



THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

PHILIPPIANS 3:17-21

Enemy or Citizen?

Small Group Study Guide

1. Paul begins this paragraph by stating: “follow my example.” Was it arrogant and egotistical of Paul to say this? Explain your answer.
 - Is it appropriate or inappropriate, for a pastor or elder today, to encourage members of the local church to follow his example? Explain your answer.
 - How important of a role do others have in your spiritual growth?
2. Paul warns the Philippians church against those he labels as “enemies of the cross of Christ.” This leads to some serious questions.
 - Are these “enemies” inside or outside the church? In other words, are these individuals those who make no claim of faith in Christ or those who claim faith in Christ and might even be church members? Support your answer.
 - Since Paul is warning us about those who are “enemies of the cross”, how is it that you can identify them?
 - What does it mean to have one’s “god be their appetite”?
 - What does it mean for one to “glory in their shame”?
 - What does it mean for one to have their “mind on earthly things”?

Don't Forget:

Discuss the Sermon Notes from this week

3. Should we weep more for those who say they believe yet live like enemies of the cross of Christ or more for those who make no claims to being a follower of Christ? Explain your answer.
 - What can you learn about Paul's heart for the church from 3:18?
 - What ought to be a mark of a spiritual leader - pastor, elder, small group leader, Sunday school teacher - from what Paul displayed in this verse?
4. "The promise of His coming is given without date so that we may live daily preparing to meet our Lord."¹ Do you live with an expectation of meeting Christ the Lord?
 - Based on the priorities in your life (think of the things you spend the most time, money and energy on), are you more focused on the things of this earth or more focused on Christ alone? Explain your answer.
5. In Greek thought, to be a citizen of a city-state was to subordinate one's own interests to the welfare of the community. How does Paul's reminder that we are citizens of heaven relate to the concerns he expressed in 2:1-4 and 2:14-15?
6. As we consider what it means to be in ***The Fellowship of the Gospel***, look over the following verse and summarize the heart of what it means to be a true citizen in ***The Fellowship of the Gospel***.
 - What is to be the single priority and goal of your life (3:8-11)?
 - What is to be the single hope and aspiration of your life (3:20-21)?
 - What is to be the single standard and authority in your life (1:27-30)?
 - What is to be the single attitude and mindset in your life (2:4-11)?
 - What unites all these together?
 - Based on the above questions, how zealous and passionate a member of ***The Fellowship of the Gospel*** are you?

¹John R. W. Stott,
The Bible Speaks Today:
Message of Acts
(Downers Grove:
InterVarsity Press,
1990), 198.

For Next Week:
Prayerfully meditate and study the following: Philippians 4:1-7