

Philippians

Reminders [3:1-21]

- **Put No Confidence in the Flesh [3:1-6]**

- In addition, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.
Τὸ λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί μου, χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ.
 - The word “Finally” is from λοιπός (loipos) which means “beyond that”, “in addition” or “finally”.
 - Paul uses this word to introduce a new topic.
 - Paul uses this word again in Phil 4:8, so this does not mean finally here.
 - As he did back in Phil 1:12, Paul refers to the Philippians as his brethren.
 - He then echoes the exhortation from the previous section to rejoice, but this time specifically ties the rejoicing to their relationship with Christ.
- To write the same things to you again is not tedious for me, and it is a safeguard for you.
τὰ αὐτὰ γράφειν ὑμῖν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐκ ὀκνηρόν, ὑμῖν δὲ ἀσφαλές.
 - The word “again” is not in the original text, but is implied by the phrase “the same things”.
 - There is a word ὑμῖν (humin) which means “to you” or “for you” and is not translated for some reason.
 - The word “trouble” is from ὀκνηρός (oknēros) which means “be reluctant”.
 - This word can mean “lazy” [Matt 25:26] or “lag behind” [Rom 12:11].
 - Paul is using this word here to indicate that writing these things is not a task which is going to induce reluctance in him (i.e. it is not tedious).
 - The word “safeguard” is from ἀσφαλής (asphalēs) which means “stable”, “firm”, “safe” or “secure”.
 - These reminders will be a safeguard for the Philippians by stabilizing them spiritually.
- Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;
Βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας, βλέπετε τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας, βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν.
 - The words “beware of” are from βλέπω (blepō) which means “see” or “look”.
 - As an imperative this word can mean “beware of” or “watch out for”.
 - The word “dogs” is from κύων (kuōn) which literally means “dog”.
 - Figuratively, this word refers to an unclean person just as the dog is an unclean animal.
 - Paul is turning the tables on the Judaizers who were trying to convince the Philippians to observe the Law and loved to call the Gentiles dogs.
 - The phrase “evil workers” is a term Paul uses to describe those who distort the gospel.
 - These Judaizers added works to faith in Christ for both salvation and Christian living.
 - The phrase “false circumcision” is from κατατομή (katatomē) which means “mutilation”.
 - The Judaizers’ emphasis on circumcision was a mutilation of the true gospel and Christian walk.

- for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship by means of the Spirit of God
 ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἐσμὲν ἡ περιτομή, οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες
 - The phrase “true circumcision” is from περιτομή (peritomē) which simply means “circumcision”.
 - Given that this is contrasted with the κατατομή (katatomē), the NASB correctly adds “true”.
 - The word “worship” is from λατρεύω (latreuō) which means “serve” or “worship”.
 - This is a cognate of λατρεία (latreia) which is the “worship” mentioned in Rom 12:1.
 - The phrase “in the Spirit” is the dative of πνεῦμα (pneuma) which means “breath” or “spirit”.
 - This is a dative of means which should be translated “by means of the Spirit” here.
 - The phrase “the Spirit of God” is a reference to God the Holy Spirit.
- and boast in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the *righteousness of the* flesh,
 καὶ καυχόμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες,
 - The word “glory” is from καυχάομαι (kauchaomai) which means “boast”, “glory” or “pride oneself”.
 - This is the word used twice in 2 Cor 10:17 which teaches us that our boasting is to be in the Lord.
 - The phrase “put ... confidence” is from πείθω (peithō) which means “persuade” or “convince”.
 - As we saw in Phil 2:24 it means to become so convinced as to put confidence in something.
 - The phrase “in the flesh” is used here to describe the human good side of the sin nature.
 - As we will see, this refers to the idea of achieving righteousness through human credentials.
- although I myself could put confidence even in the *righteousness of the* flesh.
 καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποιθήσιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί.
 - The phrase “might have” is a participle of ἔχω (echō) which means “have” or “hold”.
 - The context makes it clear that this is a view that Paul could have, but does not.
 - Again, the phrase “in the flesh” refers to the idea of achieving righteousness through human credentials.
- If anyone else might consider putting confidence in the *righteousness of the* flesh, I far more:
 τοῦτον μὲν οὖν ἐλπίζω πέμψαι ὡς ἂν ἀφίδω τὰ περὶ ἐμὲ ἐξαυτῆς.
 - The phrase “has a mind” is from δοκέω (dokeō) which means “think” or “suppose”.
 - The root meaning of this word is “consider as probable” which has a subjunctive flavor.
 - A good way to translate the essence of this verse is “...might consider putting confidence...”.
 - Once again, the phrase “in the flesh” refers to the idea of achieving righteousness through human credentials.
- circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin,
 περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος, ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ, φυλῆς Βενιαμίν,
 - The word “circumcision” is from περιτομή (peritomē) which is the word we saw for “true circumcision” in verse 3.
 - Paul begins explaining why he could claim to be “righteous” in the flesh by stating his list of credentials as a Jew.

- a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;
Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων, κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος,
 - The phrase “a Hebrew of Hebrews” could be a reference to his “pure” Jewish ancestry.
 - This could also refer to his knowledge of the Hebrew language which many Jews of the Diaspora did not possess.
 - Paul then cites his former position among the Pharisees [Acts 23:6].
 - The Pharisees were very conservative, rigidly legalistic Jews who religiously followed the Law.
 - In contrast, the Sadducees were more liberal Jews who denied the resurrection and were often at odds with the Pharisees [Acts 23:7-8].
- as to zeal, a persecutor of the church;
κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,
 - Paul made it clear that he was not a lukewarm follower of the Jewish religion.
 - His zeal as a Pharisee was evidenced by his intense and relentless persecution of Christians [Acts 8:3; 22:4-5; 26:9-11].
- as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.
κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος,
 - Paul concludes his explanation by pointing out that he diligently followed the requirements of the Law.
 - If righteousness could be obtained through human effort, then no one had a greater claim to such righteousness than Paul.

- Principles of Philippians 3:1-6
 - No matter what we might be going through in our lives, we can always rejoice because of who we are in the Lord [Ps 32:11; 37:4; Rom 5:11; Phil 4:4; Jas 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-8; 4:12-13].
 - It should be joyful, not tedious, when we are reminded of the things we have learned from the Scriptures [Rom 15:14-15; 2 Pet 1:12-15; 3:1].
 - When we hear the precepts of God's word taught over and over again it solidifies our understanding of God and is a safeguard for our souls [Jas 1:21].
 - This is an integral part of the process of maturing in the faith which should result in a renewal of our mind and transformation of our lives [Rom 12:1-2].
 - The Philippians were being disturbed by Judaizers who were trying to convince them that they needed to conform to the strict requirements of the Law.
 - These men went so far as to preach that physical circumcision is a requirement for salvation, but the true circumcision – the one that really matters – is the circumcision of the heart [Rom 2:25-29].
 - These men were evildoers who were preaching legalism rather than grace [Rom 4:13-16; 6:14].
 - We should beware of such false teachers today [Ps 119:115; 2 Cor 11:13].
 - As an example, there are denominations today that falsely teach that water baptism is a requirement for salvation.
 - The true baptism – the one that really matters – is the baptism of the Spirit [Acts 11:16; 1 Cor 12:13].
 - It is by means of the Spirit that we are able to truly worship God in holiness [Rom 8:1-8; Gal 5:16].
 - Whatever “righteousness” we might think we have in our humanity, it does not measure up to God's standard of righteousness [Isa 64:6; Phil 3:7-9].
 - Paul had a very impressive list of human credentials such that he, of all people, might even put confidence in his human abilities.
 - But Paul was actually a very humble man who knew that human effort alone was vain and that human wisdom could not possibly compare to God's wisdom [1 Cor 3:18; 8:2].
 - Paul knew that he must labor for the Lord, but could not accomplish anything meaningful apart from His power [Col 1:29].
 - Paul understood the grace of God and conducted his life in accordance with that grace [1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 1:12; Gal 2:19-21].

• **Count All Things As Loss [3:7-11]**

- But whatever things were gain to me,
[Ἀλλὰ] ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη,
 - The phrase “whatever things” refers to everything in Paul’s list in verses 5 & 6 as well as anything else that might give Paul reason to put confidence in the flesh.
 - The word “gain” is from κέρδος (kerdos) which means “gain” or “profit”.
 - Paul used this word in Phil 1:21 to refer to spiritual gain, but here it is used in reference to gains in the worldly realm.
- those very things I have appraised as worthless because of Christ.
ταῦτα ἡγημαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν.
 - The phrase “those things” refers back to “whatever things” from the first part of this verse.
 - To best translate the meaning here, it is better translated “those very things”.
 - The word “counted” is from ἡγέομαι (hēgeomai) which means “think”, “consider” or “regard”.
 - This is expressing the idea of estimating the value of something as in “appraised”.
 - The word “loss” is from ζημία (zēmia) which means “loss” or “forfeit”.
 - That which is deemed to be an asset in a worldly view is actually worthless from divine viewpoint.
 - The phrase “for the sake of Christ” is literally “because of Christ”.
 - It was because of Christ that Paul was able to see that his fleshly credentials were worthless.
- More than that, I appraise all things to be worthless
ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι
 - Again, the word “count” is from ἡγέομαι (hēgeomai) which means “appraise” here.
 - The phrase “all things” takes Paul’s valuation beyond the things that were “gain” to him.
 - Again, The word “loss” is from ζημία (zēmia) which means “worthless” here.
- in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord,
διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου,
 - The phrase “surpassing value” is from ὑπερέχω (huperechō) which means “be better than”.
 - We saw this word translated as “more important” back in Phil 2:3.
 - We will see this word again in Phil 4:7 where it is simply translated as “surpasses”.
 - In this context, it clearly refers to something of surpassing value.
 - The word “knowing” is τῆς γνώσεως (tēs gnōseōs) which means “the knowledge of”.
 - The knowledge of Jesus Christ is the greatest asset we will ever possess.
 - Paul refers to Jesus Christ as “my Lord” here.
 - This is the only time Paul refers to Christ in this very personal way implying that Jesus is Paul’s Lord because Paul has come to know Him.
- for whom I have suffered the loss of all things,
δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην,
 - The phrase “suffered the loss” is from ζημιόω (zēmioō) which means “forfeit” or “suffer loss”.
 - This is a cognate of the noun ζημία (zēmia) which we have translated as “worthless”.
 - This verb indicates that, although Paul considers all of these things to be worthless, the process of losing these things was painful [2 Cor 11:24-27].

- and appraise them as excrement so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ,
 - Again, the word “count” is from ἡγέομαι (hēgeomai) which means “appraise” here.
 - The word “rubbish” is from σκύβαλον (skubalon) which is a vulgar word meaning “excrement”.
 - The word for “gain” here is the same word Paul used for “whatever things were gain to me”.
 - This creates a direct contrast between everything else and what he had gained in Christ.
 - The word “found” is from εὐρίσκω (heuriskō) which means “find” or “discover”.
 - Those who have “gained” Christ through faith in Him are positionally “found” in Him [1 Cor 1:30].
- not having my righteousness come from *the* Law, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου
 - The phrase “a righteousness of my own” is literally “my righteousness”.
 - The word “derived” is not in the Greek and was added by the translators.
- but that righteousness which is through faith in Christ, ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ,
 - The word “that” is that is a singular feminine pronoun.
 - This word refers back to “righteousness” which is a singular feminine noun.
- the righteousness which comes from God at the moment of faith, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει,
 - The phrase “the righteousness which comes from God” is literally “the from God righteousness”.
 - Given that it is contrasted with righteousness that “comes” from the Law, this is a good translation.
 - The phrase “on the basis of faith” is literally “upon faith”.
 - This could mean “based upon faith” or even “upon believing” as in the moment we believe in Christ.
- and I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ
 - The phrase “that I may know Him” is an articular infinitive meaning “to know”.
 - This construction indicates a goal or desire on the part of Paul.
 - The word “power” is from δύναμις (dunamis) which means “power” or “strength”.
 - This word describes power which has the potential to bring about some result – i.e. our resurrection.
- and the sharing of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ
 - The word “fellowship” is from κοινωνία (koinōnia) which means “fellowship”, “participation” or “sharing”.
 - Here it is the idea of sharing in Christ’s suffering.
 - The word “conformed” is from συμμορφίζω (summorphizō) which means “same form as”.
 - This is describing being united with Christ in the likeness of His death [Rom 6:5].
 - There are two articles in this verse which are included in some manuscripts, but not others.
 - As with almost all text questions, it does not change the meaning of this verse.

- if perhaps I may *even* reach the Rapture.

εἴ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν.

- The phrase “in order that” is εἴ πως (ei pōs) which means “if perhaps”.
- This is a third class conditional meaning maybe yes, maybe no.
- The word “attain” is from καταντάω (katantaō) which means “arrive at”, “reach” or “attain to”.
- This word means to reach a goal or destination.
- The word “resurrection” is from ἐξανάστασις (exanastasis).
- The word for “resurrection” in verse 10 is from ἀνάστασις (anastasis).
- The ἐξ (ex) prefix means “from”.
- The word ἐξανάστασις (exanastasis) is not used anywhere else in the N.T.
- The use of ἐξανάστασις (exanastasis) in the phrase “resurrection from the dead” indicates that Paul is talking about something in particular.
- I believe he is referring to the Rapture event.

- Principles of Philippians 3:7-11
 - The greatest thing we have accomplished on our own in our lives is nothing when compared with the things that God has accomplished in our lives.
 - The sum total of all of the things we have accomplished on our own in our lives is nothing when compared with what Jesus Christ did for us on the Cross of Calvary.
 - At one time in his life, Paul had taken great pride in the myriad of things he had accomplished in the power of the flesh.
 - But on the road to Damascus, Paul realized that Jesus was indeed the Messiah and that he had been persecuting the followers of the true Lord [Acts 22:1-10; 26:1-18].
 - Because his eyes had been opened, Paul came to view all of his fleshly accomplishments as worthless (even excrement) compared to knowing Jesus Christ his Lord.
 - As he followed Jesus and proclaimed Him to others, Paul suffered the loss of everything that had previously been valuable in his estimation.
 - Paul knew that the real gain in his life was his relationship with Jesus Christ and possessing God's righteousness through faith in Him [Rom 4:5-16; 9:30-33; Heb 11:7].
 - Paul wanted to truly come to know Christ as he matured in the faith [Eph 4:11-16] and shared in His sufferings [Rom 8:16-18; 1 Pet 4:12-14].
 - We, too, need to understand that all of our worldly credentials and all of our good works do not gain us anything in regards to our relationship with God.
 - All of those things may have value with family, friends, co-workers, employers, etc., but in order to be saved we must humble ourselves and realize that none of that is able to reconcile us to God.
 - God Himself had to accomplish that reconciliation through Christ [2 Cor 5:18-19; Col 1:19-20].
 - Likewise, we must humble ourselves and realize that our daily walk will be righteous before God only as He accomplishes His work in and through us [1 Cor 12:4-6; 15:10; 2 Cor 3:5; Phil 2:13].
 - Paul wanted to fully understand the power of Christ's resurrection, knowing that he would one day be resurrected in His likeness [Rom 6:5].
 - He even hoped that he might live long enough to experience the power of Christ's resurrection while still alive by being transformed in the twinkling of an eye [1 Cor 15:50-53; 1 Thess 4:15-18].
 - There is nothing wrong with hoping to be alive at the Rapture, but we should not discount the blessing of experiencing dying grace [Ps 116:15; Acts 7:55-60; Rev 14:13].

- **Press On Toward the Goal [3:12-14]**

- Not that I have already obtained *these things* or have already become complete,
Οὐχ ὅτι ἤδη ἔλαβον ἢ ἤδη τετελείωμαι,
 - The word “obtained” is from λαμβάνω (lambanō) which means “receive” or “take”.
 - This word can mean “acquire” or “obtain”, but this verse does not say what has been obtained.
 - The NASB has added the word “it” implying that Paul was speaking of the resurrection here.
 - However, the Philippians know that Paul has not been resurrected yet, so there is no need for Paul to make such a statement.
 - Instead, it makes much more sense to see this as a reference back to the items listed in verse 10 – wanting to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.
 - The phrase “become perfect” is from τελειόω (teleiōō) which means “bring to full measure”.
 - In this context this word conveys the idea of reaching completion in the Christian life.
- but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω, ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ].

- The phrase “press on” is διώκω (diōkō) which means “move rapidly and decisively toward an objective”.
- This word means to pursue something with determination and perseverance.
- In the negative sense, it means “persecute” [Matt 5:44; Rom 12:14; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6; 2 Tim 3:12].
- The phrases “lay hold of” and “laid hold of” are from καταλαμβάνω (katalambanō) which means “attain (win) something through pursuit”.
- This is the word that Paul used in 1 Cor 9:24 for winning the prize in a race.
- This is also the word Paul used in Rom 9:30 for the Gentiles attaining righteousness.
- Paul’s statement here is that he had made it a priority to reach the goal of attaining the things that Christ had in mind when He laid hold of Paul.
- Brethren, I do not regard myself as having already laid hold of *it*;
ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ ἑμαυτὸν οὐ λογίζομαι κατεληφέναι·
 - The word “regard” is λογίζομαι (logizomai) which means “give careful thought to a matter”.
 - This is a thinking word showing that Paul gave careful consideration to his own spiritual progress.
 - The phrase “having laid hold of *it* yet” is the perfect tense of καταλαμβάνω (katalambanō).
 - This describes something already accomplished in the past.
- but I focus on forgetting what *lies* behind and striving forward to what *lies* ahead,
ἐν δέ, τὰ μὲν ὀπίσω ἐπιλανθανόμενος τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος,
 - The phrase “one thing” is ἐν (hen) which is the neuter of the Greek word “one”.
 - This describes Paul’s single-minded focus on reaching the goal.
 - The phrase “reaching forward” is from ἐπεκτείνωμαι (epekteinomai) which means “strain” or “stretch out” toward something.
 - The picture here is of a runner who exerts himself to the utmost, even leaning forward at the end of the race to reach the finish line ahead of the other runners.

- I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.
 - The phrase “press on” is διώκω (diōkō) which we saw back in verse 12 to mean “move rapidly and decisively toward an objective”.
 - The word “goal” is from σκοπός (skopos) which means “goal” or “target”.
 - This word was used of the bulls-eye on the target used in archery during the games.
 - The word “prize” is βραβεῖον (brabeion) which means “award for an exceptional performance”.
 - This word is used of awards given in the games, but here refers to a spiritual reward [2 Cor 5:10].
 - Some take the phrase “upward call” to mean the moment when we are called home to heaven, but this phrase refers to God’s call for us to focus on heavenly things in this life [Col 3:1-2; 2 Tim 1:9].
 - All of the things we receive by grace as believers – spiritual gifts, the call of God, open doors for ministry, effectiveness in ministry, eternal rewards, etc. – are based upon our position in Christ.
- Principles of Philippians 3:12-14
 - Paul was a very mature believer when he wrote this letter to the Philippians, but he had enough humility to recognize that he had not attained his goal of coming to know Christ to the fullest.
 - Paul understood that he had to continue his walk of faith with determination and persistence in order to accomplish all that Christ had for him to do.
 - Likewise, no matter how far we may have come in our own walk of faith, our sights should always be set upon reaching the next objective God has in His plan for our lives [1 Cor 9:24-25; Heb 12:1-2].
 - Fundamental to this endeavor is to continue to grow spiritually [Heb 6:1-2], taking hold of the eternal life we have been given [1 Tim 6:12-19].
 - Paul knew that there was nothing to gain by wasting time dwelling upon our past [Luke 9:62].
 - Spending time dwelling upon past failures might lead to feelings of guilt and spending time dwelling upon past accomplishments might lead to arrogance [Rom 12:3; 1 Cor 4:7; 10:12].
 - Furthermore, dwelling upon our past does not make any sense because our sins will not be taken into account at the Judgment Seat of Christ and God can keep track of our deeds just fine without any help from us [1 Cor 3:11-15 cf. Rev 20:11-15].

- **Maintain the Right Attitude [3:15-16]**

- Let us therefore, as many as are mature, have this mindset;

Ὅσοι οὖν τέλειοι, τοῦτο φρονῶμεν·

- The word “perfect” is from τέλειος (teleios) which means “perfect”, “complete” or “mature”.
- We saw the cognate verb for this word mean “complete” in verse 12, but the meaning intended by Paul here is “mature”.
- The phrase “have this attitude” is τοῦτο φρονῶμεν (touto phronōmen) which is “have this mindset”.
- We saw a similar phrase in the imperative mood in Phil 2:5 meaning “Develop this mindset”.
- The mindset being referred to is the one expressed in verses 12-14 regarding pressing on toward the goal in our Christian lives without looking back to see what we might have accomplished.

- and if you have a different mindset about anything, God will make you fully aware of that;

καὶ εἴ τι ἑτέρως φρονεῖτε, καὶ τοῦτο ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν ἀποκαλύψει·

- The conditional clause in this verse doesn’t exactly fit into any one of the 4 classes.
- Given the future tense in the apodasis, the “if” here should be taken as a 3rd class conditional.
- The phrase “in anything” is the neuter indefinite pronoun τι (ti) which simply means “anything”.
- The way it is used here, the translation “about anything” would seem to fit best.
- The phrase “have ... attitude” is from the verb φρονέω (phroneō) which we have already seen refers to a “mindset”.
- The phrase “will reveal” is from the verb ἀποκαλύπτω (apokaluptō) which means “reveal”, “disclose” or “make fully known”.

- in any case, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.

πλὴν εἰς ὃ ἐφθάσαμεν, τῷ αὐτῷ στοιχεῖν·

- The word “however” is πλὴν (plēn) which means “nevertheless”, “except” or “in any case”.
- In this context, the translation “in any case” best expresses how Paul is using this word.
- The phrase “let us keep living by” is from στοιχέω (stoicheō) which means “to be in line with something seen as a standard for one’s conduct”.
- This is translated “walk by this rule” in Gal 6:16.
- The word “standard” is not found in the critical text.
- Some manuscripts include the word κανόνι (kanoni) which means “rule” or “standard”, but the verb στοιχέω (stoicheō) implies this anyway.
- The word “attained” is from φθάνω (phthanō) which means “arrive at a place or state”.
- This word is an aorist which describes a point in the past – the moment of our salvation – when we attained a righteous position in Christ.
- The KJV and NKJV include an additional phrase here “let us be of the same mind”.
- However, critical analysis indicates that this phrase was most likely not in the original text.

- Principles of Philippians 3:15-16
 - As maturing believers, we should have the mindset of forgetting what lies behind and focusing on moving forward with what God has before us.
 - This mindset comes from recognizing that our sins of the past have been forgiven [1 John 1:9] and our accomplishments of the past will be fairly evaluated at the Judgment Seat [1 Cor 3:11-15].
 - If we tend to struggle with dwelling on the past rather than looking forward, God will make us fully aware of this as the Holy Spirit uses His word to correct us [2 Tim 3:16-17].
 - This correction of our thinking comes about as we seek God's wisdom [Pr 2:3-6; Jas 1:5] rather than relying upon our own understanding [Pr 3:5-6].
 - The moment we placed our faith in Jesus Christ we received (by grace) the righteousness of God, a righteousness we could not attain through any other means [Rom 3:21-24; Phil 3:9].
 - At the same moment, we were called to live a life which is in accordance with that righteousness [Eph 4:1; 1 Thess 2:12].
 - To live in this manner requires that we walk by grace through faith [Col 2:6; Eph 2:8-9] rather than by the energy of the flesh [Rom 8:4-5].
 - As we continue to live in this way and mature spiritually to the point that we are filled with the knowledge of God's will, we will walk in a manner that pleases Him in all respects [Col 1:9-11].

• Follow Godly Examples [3:17-19]

- Brethren, join together with the others who are following my example,
Συμμιμηταί μου γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί,
 - The phrase “join in following my example” is literally “become a fellow-imitator of me”.
 - This includes a form of the word συμμιμητής (summimētēs) which implies that there are others who are already following Paul’s example.
- and pay careful attention to those who walk according to the example you have in us.
καὶ σκοπεῖτε τοὺς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας καθὼς ἔχετε τύπον ἡμᾶς.
 - The word “observe” is from σκοπέω (skopeō) which means “pay careful attention to”.
 - In Rom 16:17 this word is translated as “keep your eye on”.
 - The word “pattern” is from τύπος (typos) which means “image”, “pattern” or “example”.
 - Given the use of συμμιμητής (summimētēs) in this verse, “example” is probably the best translation.
- For many walk, of whom I told you many times,
πολλοὶ γὰρ περιπατοῦσιν οὓς πολλάκις ἔλεγον ὑμῖν,
 - The word “often” is πολλάκις (pollakis) which means “often”, “frequently” or “many times”.
 - Here the emphasis is on the repeated reminders, not the frequency of the messages.
- and now tell you even with tears of sadness, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ,
νῦν δὲ καὶ κλαίων λέγω, τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ,
 - The word “weeping” is from κλαίω (klaiō) which means “weep” or “cry”.
 - This word describes tears of sadness or grief [Mark 14:66-72; John 20:11-18].
 - The phrase “enemies of the cross of Christ” begins a list of characteristics of false teachers.
 - Paul used the term “cross of Christ” of baptism and the false circumcision [1 Cor 1:10-17; Gal 6:12-14].
- whose end is destruction, whose god *is their* desires,
ὧν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια, ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία
 - The word “destruction” is ἀπώλεια (apōleia) which means “destruction” or “death”.
 - This word is used here as it was in Phil 1:28 to describe eternal separation from God.
 - The word “appetite” is κοιλία (koilia) which means “belly” or “womb”.
 - This word is used here to describe the innermost being [John 7:38], the seat of desires [Rom 16:18].
- and *whose* glory is in their shameful deeds, who set their minds on earthly things.
καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὐτῶν, οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες.
 - The word “shame” is from αἰσχύνῃ (aisuchē) which means “shame” or “disgrace”.
 - This word can be used of shameful deeds [Ju 13].
 - The phrase “set their minds” is from φρονέω (phroneō) which we have seen to mean “mindset”.
 - This word is used of earthly things in Col 3:2.

- Principles of Philippians 3:17-19
 - God has blessed us by providing spiritual mentors for us in this life.
 - We should follow the example they offer as they demonstrate for us how we can be imitators of Christ [1 Cor 4:16; 11:1] which will allow us to experience the peace of God [Phil 4:7-9].
 - As we mature in our faith we should endeavor to be examples for others to follow [1 Tim 4:12; 1 Pet 5:1-3].
 - Unfortunately, the world is full of many people (unbelievers and believers walking in carnality) who offer us the wrong kind of example.
 - Paul was concerned about false teachers who had been trying to influence the Philippians.
 - These men were following after their own lusts, glorying in their sins, and encouraging others to indulge in shameful deeds of the flesh [Psalm 52:1; Rom 1:28-32].
 - These false teachers were unbelievers – enemies of the cross of Christ and, as such, headed for eternal destruction, away from the presence of God and His glory [2 Thess 1:8-9].
 - We were once hostile toward God as well, but have been reconciled through Christ [Col 1:21-22].
 - As a result of our new position in Christ we should be following godly examples, not worldly ones.
 - As long as we are in this world, we will be exposed to worldly examples (from Hollywood, etc.), but we should ignore those examples and focus on people who imitate Christ by having their minds set on the things of the Spirit [Rom 8:5-8].

- **Keep a Heavenly Focus [3:20-21]**

- For our citizenship is actually in heaven,
ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει,
 - The word “citizenship” is πολίτευμα (politeuma) which means “commonwealth” or “state”.
 - This is the term that was used of Philippi as a Roman colony and Roman citizenship was a source of great pride to the Philippians.
 - The message here is that the believers in Philippi should now consider themselves as citizens of a colony of heaven here on earth.
 - The word “is” is from ὑπάρχω (huparchō) which means “exist” or “truly be present”.
 - The typical word for “being” is εἰμί (eimi), so Paul using ὑπάρχω (huparchō) here indicates extra emphasis on the reality of this citizenship.
- from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
ἐξ οὗ καὶ σωτῆρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν,
 - The phrase “from which” is ἐξ οὗ (ex hou) and the pronoun οὗ (hou) refers to heaven.
 - Our Savior is currently in heaven and we are waiting for him to return from there.
 - The phrase “eagerly wait” is from ἀπεκδέχομαι (apekdechomai) which means “await eagerly”.
 - Paul used this word 3X in Rom 8:19-25 where he emphasized waiting eagerly for God’s promises.
- who will transform our humble bodies into conformity with His glorious body,
ὃς μετασχηματίζει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
 - The word “transform” is from μετασχηματίζω (metaschēmatizō) which means “change the form of something”.
 - This refers to the change in 1 Cor 15:51-52.
 - The phrase “humble state” is from ταπεινώσις (tapeinōsis) which means “unpretentious state”.
 - Mary used this to describe herself in humble terms in Luke 1:48.
 - The phrase “into conformity” is from σύμμορφος (summorphos) which means “similar in form”.
 - This means that we will receive bodies which match the one Jesus has already obtained.
 - The phrase “the body of His glory” is a very literal translation of the Greek.
 - This would be better translated “His glorious body” which is a reference to His resurrection body.
- in accordance with the power by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.
κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα.
 - The phrase “by the exertion of the power” is κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν (kata tēn energeian).
 - Paul used this exact phrase in Eph 1:19 where it is translated “in accordance with the working”.
 - The phrase “that He has” is τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν (tou dunasthai auton).
 - This phrase should be translated “by which He is able”.

- Principles of Philippians 3:20-21
 - As Americans we take great pride in being citizens of the greatest country in the world.
 - If you were blessed to be born in Texas, you take even greater pride in being a Texan.
 - Likewise, the Philippians took great pride in their Roman citizenship.
 - In the Philippians case, they were a remote colony of Rome wherein their citizenship was vested.
 - This reality gave them a clear picture of their new citizenship in Christ: they were now citizens of heaven living in a “remote colony” here on earth.
 - Our earthly citizenship is temporal, but our heavenly citizenship is everlasting [Col 3:1-3].
 - That heavenly citizenship is due to our relationship with Christ who currently resides in heaven at the right hand of the Father [Mark 16:19; Rom 8:34].
 - We should live every single day of our lives with eager anticipation of His return from heaven when He comes to rescue His Church from the wrath to come [1 Thess 1:10; Heb 9:28].
 - At Christ’s return every member of the Church will see his natural, perishable body of dishonor replaced by a spiritual, imperishable body suited for eternal glory [1 Cor 15:42-53].
 - This incredible act is accomplished in accordance with the power Christ has to bring everything into subjection [1 Cor 15:25-28; Heb 2:8].