

# The end of the path

Philippians 3:17-21



**Read:** Philippians 3:17-21

## Lesson:

Paul wraps up this command to rejoice in the Lord with another call to find a good \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 17) to follow. He is not arrogantly holding himself as the supreme example to follow (verse 12), rather he is calling us to follow him and \_\_\_\_\_ who so \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 17). These are the mature mentioned in verse 15 and include Timothy and Epaphroditus mentioned in chapter 2. It is an instruction to “keep your eyes on the prize” but if you lose sight of that set your eyes on someone who can see it. Who we choose to follow sets us on one of the two paths Paul has been talking about. In order to encourage us to choose carefully who we follow, he discusses how both paths end up.

The first path to consider is the path of self-obtained righteousness. Remember the group Paul is talking about (verse 2)? He is talking about those Jews who called themselves Christians and tried to get the Philippians to obey the Jewish Law to obtain righteousness. Now he lays out the end of those who \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 18) as \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 18) of cross of Christ. Those who seek self-obtained righteousness will end in \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 19). This is because they trusted in their dietary laws, making an idol out of their \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 19). This is because they trusted in their circumcision, glorifying the covenant they had broken (verse 19). Basically, they focused on controlling their bodies right now in order to gain heaven. This failed them.

The second path to consider is the path of given righteousness (from Christ). The end of this path is \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 20) in heaven. Just as the Philippians were Roman citizens with all the privilege attached, but lived far away; so believers are citizens of heaven and long to go there. The great hope of this path is not a destination, it is a person! We \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 20) wait for Jesus Christ. He will \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 21) all things, just like the Emperor of Rome would do for his empire. And even better than that, Christ will \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 21) our \_\_\_\_\_ (verse 21) bodies, which no roman emperor could do.

The first path focuses on making our bodies the best they can be right now. Doing the most work to make sure our body is the best it can be, with the end goal of what? Obtaining eternity by finding a way to work for it. That simply is not ever possible, their end is always destruction. The second path focuses on setting our minds on Christ and trusting in what he was given us. Working diligently to serve our King because of all he has given us. This ends with us being able to see him in person in heaven forever. And he will change our falling apart bodies to be perfect bodies like he has.

You have to choose, you can only walk on one path. Where are you heading?

## Discussion Questions:

Why would Paul weep (verse 18) over this group that chose to be enemies of the cross?

Who else in this letter (Philippians) does Paul present as a mature believer?

## Application Questions:

Can a believer focus so much on “perfecting” their body that they lose focus on serving Christ?

How can a believer find their way back to the right path if they have been pulled away?

Can other believers look to you for an example of eagerly seeking Christ?