

Philippians 3:15-21

Hold True

Mature ...

I. Hold True

- A. You Have the Gospel
- B. You Have life in X
- C. You Have the Promises

II. Imitate Wisely

A. Who NOT to Follow: *Enemies of the Cross*

- Willfully Lost
- Earthly Minded
- Proudly Disobedient
- Self Worshippers
- Bound for Trouble

B. Models to Embrace: *Lovers of Christ*

- Divinely Directed
- Spiritually Minded
- Humbly Submissive
- True Worshippers
- Bound for Glory

III. To The Savior

- A. He Reigns
- B. He Will Return
- C. We Will Be Like Him

... and maturing.

Children, Listen ...

1. What kind of people does Paul remind us NOT to be like?
2. How are God's people different from the bad examples Paul gave?
3. Do you have people in your life that are good examples to follow?
4. What do Jesus' followers have to look forward to when time as we know it ends?

Be Like Me?

Coming from a mere mortal, "join in imitating me!" may read a little outrageous at first. Aren't we supposed to follow the example of Christ? Make no mistake, that is Paul's primary point – he has written so much. And don't worry, Paul is well aware of his shortcomings, labeling himself in one place as the "chief of sinners." But Paul's life was also saturated with grace and knowledge of the will of God. This taught him how to manage his new life in Christ. Sinner as he was, he still had his focus right and things fell into place because of that. He was confident enough in things of the faith that he could actually call others to embrace them for themselves. He does qualify his statement by writing this in another letter: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." 1Corinthians 11:1. There were plenty of bad examples to avoid like the plagues then as there are now – but following the example of those who faithfully follow Christ has, is, and always will be a wise choice. Flawed as he was the apostle Paul was a good example of true devotion. While it may make us squirm a little, perhaps a good question to ask ourselves is "am I a good example for others to follow ... as I strive to follow Christ?"