking about believers, you would have to say this might be loss of salvation because this seems to be headed for the lake of fire. Well, you may already anticipate that it is probably not going to end up with that conclusion. But it is something we want to look at.

We have a really fascinating scripture passage in Revelation Chapter 14 that is going to help us unravel what *Apollia* actually is. We are going to find out what is the duration of punishment in the lake of fire and what exactly is *Apollia* for believers and all of that when we come back from the break.