

Two Paths, Two Destinations

November 1, 2015

Text: Philippians 3:17-4:1

I. A Study in Contrasts (3:18-20)

- A. Two Identities: Enemies of the Cross vs. Citizens of Heaven
- B. Two Destinations: Destruction vs. Glory
- C. Two Mindsets: Earthly vs. Heavenly (Col 3:1-4)
- D. Two Ways to Walk (Matt 7:13-14)
- E. Two Sets of Guides (4:9)

II. The Charge (3:17, 20; 4:1)

- A. Walk Together Like Us (3:17; 1 Cor 11:1)
- B. Wait in Hope (3:20; 1 Cor 15:51-53; Col 3:4)
- C. Stand Firm *Thus* in Christ (4:1; 1 Cor 15:58)

Quotations

“This body which we carry about with us is not an everlasting abode, but a frail tabernacle, which will in a short time be reduced to nothing. Besides, it is liable to so many miseries, and so many dishonorable infirmities, that it may justly be spoken of as vile and full of ignominy. Whence, then, is its restoration to be hoped for? From heaven, at Christ’s coming. Hence there is no part of us that ought not to aspire after heaven with undivided affection. We see, on the one hand, in life, but chiefly in death, the present meanness of our bodies; the glory which they will have, conformably to Christ’s body, is incomprehensible by us: for if the disciples could not endure the slight taste which he afforded in his transfiguration (Matthew 17:6), which of us could attain its fullness? Let us for the present be contented with the evidence of our adoption, being destined to know the riches of our inheritance when we shall come to the enjoyment of them.” —John Calvin

“Live for the things that will last! ... The only enduring appetite is an appetite of love for Christ and his people. All else will become dust.” —Sinclair Ferguson

Let no strong affection wantonly dally with the world.
May I live high above a love of things temporal,
 sanctified, cleansed, unblemished, hallowed by grace,
 thy love my fullness,
 thy glory my joy,
 thy precepts my pathway,
 they cross my resting place.

My heart is not always a flame of adoring love,
But, resting in thy Son's redemption,
I look forward to the days of heaven,
 where no languor shall oppress,
 no iniquities chill,
 no mists of unbelief dim the eye,
 no zeal ever tires.

Father, these thoughts are the stay, prop, and comfort of my soul.

—From "Vocation," a puritan prayer in *The Valley of Vision*, ed. Arthur Bennett

"Paul is speaking of a 'hometown' legacy that, surprisingly, flows *back from the future* into the present. The city that defines your identity is neither the one in which you were born nor the one in which you were raised. It is the city *toward which* you are moving, drawn forward by the glory of the Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, who already rules there in resurrection life... For those who trust in Jesus Christ, *who we are* is no longer determined by *where we have come from*, but instead by *where we are going*." —Dennis Johnson

"Setting our minds on things above is not escapist daydreaming, but having the beauties of heaven and heaven's King permeate and transform our values and relationships in the present, on the earth... Because God's sheer grace has conferred on heaven's citizens unimaginable privileges, we are humbled, not haughty; patient, not proud; eager to serve, not demanding service; outgoing toward others, not turned in on ourselves. Heavenly-mindedness is humility in action on earth, serving, forgiving, loving others in everyday life." —Dennis Johnson

Reflection Questions (for personal reflection and family conversation):

1. What is your response to the cross of Christ?
2. How does your heavenly hope in Christ shape your everyday life? From the other perspective, what does your lifestyle indicate about your ultimate destination?
3. Who do you look to as a role model? Do you find yourself unconsciously imitating those on the path of life or those on the path to destruction?
4. What does it mean to "stand firm *thus* in the Lord?"