

March 15/16, 2003

**Study Questions**  
*Experiencing Joy: A Study in Philippians*  
**Citizens of Heaven**  
**Philippians 3:17-21**  
Pastor Bryan Clark

**Opening Discussion**

1. Who have been some of the key mentors in your life? Did the majority of their teaching take place in a classroom or in “doing life” together?
2. Which is a more powerful influence, what someone says or what someone does? Why is that? Is it effective to say to people, “Do as I say, not as I do?” Why or why not? Does this work with our kids? Does this work with the spiritual “children” among us?
3. Could we put you up in front of the congregation as a model of Christian living? Why or why not? Do we really have the luxury of saying, “Don’t watch my example”?

**Bible Study**

1. This section in Philippians is pulling together 1:27-3:21. Therefore read that whole section together.
2. In what ways have you applied 1:27-3:16? What areas of your life have you sought to address, given what Paul has taught you?
3. In what ways did Jesus “mentor” His disciples? Was this done primarily in the classroom or in the laboratory of life? Give some examples.
4. While Paul may have had a misguided past (3:4-7), he is now able to put himself in front of the Philippian believers as an “example” of godly living (3:17). How does this line up with his teaching in 3:13?

What is necessary to be a godly example for others to follow? Can people with a past history of failure and sin ever become a model of godly living?

Read Acts 7:54-8:3. How serious was Paul’s sin against the Church?

5. Paul identifies some traits of the legalists to warn the readers against following them by mistake. These would be the “false circumcision” of 3:2. Discuss each of these traits.  
“their god is their appetite”  
“whose glory is in their shame”  
“who set their minds on earthly things”

What are they?

How would they manifest themselves in our culture today? Who are these people in today’s religious culture?

How do these traits line up with 1 John 2:16?

6. Contrast these negative traits with “conduct worthy of the gospel” as defined by Paul in 1:27-3:16.

Give a summary statement capturing the difference between a true believer and a religious person, according to Paul.

7. Compare Peter’s words in 1 Peter 2:11,12 with Paul’s words in Philippians 3:20. What words, behaviors and attitudes are appropriate and inappropriate in heaven?

How, then, should those words, behaviors and attitudes be reflected in our lives now as citizens of heaven?

8. If you knew Christ was coming back tomorrow, what would you do differently?

How should we live if we are “eagerly” awaiting the return of Jesus?

## **Application**

1. What one thing works its way to the top of your list of things that you need to work on, knowing that others are looking at you as an example of Christian living?

What is your plan to work on that specific area?

Who can hold you accountable to change in that area?

2. Determine a person who bears the marks of a Christ-follower, according to Paul, that you can follow in your own spiritual walk.
3. What can you do as a LifeGroup to help one another process biblical truth so that it dramatically affects daily living? How do you move from simply more information to real life transformation?