

AN OPTIMISTIC LIFE

Philippians 3:17-21

- *"Leave your impoverished confusion and live! Walk up the street to a life with meaning."* (Proverbs 9:6)
- **The Lord wants to help us learn how to MAKE LIFE COUNT.**
- ***Am I more of an optimist or a pessimist, and why is that?***
- **Some people tend to be pessimists when going through trials, observing the world's troubles, or thinking about the future.**
- **All Christians can be optimists when we consider what the Lord has provided for us in this life and the next life.**
- ***What can encourage us as we look at the world around us?***

We Will Be Encouraged As We View The:

FAITHFULNESS OF GODLY EXAMPLES

- *"Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example."* (Philippians 3:17)
- **We learn from Paul's example how to *Grow Spiritually*.**
    - *"I don't mean to say that . . . that I have already reached perfection (maturity). But I press on to possess that perfection (maturity) for which Christ Jesus first possessed me."* (Philippians 3:12)
    - **Growing in the Lord requires focus, fervency and faithfulness.**
- **We learn from Paul's example how to *Benefit from Community*.**
    - *"Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other."* (Romans 12:4-5)
- **We learn from Paul's example how to *Overcome Adversity*.**

    - *"You ought to know . . . about the trouble we went through in Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it.* ***. . .*** *But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. And He did rescue us from mortal danger."* (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)
- **We learn from Paul's example how to *Transform Tragedy.***
    - *"God comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us."* (2 Corinthians 1:4)
- **We learn from Paul's example how to *Prepare for Eternity*.**
    - *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me - the crown of righteousness, which the Lord . . . will give me on the day of His return.* (2 Timothy 4:7-8)
- *"Pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example."* (Philippians 3:17)
- **We can learn much from others in the past and present about how to live for the Lord and "make a difference" for Him.**
- ***Who are some Christians who have encouraged me by their faith, fervency and faithfulness?***

We Will Be Encouraged As We View The:

FOOLISHNESS OF GOD'S ENEMIES

- *"there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth."* (Philippians 3:18-19)
- **We need to understand the foolishness of pursuing *Ungodly Pleasures.***
    - *"Their god is their appetite . . . "* (Philippians 3:19)
    - **Hedonists believe that pleasure is the chief end of life.**
    - **There are good pleasures to enjoy, but we must not allow ourselves to be defeated by sinful pleasures.**
- **We need to understand the foolishness of pursuing *Ungodly Philosophies*.**
    - *"They brag about shameful things . . ."* (Philippians 3:19)
    - **Humanism is the belief that man is the chief actor of life and that we're to live to glorify ourselves rather than to glorify God.**
    - **A focus on self-centeredness or self-importance negatively affects our relationships with God and others.**
    - Jesus - *"If any of you wants to be My follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow Me."* (Luke 9:23)

- **We need to understand the foolishness of pursuing *Excessive Possessions. "***
    - *"They think only about this life here on earth."* (Philippians 3:19)
    - **Materialists are focused on money and possessions.**
    - **God is not against us having wealth or possessions, but He wants us to know of the futility of relying on material possessions (Luke 12:16-21, 1 Timothy 6:6-19).**
    - *"People who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows."* (1 Timothy 6:9-10)
- *"For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that <u>there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. They are headed for destruction</u>."* (Philippians 3:18)

We Will Be Encouraged As We View The:

FULFILLMENT OF OUR GLORIOUS <u>ETERNITY</u>

- *"But <u>we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives.</u> <u>And we are eagerly waiting for Him to return as our Savior</u>. He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like His own, using the same power with which He will bring everything under His control."* (Philippians 3:20-21)
- **At the end of this age the Lord will *Return for His People on Earth.***
    - **God's people who have died are residing in Heaven.**
    - *"Since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with Him the believers who have died."* (1 Thessalonians 4:14)
    - **God's people who are alive will be "raptured" to Heaven.**
    - *"The Lord Himself will come down from heaven . . . We who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever."* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
- **At the end of this age the Lord will *Reward His People in Heaven*.**
    - **In Heaven God's people will receive new bodies.**
    - *"He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like His own . . ."* (Philippians 3:21)
    - **In Heaven God's people will receive new awards**
    - *"And now the prize awaits me - the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of His return. And <u>the</u>*

prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to His appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

- **In Heaven God's people will receive new assignments**
- The Master – *"Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate" (Matthew 25:23)*

- **At the end of this age the Lord will *Restore His Priorities in the Universe.***
  - *"He (Jesus) will bring everything under His control."* (Philippians 3:21)

- **We get to be a "citizen of heaven" by making Jesus our Lord.**
- ***What is the Lord saying to me, and how do I respond to His message?***