

Phil 3:1-3

1. Finally, my brethren,

*“loipos... left; plur. **the remaining, the rest... the rest of any number or class under consideration... the rest, the things that remain... what remains...** i.e. a. hereafter, for the future, henceforth... b. at last, already... c. to loipon, dropping the notion of time, signifies **for the rest, besides, moreover, [A. V. often finally], forming a transition to other things, to which the attention of the hearer or reader is directed...**” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, NT: 3063)*

In English, “*finally*” always infers coming to an end and drawing a conclusion. This has led some to conclude that Paul had intended to end the letter here and then thought of a few more things to say. The trouble with such a conclusion is the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is unlikely that the Spirit would do such a thing. Since the Greek “*for the rest*” can also infer a change of subject, a transition to a related topic or a drawing to a conclusion, there is no reason to concern ourselves with this question. It is an issue of translation. If they had translated it furthermore, or for the rest, this would not have been a consideration. This is clearly a transition from the news about /Timothy and Epaphroditus to their right to rejoice and need to beware of false teachers.

rejoice in the Lord.

The number of times that Paul uses the verb and noun for rejoice and joy are used fifteen times in the four chapters of the book of Philippians. When we compare that to the rest of the prison epistles, it is not used in Ephesians, 3 times in Colossians and once in Philemon. It is evident that there is a special emphasis. The terms mean exactly the same thing in Greek as they do in English.

*chairo.... To **rejoice, be glad, be delighted ... or ... to rejoice at, be delighted with, take delight in a thing, Id., etc.;** so, (from Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon NT:5463)*

*"chara... **joy, gladness;** ... b. by meton. **the cause or occasion of joy...**" (Thayer, p. 664-665; 5479)*

Despite persecution, the trials and tribulations of life under the sun, and the dangers from sin and false teaching, Christians are still commanded to rejoice. Even with the guilt of sin, godly sorrow of repentance and a continued quest to grow, Christians are still encouraged to rejoice. Even with the fear that we might come short of it (Heb. 4:1), we are still to rejoice. Even with Paul’s unceasing pain in his heart for the Jews and his imprisonment because of their hatred of him, he still rejoiced. There is something important to learn from this. Regardless of all these other things, the grace and mercy of God and the amazing nature of the hope should lead us to joy. Not always and under every circumstances is it going to be as powerful as at other times, but it should always be there.

Joy chara - Noun

- (1) *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with **JOY**, Phil 1:3-4*
- (2-3) *And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and **JOY** of faith, 26 that your **REJOICING** for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again. 1:25*
- (4) *fulfill my **JOY** by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Phil 2:2-3*
- (5) *Receive him therefore in the Lord with all **GLADNESS**, and hold such men in esteem; Phil 2:29-30*
- (6) *Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my **JOY** and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. Phil 4:1*

Rejoice chairō Verb

- (7-8) *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I **REJOICE**, yes, and will **REJOICE**. Phil 1:18*
- (9-10) *Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and **REJOICE** with you all. 18 For the same reason you also be glad and **REJOICE** with me. Phil 2:17-18*
- (11) *Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may **REJOICE**, and I may be less sorrowful. Phil 2:28-29*
- (12) *Finally, my brethren, **REJOICE** in the Lord. Phil 3:1*
- (13-14) ***REJOICE** in the Lord always. Again I will say, **REJOICE!** Phil 4:4*
- (15) *But I **REJOICED** in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Phil 4:10-11*

The context here centers joy on Jesus. No matter how difficult it might get around them with

enemies and false teachers besetting them, with other members letting them down, and with individual sorrows and disappointments plaguing their lives. There are always reasons to rejoice. By using the phrase “*in the Lord*,” he gives the location and relationship that will bring this joy. It all comes down to perspective. Those who allow the problems and trials to become their only focus will never feel this joy, while those who always take a few steps back and realize the temporary nature and the reward they bring, will always feel this joy. By faith we must accept and believe the promises Jesus left for all disciples.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful. Jn. 14:27

*These things have I spoken unto you, that **my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. Jn. 15:11***

“Rejoicing in the Lord” is based the hope of salvation He has brought to His disciples. A lack of such joy can only be traced to sin, to ignorance, or to a lack of faith in the promises and grace of God. . It is one of the fruits of the Spirit, given to all who full trust in the revelation He has given.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. (Gal. 5:22-23).*

Anyone who has become fully aware of what a horrible fate was removed from them by the grace of God, and the greatness of the reward awaiting those who live faithfully, cannot help being filled with joy when he thinks of it.

*Being therefore **justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and **we rejoice in hope of the glory of God**. And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations knowing that our tribulations work steadfastness; (Rom. 5:1-3) **1 Peter 1:3-7***

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 1Pet. 1:3-6

For me to write the same things to you,

This phrase has taken up much time in the thoughts and writings of those who study this book. There are two ways to understand it. It can point backward to rejoicing in the Lord or ahead to the warning about false teachers. If we remove the punctuation and verse separation offered by the translators, we can see this more clearly. Our translations keep the verse break and then add a paragraph break.

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

But Greek grammar did not demand this. It could just as easily read:

1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.

2 To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but for you it is safe: Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision:

While either one is scriptural, most people never tire of hearing they can rejoice and be happy because they are Christians. Multitudes only want to think about the joys of heaven, grace and forgiveness. They never tire of it because it is uplifting.

Warnings against false teachers on the other hand are a much more difficult subject that some do not want to hear about. This makes “beware of the dogs,” “beware of the evil workers,” and “beware of the concision” the reference to “the same things.”

This certainly fits in well with the context of all Paul’s letters. It is one of the most common themes found in all of them. In each of them we find references to false teachers, error, and false doctrine. He has already spoken of it in a general way several times in this letter. He mentioned adversaries (1:27-28), holding themselves away from faction and vain glory (2:2-4), and the crooked and

perverse generation in which they lived (2:15-16). It is quite likely that in writing “the same things to you” he was contrasting the epistles he was writing to the other congregations. “For me to write unto you the same thing I write to the other congregations is not irksome to me.” Though only insinuated earlier, he now wishes to get specific. Yet to make these warnings more powerful he wants them to understand his feelings. Warnings are often disarmed by misunderstandings on the part of those to whom they are given. Some get sullen as they think they are above the need of them, others become offended because it insults their maturity. Some feel they are above such warnings and are affronted at the implied weakness. Paul wants none of these things to hinder the power of this needed warning. He wants his friends to understand why he offers them the same warnings he gives everyone else.

is not tedious, to me indeed is not irksome, (ASV)

The “indeed,” included in the ASV is often left untranslated, but as in English it emphasizes a contrast and is not out of place here. It intensifies the repetition of the previous phrase. “*to write the same things is indeed not tedious to me!*” Far from tedious it is important and necessary.

mén ... was widely used in classical Greek, less frequently in the popular Koine, and not at all in modern Greek. **In the NT it occurs 180 times...** The intensifying particle *men*, ... has the function in the NT and its world — as also predominantly in classical Greek — of **setting the stage for a strong or weak contrast (most often with *de*), and thus it contributes toward linking individual words or clauses.** The correlation of *mén* and *de* corresponds to English “**certainly — but**”; however, the particles often play a role through emphatic position or oral accentuation **so that *mén* but not *de* remains untranslated...**” (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3303)

The translators had some difficulty coming to an agreement on how to translate the term “*tedious*.” The ASV chose “*irksome*,” KJV, “*grievous*,” “*no trouble*” NAS.

<i>For me to write the same things to you is not</i>	<u>tedious</u> , but for you it is safe.	NKJV
<i>To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not</i>	<u>grievous</u> , but for you it is safe.	KJV
<i>To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not</i>	<u>irksome</u> , but for you it is safe.	ASV
<i>To write the same things again is no</i>	<u>trouble</u> to me, and it is a safeguard for you.	NASU, ESV

It's other two uses in Scripture are found in the wicked and *slothful / lazy servant*, (Mt. 25:26) and in not “*lagging in diligence*” (Rom. 12:11). The root meaning of the word is “*hesitation*” and depending on the reason can be translated slothful if it arises from laziness or dislike, displeasure or distasteful. The English “*onerous*” captures the idea well. Sometimes people find it difficult to want to repeat the same warnings. Thinking perhaps that others think he has run out of things to say or knowing that people don't like to hear the same warnings over and over again.

oknéros ... Like *oknos*, which means “**hesitation**” through weariness, sloth, fear, bashfulness, or reserve, ***oknéros* is used a. of persons...** “hesitating,” “anxious,” “negligent,” “slothful.” It thus denotes **one who for various reasons or difficulties does not have the resolution to act.** ... depicts **the slothful man who lacks the resolve to get to work** (Prov 6:6,9), who **lets inconveniences stop him** (Prov 20:4), or who, **having no resolution, never moves on from the will to the deed** (Prov 21:25). ... It is also used **b. of things**, “causing *oknon*,” “**awakening suspicion, dislike, fear,**” ... In the NT a. occurs at Mt 25:26 ... **The slothful servant, who cannot overcome his distaste for responsible effort,** ... In Rom 12:11 ... **To yield to the promptings of carnal indolence** is for Christians an offence against the Spirit who enables and obligates them to overcome themselves. ... Sense b. occurs at Phil 3:1, “**arousing dislike or displeasure.**” Impelled by the Spirit to equip Christians adequately for salvation, Paul overcomes the dislike or distaste which might arise through repetition of his admonition. (Kittel, TDWNT NT:3636)

Is Paul is saying, “I am not lazy, slothful, and sluggish.” “I do not use this information for you as filler because I can't think of anything else to write,” or “It is not a burden to me to write the same things over and over.” “It is not something that is grievous or difficult for me to do.” It doesn't bother Paul in the least to repeat himself. It does not indicate that he is slothful and lazy. It only shows the great need to repeat certain themes when times of danger approach God's children.

The vast majority of the books written by the Old Testament prophets contain the same things in them. They spoke the same theme because Israel was constantly involved in the same sin and in the same dangers of apostasy. The command to keep my statutes is given 19 times in Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

The warnings against false teachers and false prophets is a theme not left out of any of the

apostles and prophets. The commands to be diligent and productive are also found in nearly every book.

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. 2Pt. 1:12-15

but for you it is safe.

The term “safe” is from a compound word from which we get the term asphalt. It makes something that is unstable (loose rocks) into something firm and immovable (mixed with tar). These repeated warnings of Paul will make those who might otherwise be thrown to the ground or thrown down, to become immovable, firm and stable.

asphalés (NT:804) secure, unshakable; *asphaleia* (NT:803) certainty, reliability; *asphalizomai* (NT:805) safeguard (verb), watch over; *asphalōs* (NT:806) securely ... **secure, unshakable**; *asphaleia* (NT:803) ... **certainty, reliability**; *asphalizomai*, (NT:805) ... **safeguard**; (vb.), **watch over**; *asphalōs*, (NT:806) ... **securely**; 1. The word group (a total of 15 occurrences in the NT) ... **asphalés signifies in the literal sense secure, unshakable** (from **sphallō, throw, bring to the ground,**) ... The word group designates in the literal sense the **certainty or stability of a thing** (Heb 6:19: a sure anchor), or **the guarding or safekeeping of a person or thing** ... of Jesus in custody; of the grave of Jesus; ... of a securely locked prison; ... of guarding prisoners; ... fastening feet in stocks). (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:804)

asphalés, adj. from the priv. **a (1), without, and sphállō (n.f.), to supplant, throw down. Firm, that which cannot be thrown down** as used in the Class. Gr. **Firm, sure, steady, immovable** (Heb 6:19 **of an anchor**; see Sept.: Prov 8:28), **safe, secure from peril** (Phil 3:1), **certain** (Acts 25:26). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:804)

A perfect passage to see all that the Spirit is warning against is found in the gifts Christ gave to His church. Not just the apostles and prophets who wrote them, but also the evangelists, shepherds and teachers who take their words and apply them. If they did not find it irksome to write the same warnings over and over again, it should not be tedious for those today to teach them.

*And He Himself gave some to be **apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints** for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 **that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,** 15 but, **speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ —** 16 from whom **the whole body, joined and knit together** by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Eph 4:11-16*

These kinds of repeated warnings are what keep Christians from being tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine. These warnings separate those who are convicted and wrong and those who are convicted and right. It begins with Jesus warnings.

*Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, **"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.** 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* Jn. 8:31-32

***Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.** He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds. 2Jn. 9-11*

***"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"** Mt. 7:21-23*

*I marvel that you are **turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,** 7 which is not another; but there are **some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.** 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, **preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.** 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, **if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.** Gal. 1:6-9*

*Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, **that you may learn in us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.** 7 For who makes you differ from another? And **what do you have that you did not receive?** Now if*

you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 1Cor. 4:6-7

Over and over these words are built upon and strengthened. It is a united chorus that all would do well to heed and follow.

*But there were also false prophets among the people, even as **there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.*** 2Pet. 2:1-2

*Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*** 4 For **certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.** Jude 3-4

*You therefore, beloved, **since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;*** 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2Pet. 3:17

Forewarning and thus forearming are the greatest things one can give to another when they are aware of dangers that lie ahead and must be faced. Paul's keen eyes, coupled with express revelations from the Holy Spirit made him able to see the great black storm clouds of apostasy forming on the horizon and drawing ever closer.

*For **the mystery of lawlessness is already at work;** only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. ... 10 and with **all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*** 11 And for this reason **God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,** 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2Th. 2:7, 10-12

Now **the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods** which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 1Tim. 4:1-4

*For I know this, that **after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.*** 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. Acts 20:29-31

*Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. 3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 **You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace*** Gal. 5:2-4

Paul loved these brethren, and saw the need to preach against the false teachers and false doctrines of the day. This need has not lessened today. No preacher or member when placed in a position to warn others of the error taught by false teachers and the reasons they are wrong should shrink from pointing them out clearly and forcefully. Those who love the truth will never tire of hearing such warnings and those who love the souls of men will never tire of giving them.

2. Beware

Although Jesus used a different word (*prosecho* - be attentive, on guard, beware) He gave a very similar warning in His Sermon on the Mount that we must do to build in the rock of His words.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. Mt. 7:15-16

This word has a slightly different perspective, but means essentially the same thing. By repeating it three times, he gives it special emphasis. We must be ready and watchful of future dangers. It is not a question of if, but when we will be in the presence of these people. Our hearts must be aware and watching for it. Every class, every sermon, every encounter. Comparing the Scriptures with what someone is saying.

blepō ... 'to notice carefully,' ... to be ready to learn about future dangers or needs, with the implication of preparedness to respond appropriately - 'to beware of, to watch out for, to pay attention to.' ... 'pay attention to what you hear' Mark 4:24; 'watch out for those who do evil things' Phil 3:2...." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:991)

These dogs, evil workers and the concision were ever present in their days. They are among Satan's best weapons against a church. If soberly watched for, the threat he poses, can be avoided.

Be sober, be vigilant (watchful - ASV alert - NAS) because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 1Pet. 5:8-9

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. 2Cor. 11:13-15

No matter what the present circumstances of any congregation might be, they must always beware and keep their eyes peeled for such people.

beware of the dogs,

These are among the strongest terms used to describe the false teacher who enters the church to deceive, take over and destroy. The first is a dog. Although a few times in the Scriptures the dog is set forth as a worker (watchdog, sheep dog), the vast majority of Scriptures speak of a dogs as a despicable animal. we see them today The term "dog" is not used enough in the NT to get the full scope of the term. The definitions are a little helpful, but the Scriptures give us the most insight.

kuōn ... With a few exceptions (Judg 7:5: neutral; Job 30:1: sheep dogs; Isa 56:10; watchdogs), the Bible regards dogs as despicable animals (along with hyenas [Ecclus 13:18], vultures [1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:24; Jer 15:3], and pigs [Matt 7:6; 2 Peter 2:22; ... They are described as always hungrily prowling around (Isa 56:11), eating whatever is thrown out as garbage (Ex 22:31;) ... Accordingly, in the OT dogs represent both the extremity of baseness (Eccl 9:4; 1 Sam 17:43; 24:15; 2 Sam 9:8; 16:9; 2 Kings 8:13; also 1 Kings 21:19,23; 2 Kings 9:10; ... 2. The generally negative connotation is present also in the NT. ...") (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2965)

The other passages in the NT bear out this negative connotation. They are twice put into the same category as the pig. Jesus and Peter both place the disgusting character of a dog with that of the pig. Revelation uses the term in a way similar to its use here by joining the dog to the sorcerer, sexually immoral, murderer, idolater, and liar.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces. Mt. 7:6

But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire." 2Pet. 2:22

But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. Rev. 22:15

The Holy Spirit chose this word. It describes the characteristics and disgusting nature of the false teacher. They are ravenous and grievous wolves, like natural brute beasts, they will utterly perish in their own corruption as accursed children.

For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise! 20 For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours you, if one takes from you, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. 21 To our shame I say that we were too weak for that! 2Cor. 11:19-21

But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, 13 and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, 14 having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. 2Pet. 2:12-15

For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; 2Pet. 2:18-19

One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, Titus 1:12-14

When one considers Paul's inspiration and thus the removal of all possible exaggeration, prejudice, or lack of love, one sees that God actually views false teachers as lowly scavengers. He considers

all who come along and destroy his new born babes as dogs. He considers all false teachers who destroy others for money, power, or prestige as lowly scavenging dogs. The reason for this view shared jointly by the Holy Spirit and Paul can be gleaned from the damage they do as stressed in the following verses.

whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. 12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "**Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.**" 13 **This testimony is true.** Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, Titus 1:11-13

false teachers among you, who will **secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.** 2 **And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.** 3 **By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.** 2 Peter 2:1-3

Now I urge you, brethren, **note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.** 18 **For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.** Rom 16:17-19

They are called dogs out of contempt for what they do. All Christians are to watch for such as these and when they are seen they are to be marked and turned away from:

beware of the evil workers,

Jesus chose this term in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. These were men waiting at the marketplace hoping to be hired to work in the vineyard.

ergátés, masc. noun from *ergázomai* (2038), **to toil, work. Laborer, worker.** ... (I) **A worker or laborer, primarily in farming** (Matt 20:1,2,8; Luke 10:2,7; 1 Tim 5:18; James 5:4 [cf. Matt 9:37,38]). ... (II) **A workman, an artisan** (Acts 19:25)... (III) **A spiritual workman or laborer, either good** (2 Tim 2:15 [cf. Matt 9:37,38; 10:10]) **or evil** (Luke 13:27; 2 Cor 11:13; Phil 3:2). ..." Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2040

ergates akin to *ergazomai*, "to work," and *ergon*, "work," denotes (a) **"a field laborer, a husbandman,"** Matt 9:37,38; 20:1,2,8; Luke 10:2 (twice); James 5:4; (b) **"a workman, laborer," in a general sense,** Matt 10:10; Luke 10:7; Acts 19:25; 1 Tim 5:18; **it is used (c) of false apostles and evil teachers,** 2 Cor 11:13; Phil 3:2, (d) **of a servant of Christ,** 2 Tim 2:15; (e) of **evildoers,** Luke 13:27. ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2040)

Jesus then elevated the term to those who work in evangelism bringing souls to God, lamenting that such workers were few. He urged all Christians to pray that God would send forth laborers (workers) into His harvest.

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. 38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." Mt. 9:37-38

Paul urged Timothy to give diligence to become such a laborer.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 **But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.** 2Tim. 2:15-16

God needs workers like this. Those who are diligent to present themselves approved to God. Their main goal is to please God by teaching only what He has commanded. To accomplish this they must rightly divide and properly use God's word. Those who do not do this will be ashamed.

This is the basic meaning of the term "evil." It is not the evil of wickedness and corruption or blatant sin. This is the evil of a worker who accomplishes nothing. Instead of producing and progressing, these people produce nothing and are constantly damaging what has been done. There is nothing worthy of the laborer who damages and destroys. They produce what they seek and desire. They may be excellent and hard working people. That is not the point. All their work is in vain.

kakos, the constant antithesis to *agathos* ... (Deut 30:14; Ps 33:14; Rom 12:21; 2 Cor 5:10; cf. Plato, Rep. x. 608 e), and though not quite so frequently to *kalos* (Gen 24:50; 44:4; Heb 5:14; ... **affirms of that which it characterizes that qualities and conditions are wanting there which would constitute it worthy of the name which it bears.** This first in a physical sense; thus ... mean or tattered garments; ... **a physician wanting in the skill which physicians should possess; ... an unskillful judge.** So, too, in the Scripture it is often used without any ethical intention (Prov 20:17; Luke 16:25; Acts 28:5; Rev 16:2). Often, however, it assumes one; thus *kakos doulos* ... (Matt 24:48) **is a servant wanting in that fidelity and diligence which are properly due from**

such; cf. Prov 12:12; Jer 7:24; 1 Cor 15:33; Col 3:5; Phil 3:2. (Trench's NT Synonyms; NT:2556)

The Pharisees were hard working and zealous. But all their work was not only in vain, but counter productive to what God was actually seeking.

*For I bear them witness that **they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.** 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. Rom 10:2-3*

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For **you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.** Mt. 23:15*

*He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 7 **And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**' 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men — the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." 9 He said to them, "**All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.** Mk. 7:6-9*

*and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. 21 You, therefore, who teach another, **do you not teach yourself?** ... 23 **You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?** 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written. Rom. 2:17-24*

There is so much of this in the religious world today. Multitudes of teachers and followers who are working hard at so many things, except the things that God has asked them to do. Like Israel, they have a zeal for God, but refuse to learn what God actually wants them to do. They change the work of the church, its organization and worship and expect God to look at their accomplishments instead of their rebellion.

Such are truly evil workers because they work hard at nothing and in the end all that they have done will be in vain.

*For such are false apostles, **deceitful workers**, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 2Cor. 11:13*

*Depart from Me, all you **workers of iniquity.**' Lk. 13:27-28*

These false teachers are hard and strong workers, they toil and labor to a degree that makes one impressed with their efforts. Yet all this labor and toil is for naught. It is building up that which will be destroyed:

*But he answered and said, **Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up.** Let them alone: **they are blind guides.** and if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit. Mt. 15:13-14*

Watch out for such as these. They will come, they will find their way into the hearts of some people and they will work great evil upon them.

beware of the mutilation

beware of the **MUTILATION!** NKJV
beware of the **CONCISION:** ASV/KJV

beware of the **FALSE CIRCUMCISION;** NASU
look out for those who **MUTILATE THE FLESH** ESV

Although the word itself is not hard to translate, the translators struggled with the implications of the word. It means to cut away, cut through or cut off. The problem is that so does circumcision. Circumcision means to cut around and this word means to cut down. The point made in the dictionary below has some merit, although it leaves the realm of Greek word definitions and moves into the realm of commenting on the verse.

*katomé, fem. noun from katatémnō (n.f.), to cut through or off. A cutting away, mangling. Used sarcastically in Phil 3:2. The words **katomé** and **peritomé** (4061), circumcision, seem alike. However, **peritomé, ordained by the Law of Moses, has a spiritual significance distinguishing God's people** (Israel in the OT) from the heathen. **When this spiritual meaning is forgotten, then peritomé, circumcision, becomes katomé, a mutilation, a butchering up, a mere cutting away flesh which in itself is of no value.** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2699)*

peritomé lit., "a cutting round, circumcision" (the verb is peritemno), was a rite enjoined by God upon Abraham and his male descendants and dependents, as a sign of the covenant made with him, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4061)

This word is only used here in the NT. It is not a common noun, so there is very little to draw from in *koine* Greek. It is an incision. There is no evidence of any transferred use. There is no basis for the sense it is used in Phil. 3:2. So all that can be done is speculation.

katatomé ... The noun *katatomé* derives from *katatemnō* and means "incision," "sectional plane," but is much less common than the verb and in its use it is obviously restricted for the most part to the scientific and technical world, ... There is no evidence of any transferred use of *katatomé*. One thus finds no basis for the sense at Phil 3:2 in the use of the noun. Important here, however, is a special use of the verb *katatemnō*, which in its basic sense "to cut in pieces" is also employed for the cutting up of meat, ... *katatomé* occurs in the NT only at Phil 3:2. The verb is absent altogether. Neither noun nor verb is found elsewhere in primitive Christian literature. We have in Phil 3:2 a polemic against Jewish Christian Gnosticism. These adversaries undoubtedly advocated and propagated circumcision. Paul describes them as *kunes, kakoi ergatai*, and *katatomé*. In so doing he apostrophises and presses to absurdity a claim of his adversaries, namely, that they are missionaries accredited by the Spirit and that they possess circumcision, cf. Phil 3:3. (Kittel, TDWNT NT:2699)

This is why the ASV is content with concision (Latin noun, to cut off), a literal term for a cutting off. It leaves off the judgment (more like jumping to conclusions) of the other translations. There is clearly a play on words:

Beware of the concision (katatomé - cutting down) for we are the circumcision (peritomé - cutting around).

The real meaning of this term can only be found in the context and the other things that are taught about circumcision. In the gathering in Jerusalem in Acts 15, the apostles and elders came together to discuss whether the Gentiles would need to be circumcised.

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." 6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. ... 24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law" — to whom we gave no such commandment — ... 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Acts 15:5-6; 24, 28-29

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to them to leave circumcision out of the conversion of the Gentiles. Physical circumcision (cutting around) was no longer part of God's plan and the only thing it accomplished was to cut something off.

Without any authorization from God, the only thing circumcision accomplished is to cut down or cut off. It accomplished nothing more than this so the word normally attached to it (*peritomé*) could not be used. The covenant of circumcision as the Jews practiced it was gone. God had found another way to circumcise that did not require any cutting down or off. I think mutilation is a stronger term than Paul used and puts unwarranted motives into the Scriptures.

After the discussion in Jerusalem and the letter that was written, these men did not stop. They wanted circumcision and the keeping of the Law to continue. They followed Paul from church to church starting with Galatia. The entire book was written to refute these dogs, evil workers and concision commanders. After God took circumcision from Israel and gave it to the church, the only things Israel was doing was a cutting off that had no value any longer.

Christians are already the circumcision even without the cutting off they demanded. It was superfluous, a useless surgery with no benefits from God.

Phil 3:3-7

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, Phil. 3:1-3

3. for we are the circumcision

From the time of Abraham circumcision as practiced by Israel before Jesus died on the cross was always done on the 8th day to all Jewish boys, even Jesus was circumcised (Lk. 2:21). This ancient covenant came even before the Law of Moses and it is understandable why initially some over

zealous Jews went too far.

*And God said to Abraham: "As for you, **you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.** 10 This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: **Every male child among you shall be circumcised;** 11 and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and **it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.** ... 14 **And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.**" Gen. 17:9-12, 14*

We don't know how long after the writing of that letter that the true meaning of circumcision under the new covenant of Christ was made known. The Holy Spirit touched on it in the book of Romans and then fully revealed it in Colossians. Circumcision is inward a matter of the heart and it is now without hands and the circumcision of Christ which is done in baptism.

*For **he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;** 29 **but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter;** whose praise is not from men but from God. Rom. 2:28-29*

***In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism,** in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 **And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,** Col. 2:11-14*

Paul gave an overview of the controversy over circumcision in the book of Galatians.

***As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.** 13 **For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.** 14 **But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.** 15 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.** 16 **And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.** Gal. 6:12-16*

This is in direct fulfillment of the prophecies God had given all the way back in Deuteronomy and further revealed in Isaiah and Ezekiel. God had promised to circumcise their heart, in the day that the Gentiles are called and Israel is gathered a second time. In that day, God give a new heart and a new spirit and will take out the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

***If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.** 5 **Then the Lord your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.** 6 **And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.** Deut. 30:4-6*

*"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; **For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious.**" 11 **It shall come to pass in that day That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left,** Isa. 11:10-11*

***For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.** 25 **Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.** 26 **I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.** 27 **I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.** Ezek. 36:24-28*

Thus both in prophecy and in direct fulfillment, all Christians are circumcised with this circumcision not made with hands, the circumcision of Christ. With this circumcision, there can only be a cutting down and cutting off of a fleshly body part with no benefit at all. Twice in Jeremiah God described the need of those who were already circumcised to circumcise their heart.

***Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, And take away the foreskins of your hearts,** You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, **Lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings.**" Jer 4:4*

*"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "that **I will punish all who are circumcised with the uncircumcised** — 26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the people of Ammon, Moab, and all who are in the farthest corners, who dwell in the wilderness. **For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.**" Jer. 9:25-26*

who worship by the Spirit of God,

There is a clear distinction between the worship of Israel in the temple at Jerusalem and the worship in the church. In Hebrews the Holy Spirit contrasted the fleshly ordinances in the Old Law with the “*time of reformation*” that began when Jesus returned to heaven with His own blood and entered “*the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*”

It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience — 10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Heb. 9:9-13

Hence as Jesus had foretold, the hour had come and now is when the worship under the Old Covenant in Jerusalem was going to be changed.

But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” Jn. 4:23-24

Since it was the Holy Spirit who guided them into all truth, all worship today must be done at the direction of the Holy Spirit using our own spirit under the New Covenant.

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. Jn. 16:12-13

Everything written in the NT Scriptures concerning worship is one of the means by which we can be certain we are truly circumcised and seen as the circumcision by God. Each act of worship must be done on every first day of the week. If any are lacking, we are not worshiping by the Spirit of God.

These were significant changes.

The **day** changed from the seventh to the first day. Acts 20:7; 1Cor. 16:1-2

Giving changed from a tithe to giving as prospered. 1Cor. 16:1-2; 2Cor 8-9

The instrument in **singing** changed from physical instruments to the spiritual instrument of the human heart. Eph. 5:19

Preaching changed from the Law of Moses to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The **prayers** changed from being directed toward the temple in Jerusalem to being directed to the Father in heaven in the name of Jesus Christ. 1Kings 8:27-53; Dan. 6:10; Jn. 16:23-24

Annual feasts of Passover and Atonement became a weekly observance of the **Lord’s Supper**. Acts 20:7; 1Cor. 11:17

The truly circumcised today have made all of these changes.

rejoice in Christ Jesus, (NKJV) and glory in Christ Jesus, (ASV; NASB; ESV; NIV)

This was one of the greatest distinctions between the old circumcision and the new circumcision. The true Israel had accepted their Messiah and moved into His kingdom while the old Israel rejected Him. For the true circumcision everything revolved around Christ Jesus. All their joy, self-esteem, sense of confidence came from Him and from His blood.

*kauchaomai boast (verb) (NT:2744) ... kauchéma, (NT:2745) pride, arrogance; object of boasting kauchésis (NT:2746) boasting These 3 words appear in the NT a total of almost 60 times. ... The verb is most often intransitive and means **boast, the context indicating whether taking pride in a positive sense or boasting in the negative sense of bragging is in mind**”(Exegetical Dictionary NT:2744)*

*“kauchaomai kauchéma, kauchésis: **to express an unusually high degree of confidence in someone or something being exceptionally noteworthy - ‘to boast.’** ... ‘whoever boasts must boast of the Lord’ 1 Cor 1:31. ... **Whether in any particular context the boasting is legitimate or not depends upon what is boasted about. ...**” (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT 2744)*

While old Israel continued to boast in their relationship to God through the Law and the works they were doing for God through that law, true Israel now boasted about their relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

*Indeed **you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God**, 18 and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, ... 23 **You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?** Rom. 2:17-23*

The truth was revealed in Romans. The works of the Law could never bring salvation and therefore there was nothing to boast about. Once man sinned, it was no longer possible to work and feel a sense of pride in our own accomplishments. The only righteousness man could attain was not from works, but through faith in Jesus Christ. There is no boasting because we are justified by faith and not by any works of the law.

*But now **the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even **the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ**, to all and on all who believe. For **there is no difference**; 23 **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**, ... 27 **Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith**. 28 **Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law**. Rom. 3:21-28*

While old Israel boasted in Abraham and his works, Abraham could not boast at all. All his works were works of faith. It was his faith and not His works that led him to be accounted righteousness.

*What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 **For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God**. 3 **For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."** 4 **Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt**. Rom. 4:1-4*

This is why Jesus was so clear about the blessedness of those who recognize their own spiritual poverty. They have nothing to boast about!

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

This is the word for total and absolute destitution. Blessed are those who recognize their own spiritual destitution. Those who recognize that they have nothing at all to bring to God. Their souls have been blackened and soiled through sin and corruption and there is nothing they can offer in its place that is worth anything to God. These have nothing in themselves to be proud of.

All their abilities and areas of worth and value pale into insignificance when they look at God's holy law and requirements and see that they have not and never can measure up. Once someone is brought face to face with this truth, they are prepared to enter the kingdom. Jesus Christ has the soul-cleansing blood. Only he can make anyone worth anything in the eyes of God. Therefore, only those who glory and gain both their self-esteem and worth from their relationship to him can be the true circumcised of God. To be certain no one misses his point he gives the negative also.

and have no confidence in the flesh,

There is a subtle difference between boasting and feeling self-esteem and in confidence and a sense of security about something. In its active state it means persuade, convince, trust and believe. But in the perfect tense, as it is used here, it means to fully trust in, depend on. As the rich depend on their wealth, the old Israel depends and fully trusts in their flesh.

***peithō persuade, convince; trust, believe ... This verb occurs 52 times in the NT. In active usage the verb means convince, persuade** (or negatively: induce, cajole; cf. BAGD s.v. 1.b), conciliate, pacify. In the **passive it means trust, then also obey**. **Second perfect pethoitha** preserves in its active form the original intransitive meaning **fully trust in, depend on, i.e., persevere in a condition of trust**. The mid. pass. first perfect maintains the present sense of be convinced (see Becker 588 f.). The spectrum of meaning is wide, and the nuances many; a consideration of the various tenses and esp. of the context best discloses the meaning in a given instance. 4. **pethoitha** with *epi* means **depend on** after one has already been securely convinced (Luke 18:9; 2 Cor 1:9; 2:3; 2 Thess 3:4). In the later addition to Mark 10:24 (Koine, several minuscules) **the rich depend on their wealth**. ... The second pf. occurs with *en* only in Phil 3:3,4; **this dependence on the flesh is the Jews' false confidence, which stands in contrast to faith in Christ** (v. 9). ..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3982)*

This is a confidence that permeates one's life. The things that give confidence because they are relied upon for self-esteem will change the course of each person's life. Yet all fleshly attributes have one thing in common. They were a gift that we received. Those who put confidence in them are acting like they were not received but earned. The truth is it is all a gift from God.

*For **who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did***

indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 1Cor. 4:7

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
1Pet. 4:10

Nothing we have is ours. God created our world and our bodies. All that we can do and have the potential to become was a gift. We can't rely on it because it is not ours. God warned those who thought of their gifts as their own to take no confidence from it. Wisdom, might, wealth, and even beauty or any other attribute that leads to confidence will lead on astray for this one important reason. The only thing we have to glory, boast and have confidence in is our knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ.

Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the Lord. Jer. 9:23-24

There is nothing in the flesh to have confidence in. God does not want His people putting confidence in their own fleshly abilities and attainments, because they are not theirs and because even if they were theirs they are not enough to save us. No one is so great, powerful, rich or famous that it will have any influence on God. When God created man, His purpose was that man should glorify and honor Him. No amount of beauty, wealth, power, or any other fleshly attribute of man has any lasting value if its possessor refuses to honor God. Those who feel superior to others due to the possession of such things are foolish for they are fleeting. No true Christian will ever do this. Nearly all false teachers will.

In order to fully establish and elaborate on the difference between these two things, the Holy Spirit will use Paul's life as an example. He will show how trust in the flesh works its way into people's hearts and how Paul had learned and removed himself from it.

though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:

This entire passage revolves around where one places their confidence. Those who place confidence in their flesh and those who place their confidence in God, the gospel, the Holy Spirit and the salvation that is in Christ.

Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul will speak very openly about himself as the perfect example of both. For the first part of his life, Paul had put his confidence in the flesh. After he met Jesus on the road to Damascus, he realized the folly and emptiness of his own confidence based on his own fleshly attainments.

Yet all the Jews who remained behind and did not see these things still thought as he once did. The Holy Spirit can use Paul as the perfect example of one who could put confidence in the flesh and as the perfect example of one who realized the emptiness of this confidence and replaced it with a confidence in Christ.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul seeks to help those who are deluded or seeking to delude others to see what he once could not see.

The Holy Spirit is revealing that if there was ever a man who could be considered to have everything possible to put full confidence in the flesh in that day and age, it would have been Paul.

Paul had far more than all the false teachers who were plaguing the churches in that day could boast about. Paul had all the things which made the Jews, and the false teachers of the day look to themselves as having in some special way a claim to the favor of God above other men. No one could claim that Paul looked down upon these things and thought them worthless only because he could never have them.

If we follow the reasoning in his second letter to the Corinthians, we can get a better idea of what is being done here. The false teachers used their own abilities and experiences as a means of boasting and bragging. The Corinthians had been moved by all this boasting to put their trust and

confidence in these teachers. Yet they were false apostles and deceitful workers. Paul contrasted all that they had bragged about to show the Corinthians that it was humility and modesty and not lack of ability that had kept Paul from doing any of these things.

But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ... 17 What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. 18 Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast. 19 For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise! 2Cor. 11:12-20

Everything that these men were boasting about Paul either had the same or more. Yet he felt like a fool to talk in this way. This is not the way of Christ. None of these things mattered so Paul never bragged about them.

Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? — I speak as a fool — I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 2Cor. 11:22-26

Paul spoke in a similar way to the Galatians. Yet this time the false teachers were seeking to prove that the other apostles in Jerusalem were superior to Paul because they had become great pillars in the church at Jerusalem. He revealed that in every way he was equal to all the apostles.

But from those who seemed to be something — whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man — for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. Gal. 2:6-10

He had also spoke along the same line to the Corinthians, having to proclaim that he is not inferior and not behind even the most eminent apostles. Yet he still felt like a fool for speaking like this.

For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6 Even though I am untrained in speech, yet I am not in knowledge. 2Cor 11:5-6

I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing. 12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you 2Cor. 12:11-12

For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1Cor. 15:9-11

Paul did not become an apostle because there was no hope for him to reach any high position in the Jewish religion. He did not leave Jerusalem because he knew that with Peter and James there he could not reach a position of prominence. He did not become a Christian because he had no other prospects? He did not come to Christ out of desperation to become something greater in the flesh.

He already had everything the flesh could have brought to him and realized it was a worthless journey to nowhere.

The things he now lists are the things the false teachers had or wished they had. In each of these he was the best of the best, the purest of the pure and the zealous and blameless of them all.

as to circumcision an eighth-day-one; out of Israel's stock, Benjamin's tribe; a Hebrew out of Hebrews; as touching law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, a persecutor of the church; as touching righteousness in connection with law, one come to be blameless. Phil. 3:5

5. circumcised the eighth day,

His first great attribute was his circumcision which was done in precise obedience to the Old Testament law. He was not a late comer. Someone who had been circumcised later in life. He was

an eighth day one. Any child who was not circumcised on that exact day was not in true covenant relationship with God and was cut off from his people. (Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3).

Before he had become a Christian he had already entered into a covenant with God. This was something the Gentiles could never have and the false teachers of that day had sought to use to shame them into having their flesh removed. Circumcision was something very special and precious to those in error. Paul was not teaching against it because he did not have it, but because God had replaced it with something far better. It is difficult for us to know exactly what use these teachers made of this, but Paul mentioned it often and therefore the Spirit saw it as a threat.

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. Rom. 2:28-29

*Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. 19 **Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.** 1Cor. 7:18-20*

*For in Christ Jesus **neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.** Gal. 6:15*

of the stock of Israel,

Paul was a true Israelite. Both his mother and his father were of Israel. The pride they had in that is clear from the sacrifice they made in sending their little boy to Jerusalem to be brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. This pride was also instilled in their son. As with all Jews Paul had feelings of worth and value from his lineage. In that day and age those who could claim such a distinction were few. This was a great claim to honor in and of itself. But it climbs even higher than this.

*What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 **Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.** Rom. 3:1-3*

*who are Israelites, to whom **pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;** 5 of whom are **the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.** Rom. 9:4-5*

Contrast that to the Gentiles:

*you were **without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** Eph 2:12-13*

As far as fleshly attributes, he had been born into the greatest and most blessed positions.

of the tribe of Benjamin,

Not only was he of the stock of Israel, and one of the twelve sons of Jacob, but after the 10 tribes were cast off into Assyrian captivity, Benjamin along with Judah were the two remaining pure tribes.

One of the two tribes that remained faithful to David's house and remained part of God's covenant people. Though they had gone into captivity in Babylon, they had never been completely cast off as had the ten tribes of Israel who were taken into Assyrian captivity. Thus again he narrows it down. Few could claim to be pure Jews, fewer could claim to be of one of the two tribes who remained faithful to God.

a Hebrew of the Hebrews:

Go back into the genealogies of the Hebrews and Paul's lineage traced all the way back to Abraham. Not one proselyte and no breaks in the lineage. This, even more fully than "of the stock of Israel," established Paul's claim to the very highest of honors that could be gained from a fleshly descent from Abraham. He was a Hebrew of Hebrews. Not once had a proselyte of another nation tainted his bloodline. He was a Hebrew who had Hebrew ancestry all the way back on both sides directly to Abraham. He was greatly honored for that distinction among his own countrymen.

concerning the the law, a Pharisee;

When he now moves from that which he received from his parents to that which he did himself, the great advantages continue. Of all the Jewish sects in existence at the time of Christ, the Pharisees

were by far the strictest and purest. Jesus did not fault them for their strict teachings regarding the law, but their own hypocrisy in not observing it.

*Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, 2 saying: "**The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.** Mt. 23:1-3*

Paul had been a part of the strictest observers of the law that existed. If he had trusted in his own power to save himself, through attainments that he could gain, then he was in the right place and among the right group.

*nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. 5 They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that **according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.** Acts 26:4-6*

Jesus would have found his greatest supporters among these people, if they had not become so involved in their own traditions and hypocrisy that they could not give them up. Not even when shown that they were corrupting and perverting the word of God itself.

6. concerning zeal, persecuting the church;

In a comparison between himself and the Judaizing teachers of the day, Paul shined as the brightness of the sun over them.

*For you have heard of **my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. 14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.** Gal. 1:13-14*

*"**I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. 4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, 5 as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and Acts 22:3-5***

Judaizers sought to salvage what they could of the Jewish religion and the Jewish law by compromise. At the time they both felt that Christianity was an evil and wrong.

Paul took his feelings and did something about them. The Judaizing teachers in their zeal would only go into churches and try to convince as many as possible that they ought to be circumcised. Paul on the other hand went much further. In his quest to protect the Jewish law and the Jewish customs he went to the point of persecuting the church unto death.

Paul is not saying that he was right in what he did. He is only stressing that when he lived in the confidence of the fleshly attributes available through Judaism, and saw the danger presented by the church to that system, he went to much greater lengths to do something about it than the false teachers of the day were doing. His zeal far surpassed that of others in doing something about the doctrines of Christ.

as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Prior to Jesus death, this was this greatest thing a Jew could aspire to.

*There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And **they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.** Lk. 1:5-6*

The Holy Spirit is affirming here that Paul had the same qualities as Zacharias and Elizabeth. Many were as righteous as the law allowed them to be (they were not perfect). Before the coming of Jesus Christ the keeping of the law when united with faith was able to give one righteousness. What else could Paul mean by the term "righteousness of the law?" Many people were righteous while living under the law before the coming of Christ. They were righteous because they put their trust in God and kept his law to the best of their ability. Paul maintained that he had always lived before God in all good conscience.

*Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, "Men and brethren, **I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.**" Acts 23:1*

Paul was everything the law could produce before he left it to become a Christian.

*If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 **circumcised the eighth day**, of the **stock of Israel**, of the **tribe of Benjamin**, a **Hebrew of the Hebrews**; concerning the law, a **Pharisee**; 6 concerning zeal, **persecuting the church**; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, **blameless**. Phil. 3:4-6*

Phil 3:7-9

7. But what things were gain to me,

Before becoming a Christian, every one of the things listed above were very important to Paul. More importantly, before Christ came, all but the persecution of the church were things that God had commanded. They were things that brought God's favor and salvation. They were his confidence. They were his reason for living and his means of dealing with every trial and trouble of life. He saw each of them as a "gain" bringing both "profit" and "advantages" to him.

kerdos (derivative of *kerdaino* a 'to earn, to gain,' 57.189) **that which is gained or earned - 'gain, profit.'** ... teaching what they should not, for the shameful purpose of gain' Titus 1:11.... **kerdos in the sense of 'gain' is not restricted, however, to monetary gain or profit. It may refer to any kind of benefit or advantage**, for example, 'for me life is Christ, and **death is a gain**' Phil 1:21. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, NT:2771)

These things had put him in a position where he was greatly respected and honored among his own people, and until Christ came and he began persecuting the church, by his God. Some were beyond his control, gifts God had given to those who were born into this nation and submitted to His command to be circumcised the eighth day. Yet Paul had seized the opportunities God had given to him. Paul was among the best that those living under the Law of Moses could have produced. Even being a Pharisee was not the stigma Jesus gave to them, because Paul was not a hypocrite. If he had been, Jesus would never have chosen him to become a disciple and appoint him as an apostle.

*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because **He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry**, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ **Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.** 1Tim. 1:12-15*

Paul was a sinner, like all Israel and all Gentiles. His journey into sin is charted in Roman 7, but in spite of those sins, these were wonderful attributes. He honestly believed that he was protecting both his faith and his God from the ravages of a false doctrine and a false Christ. Too many commentaries are ready to attack Paul and take from him the honor and dignity which the things above gave to him. They truly were an advantage and a gain. But the time finally came when his knowledge became so great that they had to be given up if a good conscience was to be maintained. When that day arrived, he counted them loss for Christ.

these have I counted loss for Christ.

It is important to see the emphasis on Paul's own assessments in this passage. It is not often the same verb is found three times as it is here.

*But what things were gain to me, these **I have counted** (perfect middle) loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed **I also count** (present middle) all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them** (present middle) as rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

It is important here to consider the of "count," as it was used in that day. It is a word that "denotes a belief" "based on due consideration of external grounds," after weighing and comparing the "facts." It is used when "more deliberate and careful judgment is the main point.

"hegeomai... 2. i.q. to consider, deem, account, think..." hegeomai and nomizo denote a belief resting not on one's inner feeling or sentiment, but on the due consideration of external grounds, the weighing and comparing, of facts; dokeo and oiomai, on the other hand, describe a subjective judgment growing out of inclination or a view of facts in their relation to us. hegeomai denotes a more deliberate and careful judgment than nomizo; oiomai, a subjective judgment which has feeling rather than thought (dokeo) for its ground. (Cf. Schmidt, chapter 17.)..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:2233)

It reveals the process of consideration that leads to the only logical conclusion. That conclusion then becomes an unbreakable conviction. After Jesus appeared to Paul, he was three days without sight and refused to eat or drink. He had ample opportunity to go over his life. He had a decision to make. He could ignore, set aside and forget what he had seen and continue on the path he had set for himself. The second decision was to lose absolutely everything he had ever worked for and accomplished to enter into uncharted realms. This is the decision he describes here.

This offers great insight into that exact moment of his conversion, and after it, when Jesus' words in the parable of the treasure in the field occur. Paul is speaking here of his own assessment, understanding and decision to "*sell all that he had.*"

*Again, **the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.** Mt. 13:44*

Yet there is a second thing about this passage that makes it ever more powerful. There is no way translate into English because there is no equivalent for it. It would have to be a long paraphrase. The middle voice in Greek is "*one of the most distinctive and peculiar phenomena of the Greek language.* It is a word that reveals "*the subject as participating in the results of the action.*"

The Middle Voice: Here **we approach one of the most distinctive and peculiar phenomena of the Greek language.** It is impossible to describe it, adequately or accurately in terms of English idiom, for English knows no approximate parallel. It is imperative that the student abandon, as far as possible, the English point of view and comprehend that of the Greek. We can never hope to express exactly the Greek middle voice by any English translation, but must seek to acclimate ourselves to its mental atmosphere and feel its force, though we cannot express it precisely. **The middle voice is that use of the verb which describes the subject as participating in the results of the action.** ... while the active voice emphasizes the action, the middle stresses the agent. It, in some way, relates the action more intimately to the subject. ... "**the essence of the middle therefore lies in its calling attention to the agent, as in some way clearly concerned with the action.**" (Dana and Mantey, Manual Grammar of the Greek NT, p 156-157 Paragraph 154)

In English we have two choices. The subject is either doing the acting (active) or being acted upon (passive). Greek has a third option. It is still an active verb, but with the emphasis on the one doing the acting. In this case, instead of using the active that would affirm that Paul was the one who was "*weighing and comparing the "facts,"*" the Holy Spirit chose the middle. It puts Paul in the forefront. This "*due consideration of external grounds,*" was solely based on how it would affect and impact Paul. This was a decision based entirely weighing the impact on his life. On the one side was all the gain he would lose because he would have to sell it to "*buy that field.*" On the other side was Christ. Nothing else. There was nothing to bring. Everything he had thought to bring to God as his works become empty and useless. His entire world view was shaken and destroyed.

Paul was brought face to face with his innermost self. He saw clearly the terrible mistake he had made. But there was so much more. He saw that his entire life had been spent on something that was useless and futile. Once he knew beyond any doubt that Jesus was the Christ, all the prophecies and knowledge he already possessed now began to assert itself. Everything he had heard from these "*Christians*" about the gospel was certified as absolute truth.

During those three days, he pondered and consider all of this and finally drew the conclusion that it was truly in his own best interests to stop looking upon them as gain and begin to see them as a loss. This term takes in a little more than just losing something. It is something that had become a disadvantage and was hurting him. He had to take a loss of what he had thought was gain so that he could truly get the gain. "*Sell all he has to buy that field.*"

zémia, zémioō ... originally means "disadvantage ;" ... to set someone in a disadvantageous position," "to do someone hurt ;" ... 1. As the word "disadvantage" carries some measure of comparison with a preceding advantage, so it is with zémia zémioō ... disadvantage takes the form of "loss" (opp. kerdos, "gain") or "damage" ... "profit") in money or material goods in the broadest sense. ... used in this sense in Acts 27:10,21. ... the loss in goods and lives caused by unfavorable conditions at sea: (Kittel, TDWNT NT:2209)

In a flash of insight and understanding, Paul saw them for what they were. On that road to Damascus and the three days after, they slowly changed from an asset to a deficit, an advantage had become a disadvantage. They had been indispensable. Something to hold onto at whatever

cost.

We have a good illustration of this quality of loss in the only other place in the NT where this noun is used. (Acts 27:10-21). Paul, as a prisoner had been placed on this ship to bring him to Rome. This was a merchant vessel with a valuable freight that would bring profit to the owner. God had revealed to Paul that all the gain of this voyage would be lost if they sailed from Crete. When he informed them of this they mocked at his prophecy and set sail.

When the storm came upon them their circumstances were drastically changed. All thought of the gain to be made from their cargo was replaced with a concern for their lives. Though at any other time it would have been unthinkable to throw this valuable cargo overboard, when the time came where it changed from something one hoped might bring them gain into something that might cost them their lives; of their own volition they cast it overboard.

That which had been counted to be gain was changed by the storm into something damaging. This is exactly what happened to Paul. For most of Paul's life he zealously sought to gain the things listed above. They were so very important to him. But suddenly on the road to Damascus, they were no an asset, benefit or advantage to him.

This is Paul's response to the "dogs," "evil workers" and "concision." Paul had far more than these men and he gave it up because it was useless. They appeared to be offering an even closer relationship with God than Christ could give them. They were close as Christians, but could be far closer if they took on the Jewish customs. On the surface this was a very appealing offer. In 1-3 Paul crushes the argument in its infancy as a false promise.

Christians already have everything Judaism could have given them and more. The contrast is between the "gain" through fleshly (human merit) and the true gain through faith in Christ.

Yet indeed I also count all things loss

As is evident from the divergence in the translations, there is some difficulty in this phrase. It is because of the complex nature of the words the Holy Spirit chose.

Yet indeed I also count all things loss NKJV	Indeed, I count everything as loss ESV
Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss ASV	What is more, I consider everything a loss NIV
More than that, I count all things to be loss NASU	Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss AMP

Sitting between the gain of Paul's accomplishment and their loss and the prospect of even further losses are five words. Two conjunctions and one triple compound particle in between. "yea, indeed, therefore, at least, even." The Greeks could take all five of those terms and sort them into the exact concept and idea that was needed. We can't do that. We have to sift through the five terms and try to grasp its fulness. That's why there are more than six different ways to translate them.

The first conjunction is generally used to contrast what was previously said with something new. this case, the contrast is between the surpassing value in the gain in comparison to the loss and the possibility of further loss. By itself, this word means almost everything our translations can bring to us. The other terms are unnecessary for English, but for the sake of emphasis, we have to try to create what is necessary

"*alla* ... **The adversative particle *alla* is etymologically derived from *allos*. ...Therefore it actually means differently and refers to that which is different, to contrasts, separations, and new beginnings.** a) In most cases *alla* means but ... e) When used for rhetorical intensification *alla* means indeed or "so indeed, and what is more" ..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:235)

The second term is a triple compound particle of affirmation. There are three separate terms, and we just can't translate them into English. The best we can do is look at each term individually and then seek to grasp the nuances of their meaning when joined together. It could be translated "indeed now" or "indeed therefore." the term *ge* is never translated because we don't have a way to do it. It intensifies whatever it is joined to.

menoúnge; **compound particle of affirmation** or concession, from *mén* (3303), indeed, and *oún* (3767), but

now, verily, therefore, and ge (1065), an emphatic. Yes indeed, yes verily, found in composition (Luke 11:28; Rom 9:20; 10:18; Phil 3:8). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3304)

Hence when we break down the term *men-oun-ge* we have three terms. The first, *men*, strongly affirms the truth and veracity of the willingness to suffer any loss. with words like “*truly, certainly, surely, indeed.*”

men, ... properly a particle of affirmation: truly, certainly, surely, indeed...” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT 3033)

Added to this is “*oun*” which is a marker of result “*implying that something follows from another necessarily.*” The conclusion and result is that any further loss up to everything would still be a gain.

oun ... b: **markers of result, often implying the conclusion of a process of reasoning - 'so, therefore, consequently, accordingly, then, so then.'** 'therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine' Mt. 7:24; ... 'therefore they gathered and filled twelve baskets with pieces' John 6:13. 'therefore, truly blessed are (or 'happy are ...') those who hear the word of God and obey it' Luke 11:28. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3767)

“*oun*... a conj. **indicating that something follows from another necessarily;** ... Hence it is used in **drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences** together logically, *then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...*” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

The third term “*ge*” strengthens and emphasizes the other two terms giving it an exclamation point!

ge an enclitic particle. **Serves to strengthen or render more emphatic the word to which it is appended** by placing it in opposition to other words and thus fixing the attention upon it; ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary NT:1065)

ge It **indicates that the meaning of the word to which it belongs has special prominence**, and therefore that that **word is to be distinguished from the rest of the sentence and uttered with greater emphasis.** (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:1065)

Finally there is a *kai* - and

“*kai*... a conj., *and* the most fre. by far of all the particles in the N. T. ...II It **marks something added to what has already been said**, or that of which something already said holds good; accordingly it **takes on the nature of an adverb, also...** 1. used simply, a. **also, likewise** ... *de kai*, and *de ... kai*, but also, and also: ... (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:2532)

How do we translate and understand these five terms? Each emphasizes a contrast between any gain of this life, whatever it might be the and exceeding greatness of knowing Christ. If we take but indeed, therefore, then bolded and capitalized with it with a few explanation points it comes closer, but we will never be able to duplicate it.

BUT INDEED THEREFORE ALSO!!!!

It is the strongest and most powerful way available to Greek speaking people. It is fixed, absolute certain and established. No matter what had to be given up, it is nothing. Jesus parable of the hidden treasure becomes all the stronger with these words.

The contrast between what he thought to be a gain before he became a Christian and how they had all become to him a loss is now summed up in this emotional and powerful appeal. Paul was not the only Christian and His confidence is not all. Since others have different things they considered near and dear which were not in his list of things to be given up. Paul's now covers these also. All things are loss! All classes and all kinds! There is nothing in the entire universe that would not fall under this category. Paul had given up the most important things, but emphasizes that if there had been anything else to give up he would have given that up also!

Jesus made this same point. Just as the sailors threw the cargo overboard to save their lives so also must each man or woman to become a devout Christian.

*When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 For **whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.** 36 For **what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?** 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? Mk. 8:34-37*

Paul knew by inspiration and personal experience that the above was true. Never would anything

in this life stand in his way of gaining what God offered him through Christ! Jesus came first.

for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: exceptionally valuable,

In comparison to the loss is the superlative “*excellency*.” It far surpasses his “*worthless*” losses with something of exceptional value. Everything in the OT can’t compare to the knowledge Christ has brought. It is “*exceptionally valuable*,”

huperechō a: to **be of surpassing or exceptional value** - 'to be **exceptionally valuable, to surpass in value, to be better.**' ... 'I consider everything to be loss for the sake of that which is of surpassing value, namely, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord' Phil 3:8; ... 'but in humility considering others as better than yourselves' Phil 2:3. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5242)

In summing up the worth of his knowledge of Jesus Christ, he uses a this term of comparison. If everything Paul possessed were compared to various mountain peaks in a mountain range. If his circumcision were one peak, his knowledge of the law another, and everything else in the world a man might gain as others, then right in the middle would be a peak that overshadows, stands out, rises above and overtops all the rest.

The knowledge of Christ Jesus would be that peak. There is not much difference in our term knowledge and theirs. It is the learning of new facts that lead to a cohesive whole in which all its parts can be incorporated and used. There is knowledge in every field of endeavor, first the basics, then the nuances and then the wisdom and experience to use them.

gnōsis, fem. noun from *ginosko* (1097), to know. Knowledge. **Present and fragmentary knowledge as contrasted with epignōsis** (1922), **clear and exact knowledge which expresses a more thorough participation in the object or knowledge** on the part of the knowledgeable subject. ... (I) **The power of knowing, intelligence, comprehension** ... (II) **Subjectively** spoken of **what one knows, knowledge** ... (III) **Objectively** spoken of **what is [can be *akh*] known, the object of knowledge, generally knowledge, doctrine, science** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1108)

If one is an electrician or plumber then the process is exactly the same. Except the knowledge of Christ and becoming a Christian is far superior both in benefits in this life and eternal life at the end.

This knowledge is far superior, it surpasses any earthly knowledge and any earthly possession, it has surpassing worth. What else could Paul say to describe what he felt he had received when he suffered the loss of everything else?

for whom I suffered the loss of all things

It had been 20-30 years since his conversion. As Paul looks back on the life he had begun and the new life he had started after becoming a Christian, he can see that he did in fact suffer the loss of all things. a second time, he had before becoming a Christian. On all that he possessed and on all his hopes, dreams, and plans for the future, he affirms that he had lost them all.

zēmiōō, zēmia... : to **suffer the loss of something which one has previously possessed, with the implication that the loss involves considerable hardship or suffering** - 'to suffer loss, to forfeit.' ... *zēmoomai* ... 'for the sake of whom I have suffered the loss of all things' Phil 3:8; ... 'if he gains the whole world and **loses** his life' Matt 16:26. ... *zēmia* '**great loss not only of the cargo and the ship but also of our lives**' Acts 27:10. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2210)

Although it is nowhere full elaborate on the nature of Paul’s losses after becoming a Christ it is not difficult to imagine. His nation and his family were fixed in their convictions so Jesus words would have been fulfilled.

*So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is **no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life.** Mk. 10:29-31*

He lost his job, his reputation, his goals and plans for the future. He also lost his friends and the comfort of living in peace and tranquility. The difference between the life he would have had that the life he received are list in a few different passages.

*For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men **condemned to death**; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. 10 **We are fools** for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! **We are weak, but you are strong!** You are distinguished, but **we are dishonored!** 11 To the present hour **we both***

hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. 12 And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now. 1Cor. 4:9-13

*We are **hard-pressed on every side**, yet not crushed; we are **perplexed**, but not in despair; 9 **persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed — 10 always **carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus**, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are **always delivered to death for Jesus' sake**, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 2Cor. 4:8-12*

and do count them but rubbish

As he now compares what he has gained with what he has lost, once again Jesus' parable of the hidden treasure is the perfect commentary. How could he not look back at what he had lost (sold) and after comparing what he had gained he was better off in every way.

While all the later translations have rubbish, the earlier ASV (refuse) and the KJV (dung) are much close to the real meaning. This is not rubbish in the sense of things no longer needed, this is the disgusting and vile things that no one would want and everyone would be thankful to have it buried or carried away where it need not ever be seen again.

*skubalon ... A. The Greek World. ... The **derivation has not been cleared up**. Suid., s.v. takes it as ... = what "is thrown to the dogs," but this is **popular etymology**. *skubalon* occurs only in later Gk. (earliest instances ... 3 rd cent. B.C. and is rare. **Only with hesitation does literature seem to have adopted it from popular speech**. Lit. *skubalon* means 1. "dung," "muck" both as "excrement" and also as "fodder or food that has gone bad" ... "scraps," "leavings" esp. after a meal ... In the transferred sense the word is **used of persons and things to denote pitiful and horrible remains, a corpse half-eaten by fishes** as the remnant of a much-bewailed sea voyage ... " (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:4657)*

When a man goes to the dump with a truckload of cow manure, rotten food and with the smelly and disgusting odor, would anyone have any problem leaving them there and never look back with longing and regret? Thus does Paul sum up his own view of everything that keeps people from coming to Jesus. Will you lose your job, your home or your family if you become a Christian? Will you lose money, power or prestige? It is only rubbish. Strong words, but so very true. Will you look back upon it as simply leaving the trash at the dump in comparison with what is gained by willingly giving it up? Paul did.

that I may gain Christ,

"Gain" is an interesting term to us to describe our conversion.

*kerdaino ... to **gain by means of one's activity or investment** - 'to earn, to gain, to make a profit.' 'we shall go into business and **make a profit**' James 4:13; ... 'he invested his money (literally 'he did business with them') and earned another five' Matt 25:16; ; 'what will a person accomplish if he gains the whole world but is himself lost or must suffer for it?' Luke 9:25. ... 'your mina ... has earned five minas' Luke 19:18...." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2770)*

This continues the analogy of the treasure hidden in the field and the pearl of great price. Something is given up and something is gained. Gaining Christ emphasizes doing whatever is necessary to gain His favor and good will. Jesus sits at the right hand of God exalted as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He exists in the form of God and is equal with God. On the judgement day, he will judge all men and decide their eternal fate and no one will deliver themselves out of his hands. To have his favor and fellowship is the greatest blessing a man could court and gain. Whatever sacrifices stand in the way of this were cheerfully made by Paul.

9. and be found in him,

*and be found **in (en)** Him, not having my own righteousness, which is **from (ek)** the law, but that which is **through (dia)** faith in Christ, the righteousness which is **from (ek)** God **by (epi)** faith; Phil. 3:9-10*

IN him is a favorable relationship with Jesus Christ that brings true righteousness.

FROM (the source the law) that could never justify there is no true righteousness, no matter how far one progresses in it.

THROUGH (means method) faith in Christ. This is where true righteousness resides and exists where we can access it.

This righteousness is **FROM** the (source) of God who alone possess it as a gift to be offered.

BY on the basis of faith.

be found in him,

Be found is another interesting way of putting our relationship with Christ. We were lost in but we are found in Christ. While the active means to find a thing sought, the passive means as a thing to be sought it has been found.

“heurisko... to come upon, to hit upon, to meet with a. after searching, to find a thing sought... b. without previous search, to find (by chance), to fall in with ... 2. Tropically, to find by enquiry, thought, examination, scrutiny, observation, to find out by practice and experience i.e. to see, learn, discover, understand ... to get knowledge of, to come to know God Passive heuriskomai to be found, i. e. to be seen, be present: Luke 9:36 (Gen 18:31); often like the Hebrew ... to be discovered, recognized, detected, to show oneself out, of one's character or state as found out by others (men, God, or both) ...” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon NT:2147)

The seeking and finding is God's role, using us as His workers to bring it about. This was promised long ago when Israel was warning that apostasy would lead to their being scattered, but God promised to find them.

Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God drives you, 2 and you return to the Lord your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, 3 that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you. 4 If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Deut. 30:1-4

It shall come to pass in that day That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea. 12 He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth. Isa. 11:11-12

'For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; Ezek. 34:11-13

And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'" Lk 15:23-24, 32

Like most of the books in the NT, being in Christ is an often described theme. In the prison epistles in Him and in Christ are used 35 times to emphasize that all that God has done has been done in Christ and every spiritual blessing is in Christ. If we are baptized into Christ and put on Christ we have every spiritual blessing. Hence being found in Him is the greatest gain possible.

Paul had always and would always continue to do everything necessary to keep his relationship with Christ as close as possible. He wanted to be found in Him at all times.

not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law,

Everything listed above was a part of the elaborate system the Jews had devised to consider themselves righteous under the law of Moses. Their ignorance of God's true righteousness had led them to seek to establish their own righteousness.

For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Rom. 10:2-4

Under their system of righteousness Paul had amassed a great treasure of works. This is why Paul had such confidence in them. Although it was true that they were keeping the law to the best of their ability, they had overlooked one critical fact that changed everything. Righteousness could only come through the law if you never violated it. Once a sin had occurred, the law was powerless to bring righteousness. Regardless of the works of Israel, that sin could not be forgiven or atoned for and therefore forever barred them from righteous. If a law could bring righteousness then the Law of Moses would have been that law. The very fact that God sent His Christ to die for these sins proved conclusively that righteousness could never come through the Law.

For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." Rom. 10:5

For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Gal. 3:21-22

I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain." Gal. 2:21

This was the sad misunderstanding of Israel that led Paul to throw all of that away. Everything done under the law was weak and unprofitable because the law could make nothing perfect.

For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing perfect; Heb 7:18-19

He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Heb. 8:6-17

There was no excuse for Israel making this mistake. God had made it clear with Abraham that righteousness came through faith. There is can be no confidence or boasting in our works, because works could never make one righteous.

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, Rom. 4:3-6

This is the basic issue of all thought of works. They sought to make righteousness a debt God owed them because they had worked for it. But since the wages of a single sin is death, all thought of wages and earning are banished. Only grace and mercy remain. This is exactly what the second covenant different that the first one could not. Righteous could only come through faith in the gospel alone.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:16-17

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe Rom. 3:21-22

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Rom. 3:27-29

For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. Rom. 4:9-10

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; 31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. Rom. 9:30-33

This was the great and vast difference! The difference between having one's own righteousness which could be attained by the most zealous attempts to keep God's Old Covenant, placed next to the righteousness which can be found by being in Christ. This is why Paul could leave all the rest behind. Isaiah uses graphic terms to express what Paul himself also knew to be true.

But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away. 7 And there is no one who calls on Your name, Who stirs himself up to take hold of You; For You have hidden Your face from us, And have consumed us because of our

iniquities. Isa. 64:6-7

but that which is through faith in Christ,

This is the heart and soul of the good news offered through the gospel. It is the golden treasure hidden in the field. God planned to replace the futility of the efforts at righteousness by man’s power with true righteousness and the only condition He placed upon it is trusting obedient faith in Jesus Christ. All of the verses from Romans above prove this truth.

God takes the faith one places in Christ and marks it down as righteousness. He takes that faith and joins it to the price paid by Christ on the cross and is able to put that down on their account as righteousness. This is the great and mighty gift which Christ purchased by his death.

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. 27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Rom. 3:23-28

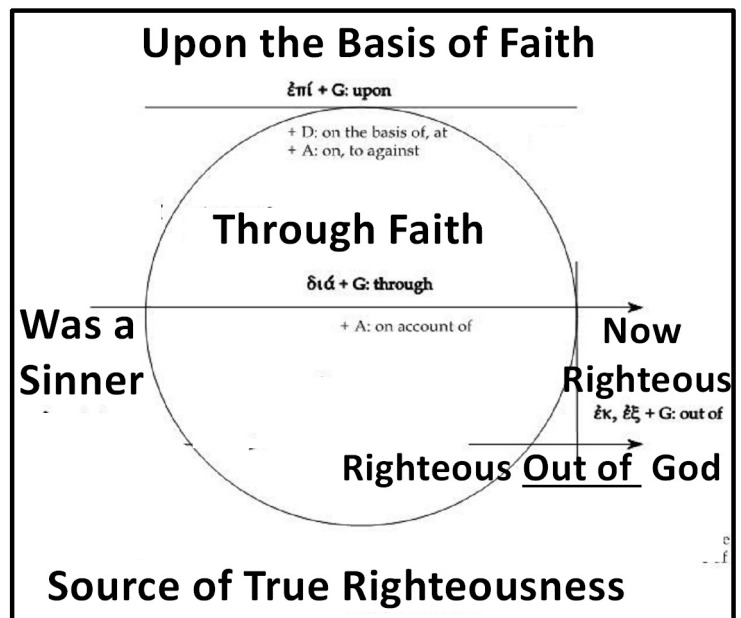
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Rom. 8:2-4

This is the grace of God. No matter how great the efforts put forth by those living under the Old Covenant were, it was futile, for they could never attain righteousness under it. But now that same effort put forth under the gospel to retain one’s faithful relationship to Christ will result in true righteousness.

the righteousness which is from God by faith:

*(righteousness) which is **THROUGH** faith in Christ, the righteousness which is **FROM – (OUT OF)** God **BY – (UPON THE BASIS OF)** faith; Phil. 3:9-10*

These three propositions express the good news of the gospel. It is **THROUGH** faith in Christ that righteousness is imputed. This righteousness is **FROM** God and it is **BY** faith. When we understand the logical relationship of these prepositions we will have a perfect view of exactly how God makes man righteous. Through is a the means by which one passes from one place or relationship to another. When we go through a town, it is the road that allows us to pass from one side to the other. In the instrumental, it is “*the Means or Instrument by which anything is effected.*”; When it is used metaphorically as it is here, it is the means by which we pass through all obstacles and arrive at righteousness. Faith in Christ is the path that leads us to the goal where we arrive at being righteous.



“*dia... A. with the genitive: through... III. of the Means or Instrument by which anything is effected; because what is done by means of a person or thing seems to pass as it were through the same... 2. of the instrument used to accomplish a thing: or the instrumental cause in the stricter sense:... by the service, the intervention of, by means of, with the help of... 3. with the gen. of a thing dia is used to denote the manner in which a thing is done, or the formal cause...*” (Thayer, 132-135; 1223)

dia ... A. dia with Genitive ... 1. Spatial: “through,” “through ... to,” ... 2. Temporal: a. of the whole duration of a period of time: “through”; b. of part of a period of time: “during”; c. of distance in time: “after.” ... 3. Modal, a. of

manner: "through," "in," or "with"; b. of accompanying circumstance: "with," "among," and sometimes, according to the context, "in spite of." ... 4. **Instrumental**: a. with genitive of cause: "**by means of**," "**with**," "**through**"; b. with genitive of person: "through the mediation of." 5. **Causal**: a. of the cause: "in consequence of," "on the basis of," "on account of"; b. of the author: "from," "for the sake of." ..." (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:1223)

Thus the grammar expresses the truth that a sinner becomes righteous after passing through faith. Faith is the means and agency by which God makes the unrighteous righteous. The Scriptures clearly affirm this. Just as God accounted Abraham to be a righteous man upon the basis of his faith, God will also account everyone who obeys the gospel by faith.

*3 ... "Abraham believed God, and it was **ACCOUNTED** to him for righteousness." ... 5 believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is **ACCOUNTED** for righteousness, ... 6 David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God **IMPUTES** righteousness apart from works: ... 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not **IMPUTE** sin." ... 9 we say that faith was **ACCOUNTED** to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How then was it **ACCOUNTED**? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Rom. 8:3-9*

*He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was **ACCOUNTED** to him for righteousness." ... 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was **IMPUTED** to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, Rom. 4:21-24*

The source of this righteousness is "out of" God. Thus another very important preposition is given. This preposition is used when things exit out of one place and enter into another. It also describes the change of ones condition or circumstance. It is also used of the origin, source and cause.

ek, a preposition governing the genitive. Also, it denotes exit or emission out of, as separation from, something with which there has been close connection; ... from out of, out from, forth from, from, it is used ... I. of place, and 1. universally, of the place from which; from a surrounding or enclosing place, from the interior of: ... 5. of the condition or state out of which one comes or is brought: ... 6. of any kind of separation or dissolution of connection with a thing or person ... II of the origin, source, cause; ... 5... is used of the cause (whether thing or person) by which the act expressed by the accompanying verb is aided, sustained, effected... " (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:1537)

In this case, it is God who is the source and cause. It is only through God's righteous actions that man could stand just. God is righteous, just, fair and upright. He is no respecter of persons. He could not make one man righteous and condemn another as a sinner and continue to be just and impartial.

He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. Ps. 9:8.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face. Ps. 89:14

God knew this and created a plan where mercy and truth could meet and righteousness and peace could kiss.

Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land. 10 Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed. 11 Truth shall spring out of the earth, And righteousness shall look down from heaven. Ps. 85:9-11

In order to accomplish this, God had to pay the price. He could not justify one class of people and condemn another unless He had the price that would cover the debt of those He wanted to forgive and make righteous.

whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Rom. 3:25-26

God paid for everything, then set the basis upon which He would make some righteous and leave others in their sins. The basis would be obedience to the gospel and faith in Jesus. This is what Paul realized on the road to Damascus and the three days that followed. It is why everything else could become rubbish. There was only one thing needed, true faith in Jesus.

Before passing from this, it is necessary to bring faith up to the level that is necessary for it to have the power to save. Token faith, or empty words of trust will not bring salvation. Such faith is dead

and barren. The faith God seeks is set forth in Hebrews 11 and emphasized by James.

*But do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead**? 21 Was not **Abraham our father justified by works** when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that **faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect**? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 **You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.** 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? 26 **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.** James 2:20-26*

The righteousness Paul sought was given upon the basis of faith. This preposition describes sitting on top of something. Faith is the thing we must sit on top of if we want to have the righteousness of God. Faith is the basis and support of all righteousness.

*"epi... upon the surface of... after verbs of abiding, remaining, standing, going, coming, etc; of doing anything.. B. with the DATIVE... 1. properly; a. of the place where or in which... 2. Metaph.; a. **of that upon which any action, effect, condition, rests as a basis or support**; pro. upon the ground of; and a. of that upon which anything is sustained or upheld... b. of that upon which anything rests (our upon)... d of the reason or motive underlying words and deeds..." (Thayer, NT:1909)*

Faith is the condition, and basis of support from which God makes one righteous. God takes faith and makes it the grounds for giving righteousness to man. God is the only one with the knowledge and the authority to declare people righteousness. He offers righteousness to all men based upon their placing their full trust in his Son Jesus.

10. that I may know him,

If we look at the flow of the text, it is clear why Paul considered his knowledge of Christ so far superior than anything he had lost prior to his conversion. He started the section with the loss and the gain. He first assessed the possibilities of the gain and determined that the gain would still be more even if it came to all things. Then, it did come to all things and looking back on it, he had not changed his feelings about the decision. There is no regret and no disappointment.

*I also **count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish,***

He now returns to the "excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." There is nothing in this life that can compare to the value of this excellence. One passage reveals this in all its glory. The central part of God's eternal purpose is that a restoration should begin. God predestined that all Christians be conformed to the image of His Son.

***For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.** Rom 8:29*

This is very similar to the words of the first creation where we were created in the image and likeness of God. The difference is that it now requires our efforts to conform. God has given us the mirror in the Scriptures and as we behold Him in that mirror we are transformed into the same image.

*But we all, with unveiled face **beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.** 2Cor. 3:18*

Thus, after we put off the old man and begin our transformation into the new man, we begin to become conformed more and more into the image of God's Son and become part of the elect race and holy nation in which Jesus is the pattern we are all striving to attain.

*lie not one to another; seeing that ye have **put off the old man with his doings, 10 and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him:** Col. 3:9-10*

Thus Paul's words of desire and joy at the prospect of losing all things to know Christ. Throughout eternity we will praise God for the opportunity to know and become like Him. Paul wanted to know Jesus. He was everything the Father would have been if the Father had become a man. Mankind can only understand the Father by studying and knowing his Son.

*Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" 10 Do you not believe that **I am in the Father,***

and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Jn. 14:9-11

Paul longed for a full and complete knowledge of Jesus. He looked upon it as being worthy of the most strenuous efforts he could put forth. Two examples make clear the great blessings that can come from knowing Christ.

*that **Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — 19 **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge**; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient (even) unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Phil. 2:5-8

If reaching and striving to know the love of Christ will fill each child of God with all the fullness of God, then truly it is a wonderful gift that God has given to his people to seek and strive to gain this knowledge. God has helped man kind in every possible way to gain this knowledge.

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the **equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ**, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of **the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ**;... 15 but, speaking the truth in love, **may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — Eph. 4:11-15***

Paul gladly left behind the futility of serving God under a system that could never make perfect and never make righteous. He joyfully entered into the new covenant where all are made perfect upon entrance. A covenant where “*the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory.*”

With Jesus for an example, Paul was now striving for absolute and total perfection. A perfection which though never quite reached was much more worthy of intense effort than anything the Old Covenant could offer. A perfection which though never reached in reality, was made by the grace of God the present possession of each member. Paul hoped to instill these same values in all those who read this epistle.

and the power of his resurrection,

The Holy Spirit selects three specific attributes of Christ that were of special importance.

- (1) the power of His resurrection,
- (2) the fellowship of His sufferings,
- (3) being conformed to His death,

The power of Christ’s resurrection is the foundation of our faith and our hope. The resurrection revealed the “*achieving power of God.*” Nothing manifests God’s power like the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. There is confidence and assurance in knowing that God has that power and that God will use that power again for each of us.

*dúnamis, fem. noun from **dúnamai (1410), to be able. Power, especially achieving power. All the words derived from the stem **dúna-** have the meaning of being able, capable.** It may even mean to will. ... Spoken of **intrinsic power, either physical or moral, ... (C) Spoken of God, the Messiah, the great power of God, meaning His almighty energy ... Eph 1:19; ... it implies the greatness, omnipotence, and majesty of God ...**” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1411)*

The power exerted in Christ’s resurrection is now the power which the Christian has access to and can use in his life.

*the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know ... 19 **the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power** 20 which **He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead** and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, Eph. 1:19-21*

The more one understands the power of the resurrection, the more clearly they understand how much power God is exerting to help them. What Paul prayed for the Ephesians, that the eyes of their hearts might be enlightened, he was also working toward in his own life and counted the loss of all things not too high a price to pay to gain it.

The resurrection of Jesus declared Jesus to be the Son of God with power (same word as here).

*Who was **declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead**; even Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 1:4*

Has begotten us again to a living hope.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has **begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 1Pet. 1:3-5*

Gives assurance to all men of the coming judgment day:

*Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but **now commands all men everywhere to repent**, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. **He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.**" Acts 17:30-31*

Validates and authenticates the entire gospel:

*Now if **Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead**, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then **Christ is not risen**. 14 And if **Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty**. 15 Yes, and we are found **false witnesses of God**, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up — if in fact the dead do not rise. 16 For if the dead do not rise, then **Christ is not risen**. 17 And if **Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!** 1Cor. 15:12-18*

Truly there is much to be gained by a deep and rich understanding of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Much more than Paul could have ever gained from those things he gave up. So much more than anything offered by the false teachers of that day or any other.

and the fellowship of his sufferings,

"Fellowship" is a broad term with many different words. Yet through them all is one basic theme. It is the "communion" of the Lord's Supper, the "right hand of fellowship," the "communion" with the Holy Spirit, our "fellowship" with the apostles and their fellowship with God, it is always a joint participation in something.

*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the **communion of the blood of Christ**? The bread which we break, is it not **the communion of the body of Christ**? 1Cor 10:16*

*Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And **what communion has light with darkness?** 2Cor. 6:14*

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and **the communion of the Holy Spirit** be with you all. Amen. 2Cor. 13:14*

*when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas **the right hand of fellowship**, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. Gal 2:9-10*

*that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that **you also may have fellowship with us**; and **truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ**. ... 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, **we have fellowship with one another**, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 1Jn. 1:3-7*

Fellowship requires participation, sharing, companionship and association. We must be partakers together in some activity, belief or conviction.

koinōnia NT:2842 **community; fellowship; participation** ... *koinoneō* NT:2841 **have a share; give a share; take a share; have fellowship** ... *koinōnos* NT:2844 **companion, partner** ... Adjective use of *koinōnos* can be rendered **common or participating in**; subst. use can be rendered **partner, associate**. ... "**partakers of the divine nature**." ... Luke 5:10: "who were **partners** with Simon") *koinōneō*, the verb derived from *koinōnos*, means **have/take a share in something** ... Heb 2:14: "as now **the children share flesh and blood**"; ... 2 John 11: "One who greets [a false teacher], *takes part* in his evil works"). It means **give a share, communicate, have fellowship with someone**,... *Koinōnia*, the related abstract form, is translated **fellowship, partnership** and also with **participation, sharing**. ... Acts 2:42: "They continued in the teaching of the apostles and **in fellowship**"; ... 1Jn 1:3: "so that **you have fellowship with us**; but **our fellowship is also with the Father and with his Son**, ..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2842)

While suffering is something most people seek to avoid, there is something special enough about this suffering that Paul sought it. Christ's sufferings were brought about by His godliness and efforts to bring others to righteousness. The only reason one will suffer as Christ suffered is because they are zealous and living godly. Paul simply seeks to be as godly as Christ and bring upon himself the sufferings that will result from it.

*Yes, and **all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.** 2Tim. 3:12*

*Remember the word that I said to you, '**A servant is not greater than his master.**' **If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. Jn. 15:20-21*

*Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. **15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.** **16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.** And who is sufficient for these things? 2Cor. 2:14-17*

Being in fellowship with Christ's sufferings is saying the same thing as being so faithful to Christ that we are willing and ready to suffer with Him. Persecution and tribulation are the result of being a faithful Christian.

***Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.** For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.** **12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.** Mt. 5:10-12*

***Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake.** **23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.** Lk. 6:22-23*

Paul knew that if he was ever to attain to the resurrection of the dead, he was going to have to suffer many things while living in this life. Peter repeated the same words in his letter.

*Beloved, **do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;** **13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.** **14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.** 1Pet. 4:12-14*

With all this in mind it is no wonder that Paul considered this a great honor. But these are not minor sufferings. These are sufferings that lead to being conformed or of the same form as Jesus death.

being conformed to His death

While some are content to apply this to baptism alone there appears to be much more here. Being conformed (the same form as) His death is who we became a Christian.

*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus **were baptized into His death?** **4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ... 6 knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.** Rom 6:3-6***

***I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.** Gal. 2:20*

Yet, it can't be denied that when the fellowship becomes full enough, the form of both become similar in likeness. This is part of the mind of Christ described in the previous chapter. Paul wanted the mind of Christ to humble Himself even to the point of death.

*Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ... And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.** **9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,** Phil. 2:5-10*

Being conformed to His death is the destination of the mind of Christ. Paul brought the life that he lived into conformity with Christ's death. But this by no means captures all that Paul conveys by this term. He also wishes to fill up in whatever way he can by his own suffering that which is lacking. A passage that helps clarify the nature of this fellowship and conformity speaks of Paul's attempt to find those areas where Christ's death on the cross needs just a nudge by the sufferings of His

people.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church; Col. 1:24

Paul considered even Christ's death to be one of the great jewels he picked up when he left the refuse of the things listed in 3:4-7 behind. Whether that death be carried out in the agonizing and slow death of all the sinful habits made before conversion, or the anguished suffering that leads to physical death. It takes great maturity to be able to look even at a horrible and agonizing death as of greater value than having power and position in a nation.

11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

The true path to resurrection from the dead is the gain that made all the loss rubbish. The three things above are the route to attain the resurrection. There is clearly no doubt expressed here with the phrase "if by any means," but there is a concern. As he told the Corinthians all effort must be put forth to be as sure as possible.

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1Cor. 9:24-27

He is expressing his intense desire. I am willing to do any and everything if by any means I can attain to the resurrection.

ei pōs... conditional expression from *ei* (1487), if, and *pōs* (4458), how. If by any means, if possibly; ... With the fut. indic. (Rom 1:10; 11:14; Phil 3:11; Sept.: 2 Kings 19:4). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1513)

Paul understood the great labor and toil, God expected His people to make after seeing what God and Jesus had been willing to do.

This is not the beginning of fear, but the beginning of zeal, drive and determination. The end is in doubt without our greatest efforts. Jesus nowhere justifies the view that salvation is assured to all believers.

'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen." Mt. 22:12-14

Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, 24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Lk. 13:23-24

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Mt. 25:1-5

Since this is the beginning of the section where Paul speaks of putting forth the greatest efforts and never being satisfied, it is important to recognize that this is the true meaning of this passage.

Phil. 3:12-15

9 be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

When God created animals, trees, fish and birds, they all began incomplete. They were in their infancy. God placed it within each of them everything necessary to complete this process. As time passes, if they eat, exercise, protect themselves and do whatever is specific to each species, they will complete the process and become exactly what God created each to become.

Man is the same. Yet he begins far more helpless and dependant than all other things in this

creation. He is vastly superior in the end result, but it takes far longer and is more complex. He must learn to walk, talk, reason, and wait nearly 18 years for his body to fully develop. During that time he is also learning how to “*advance in wisdom and stature in favor with God and man.*” This process never ends. He may be fully developed in his 20's, but if he keeps working, he will be far superior mentally at the end of his life.

The life of the Christian is exactly the same. He begins as a infant and slowly grows to maturity. When by reason of time you ought to be teachers is setting one marker in this growth. No longer being children tossed to and fro is another. Paul here revealed through the Holy Spirit that for the Christian this process from birth to maturity never ends. Paul had been a Christian for over 20 years. He is not even close to where the gospel could take him and as long as he lived, he would continue to strive to draw ever nearer.

12. Not that I have already obtained,

He begins with a simple declaration. I have not yet reached where I want to be to attain the resurrection of the dead. Although Paul knows better than anyone that our salvation is based on our faith in Jesus and not in our works, he also knows the truth of James words that faith without works is dead. These are not contradictory statements. Faith and love for Jesus forces those who know they are saved by faith to work even harder than those who believe they are saved by works. Not to be saved, but to become as much as possible what God made possible through the gospel. It hasn't happened yet or already. The completion is still in the future. The goal is ever moving and only death will bring the final moment when what needs to be obtained has all been gathered. Yet even then what can not truly ever be obtained is only completed because there is no time left to work.

ēdē, already; now ... designates temporal or logical proximity....appears in the NT 62 times ... In almost all passages *ēdē* is to be translated *already*," ... The translation *now* fits in 2 Tim 4:6: "For I am *now* being offered..." (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:2235)

ēdē:... a point of time preceding another point of time and implying completion - 'already.' ... 'don't bother me; my door is already locked' Luke 11:7; 'the axe lies already at the roots of the trees' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2235)

“Obtained” is generally used for something that is taken into possession. It would always be something which further effort and toil would be necessary in order to possess it.

lambánō ... To take in whatever manner. ... In the NT, to actively take, and, partially in the pass. sense, to receive, trans. ... (1) To take: (A) Particularly with the hand, ... (2) Of taking food or drink, with the acc. (Mark 15:23; John 19:30; Acts 9:19); used in an absolute sense (1 Tim 4:4). ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2983)

lambanō ... grasp, seize, take hold of, take; attain; take up; receive ... is used 260 times in the NT ... It signifies the range of meaning, "grasp, take, seize," either peacefully or violently. ..." (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:2983)

These are the things Paul doesn't not yet fully possess to the degree he desired.

Righteousness which is from God by faith;	
(1) that I may know Him	(2) and the power of His resurrection,
(3) and the fellowship of His sufferings,	(4) being conformed to His death,
if by any means,	
I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.	

There is a very important distinction which must be understood and maintained in this section. This distinction lies in the manner in which God promises salvation to his people.

When viewed from God's side, His grace, promises and power and veracity leave no question or doubt regarding the outcome. God will do what he promises. It is impossible for God to lie. If God were all that had to be depended upon then our salvation would be secure

and all who obeyed the gospel would unquestionably be saved. God is faithful! He never changes! He always does what He promises! Passages of Scripture looking at salvation from the side of God's promises always speak of it with assurance and without doubt. God's conditional promises are different. Whenever there is a fellowship between God and man and man's role is as important as God's in the outcome, the outcome will always be in doubt because it is just as important that man keep his promises. When Jesus said that His disciples must be faithful until death, they will not attain the goal until death because if they became unfaithful, even in the last days of their life they would lose the crown.

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev. 2:10

This is Paul's concern in this section and also his emphasis. Paul is deeply concerned that he may not fulfill the commitment of his confession on the day he was baptized. Having Jesus as Lord, Christ and king puts a great responsibility on shoulders of each Christian. This is why Paul said to the Corinthians, that he could still be disqualified.

But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1Cor 9:27

He wasn't afraid, because God would keep His promises, he was only zealous that he keep his commitments. He knew from Jesus parable of the sower the grave concern to become a disciple with a good heart.

the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. 15 But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience. Lk. 8:13-15

No one knows what the future holds and what preparations that have not yet been made that will be essential to get through some trial or temptation. What hasn't happened yet and lulled us into a sense that we have all things necessary may come upon us.

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Eph. 6:13

It is this sense of urgency that Paul sought to instill in others that he is speaking about here. He doesn't want to fall and though he is confident he won't, he is still making preparations adding to the foundation of Jesus words by doing them.

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 1Cor. 10:12

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. Heb. 4:11

Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Lk. 12:35-36

Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. 3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, 4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Mt. 25:1-4

There must be a sense of urgency and not of complacency. God doesn't want fear and terror, only zeal, determination and a never ceasing desire to do more and be more ourselves. This is what Paul is speaking of when he says he has not already obtained and is not already made perfect. Only a fool would affirm that he will never be faced with a difficult trial which may stretch him to the breaking point. Peter made such an affirmation and then fell.

Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.' ... 29 Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be." 30 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before

the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." 31 But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" Mk. 14:27-31

As Paul considered the span of his life that was left to him, he refused to make a similar statement. As he looked to God and his promises, he felt secure, but when he considered his own heart and the years ahead, he felt concern. Paul has not yet obtained because he is not actually holding it in his hand on the day of judgement. All the battles had not yet been fought and won. The purity of the gospel had not yet been held intact until death. The faith had not yet been fully kept, the course was still to be finished, and the fight was still being fought. When death finally stared him in the face and all that mattered were the promises of God, he was confident.

*For I am already being offered, and **the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.** 2Tim. 4:6-8*

When we see this principle, a great difficulty in Biblical interpretation will be resolved. Many Scriptures speaking of God's role in man's salvation speak of it as an accomplished fact. Many others when viewing it from man's fulfillment of the conditions speak of it as being contingent. The harmony lies in the understanding that though God cannot change, man can. When death stares one in the face, when all hope of further advancement and strengthening is gone, when all battles and conflicts are past and we are still faithful, then the day has arrived to speak about ourselves with confidence. When looking at the promises of God Paul felt complete and total security. When he looked at himself he spoke as he does here.

or am already perfected; (made perfect - ASV)

The thoughts of "*already obtained*," and "*already made perfect*" are separated by "or" that makes them exclusive. One or the other. They both say the same thing in different words. Obtaining refers to ownership perfection refers to completion of a goal. They both say the same thing from different perspectives. "*Perfection*" is used in two distinct ways in Scripture first, what God makes us by grace and second what we strive to accomplish ourselves.

*teleiōō ... from *teleios* (5046), **complete, mature. To complete, make perfect by reaching the intended goal.** ... (I) Particularly with the meaning **to bring to a full end, completion, reaching the intended goal, to finish a work or duty** (John 4:34; 5:36; 17:4) ... (II) Metaphorically meaning **to make perfect although not faultless but bringing to a state of completion or fulfillment.** (A) Generally (John 17:23, "that they may be [perfectly or completely united in] one"; ... (B) In the epistle to the Hebrews, *teleiōō* is used in a moral sense meaning **to make perfect, to fully cleanse from sin, in contrast to ceremonial cleansing.** ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5048)*

What God does through grace in baptism, man has the obligation to complete. It is the duty of each Christian to complete to the very best of their ability what God started in our new birth. The goal of the faith is to ever grow to need less and less grace. God will always carry for His people as much as they cannot carry themselves as long as they are faithful. Yet He desires that we take on as much of the goal of perfection as we are capable of offering. Paul always sought to further his own abilities on to perfection. He admits that he was not yet made perfect. What God had done He had not yet carried through to completion or reached the goal.

He had not yet accomplished all that the gospel demanded. I am not yet finished, I have not yet added to my faith everything God wants. At the end of each day, those with a tender heart see so clearly how far they fell short and then as each new day begins, make it their goal to get further that day.

but I press on,

“Press on” was a very powerful term in the Scriptures. It was used by Jesus to describe the manner of persecution His followers would endure because of the zeal, effort and determination of those who would grow to hate them. It’s original meaning was “drive, set in motion, and push.” In the sense it is used here, “*push forward zealously, aspire to, be zealously behind something, endeavor with zeal.*”

diōkō ... **hasten, run; be behind something; strive for something; persecute** ... The verb **appears 45 times in the NT.** ... The **overwhelming majority** of these passages speaks of the **persecution** of the followers of Jesus; this is especially the case in the Gospels and the post-Pauline literature. ... The **original Greek sense** of the word is based on the meaning **drive, set in motion, push, which then becomes persecute, banish and, used metaphorically, follow, strive for a person or a thing, push forward zealously, aspire to, be zealously behind something, endeavor with zeal...** (Exegetical Dictionary NT: 1377)

Paul runs as swiftly and as steadily as he possibly can his quest for the perfection necessary to the obtaining of the resurrection. He spoke of this to the Corinthians. The effort and zeal of the Christian is like that of those who compete in a race. The urgency is that in the midst of all the runners there will be only one who wins and since we do not know the efforts those who are competing against them are putting forth, are themselves putting forth their absolute best.

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? **Run in such a way that you may obtain it.** 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is **temperate in all things.** Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore **I run thus: not with uncertainty.** Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I **discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.** 1Cor. 9:24-27*

that I may lay hold of that

Paul wanted to lay hold on it. His efforts zeal and goal all leading toward “*laying hold.*” Using the same verb as what he had not already “*obtained,*” the Spirit added a preposition to bend it to a much more intensive meaning. Instead of just obtaining it is seizing with eagerness. Used in the passage to the Corinthians above it describes the efforts of the athlete who in seeking to grasp and seize the prize is putting forth eager, zealous and strenuous exercises to accomplish it.

*katalambánō, from **katá** (2596), an intens., and **lambánō** (2983), to take. To apprehend, attain, obtain, find. ... (I) To lay hold of, **seize, with eagerness, suddenness** (John 8:3,4). ... (II) In **allusion to the public games, to obtain the prize with the idea of eager and strenuous exertion, to grasp, seize upon** (Rom 9:30; 1 Cor 9:24; Phil 3:12,)...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary NT:2638)*

In exactly the same way as that athlete, Paul is doing everything in his power to zealously attain it. This is the finish line. This is what Paul is pressing on toward by running after it hastily.

for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

What Paul is now striving for is exactly the same thing that Jesus was striving for. Eternal life at the resurrection was the basis (*epi — the reason and motive*) for what Jesus had done to make it possible for Paul and all of us to accomplish. Thus the same earnest and zealous effort that Paul was seeking had already been accomplished by Jesus. In the previous chapter, The Holy Spirit had revealed the mind of Christ that willingly emptied Himself to become a servant and even die in order to lay hold of those who would be saved. No matter how hard Paul worked, he could not match the efforts of what Jesus had already done to make it possible. This is why Jesus could tell us that when we take on this side of the yoke Jesus had left for us, our side is easy and light because He carried and is still

carrying the heavy side for us.

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Mt. 11:28-30

Christ calls to all and desires to lay hold on them. The course is laid out and God and Christ want all men to lay hold on the prize. Paul hasn't completed it yet, but with every part of his being he struggles and toils to do so.

13. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended (to have laid hold - ASV)

Paul uses the term brethren whenever he wants to show his love, affection and equality with them and us. We are all in this together as a family and as a body. As each part of the body differs in ability and function, yet still has the same essential nature to the functioning of the body, so also does everyone in a family. Paul wants all to see that we are all on equal footing with him in this.

The term "*count*" is the term of a bookkeeper who keeps a tally of expenditures and deposits. As Paul added up all that he knew he needed to do against what he had already done it was obvious to him that he was still short. Each Christian must do the same. As we learn our obligations, the next step is to accomplish them. No matter how much Paul had done he could always calculate the next set of duties..

"logizomai... [a favorite word with the apostle Paul, being used (exclusive of quotations) some 27 times in his Epp., and only four times in the rest of the N.T.]. 1. ...to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over; hence a. to take into account, to make account of... 2. ... to reckon inwardly, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate,... 3. by reckoning up all the reasons to gather or infer; i.e. a. to consider, take account, weigh, meditate on... b. To suppose, deem judge... c. To determine, purpose, decide..." (Thayer, p. 379; 3049)

For the third time Paul speaks of "*laying hold — seizing with eagerness by putting forth eager, zealous and strenuous exercises to accomplish it.*" First he spoke of it as His goal and purpose, second he spoke of how Jesus had laid hold of each of us by his own eager zealous and strenuous efforts, and now he affirms that he has not yet finished his own strenuous efforts. He has already spoken in general terms of what he is seeking and why he is seeking it.

know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

He wants to know more about Jesus, more about the power of Jesus' resurrection and have more fellowship with Jesus' sufferings, and be more conformed to His death. All of this to attain to the resurrection. He has not yet fully grasped or eased up on any of these goals. He is still carrying his cross and seeking to deny himself. He continues to find new realms of labor and toil. These are things Paul continued to strive for but has not yet laid hold of. Each day is an opportunity to grow a little closer to what God and Jesus worked so hard and sacrificed so much so each of us would have the opportunity to work toward it.

But also for this very reason, adding on your part all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2Pet. 1:5-11

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:10

Among the most damaging things any Christian can do is to lower duty and obligation to an

earthly standard which causes them to believe they have already reached the goal for which God called them. Paul forever removed this possibility. After preaching the gospel and striving for perfection for at least twenty years, Paul still feels he has not yet reached it. Those who fully understand the high standards of God, they haven't either. There will always be more love for truth to learn, a greater faith to possess and greater preparation to be used.

but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind,

Having admitted he has not yet reached the goals he strives for, he offers the steps he does use to get as far as he can and as quickly as he can toward them. It is important for us to see this clearly since Paul will soon ask us to imitate him.

The one thing Paul does is "*forget what lies behind.*" It is evident from the meaning of forget that this is not literal. If Paul were to forget everything to the degree where he could remember none of it, it would hinder the very thing he wanted to accomplish. When we can no longer remember important things and begin neglecting them, we can't be pressing on toward anything.

epilanthánō... from *epi* (1909), in, and *lanthánō* (2990), **to lie hidden. To forget, not to remember ... to forget and therefore to neglect** ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1950)

epilanthanōmai, "**to forget, or neglect**" (*epi*, "**upon,**" used intensively, and *lanthanō* "**to escape notice,**" is translated "they (wilfully) forget" in 2 Peter 3:5) ... is said ... (c) **of Paul regarding "the things which are behind,"** Phil 3:13; ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1950)

Clearly this forgetting has a specific reference. In the term *behind*, we gain the insight needed to understand. It comes from a term that means to look back at things that are behind.

opísō adverb from *ópis* (n.f.), a looking back. Shows the extremity or end of a thing, used with a gen. **Behind, back, backwards, speaking of place and time.** In the NT used in an absolute sense only of place ... (Luke 7:38). **implying "things behind"** and with the preposition *eis* (1519), unto or toward the back, backward, back, to go back, fall back (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3694)

This is exactly what Lot's wife was told not to do and Jesus used her to make that point.

So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed." ... 26 But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. Gen 19:17, 26

Remember Lot's wife. Lk 17:32

There are things that are not worthy to be remembered or sought. Lot's wife lingered, looking back though she had been warned against it. It is doubtful that this was a direct judgment, but more probable that the time taken to look back took away her chance to escape.

There are two problems with remembering the past. The first like Lot's wife it takes time away from the present. The second, good or bad, the past is gone and can only become baggage that needs to be cast away. Whether we allow the sins of our past to fill us with guilt and remorse or whether we allow our accomplishments to fill us with pride and lose ourselves, those who have a goal cannot be bothered with the past. Good or ill, it only hinders if we ponder it. End each day with prayers of praise for accomplishments and for forgiveness and then don't look back.

Along the same lines are those who look back with regret at what was left behind. It will hinder as they will not get as far as if they had not done this.

But Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Lk. 9:62

Paul did not look back on the things mentioned in 3:4-7 with longing and desire. He counted

them refuse and forgot them. Those who begin with great zeal and excitement can after a time, begin to rest on those accomplishments and slowly drift away from the motivation that brought them into being. The longer they think and meditate on their accomplishments in the past the further they remove themselves from any future achievements. Forget the past! Do not look back on it to remember the joys and excitements of living in the world. Do not look back to see how far you have come and thus grow lethargic and complacent. Look to the future. Look at what is left to be done.

God will remember them and that is enough. God will give the reward. We should press on to new endeavors and new realms of maturity.

For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb 6:10-12

reaching forward (stretching forward -ASV) to those things which are ahead,

When Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand, he was using a form of this word. Here, it is intensified with a preposition and is a present middle participle. Each of these things adds more emphasis. He is already stretching out as far as possible, but he is doing it continually and he is doing it for and by himself.

epekteinō ... from epí (1909), to, unto, and ekteínō (1614), to extend. To reach towards. In the NT, only as a middle participle. (Phil 3:13)..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1901)

epekteino an intensive form of "to stretch out or forth," is so rendered in Matt 12:13 ... (epi, "forth"), is used in Phil 3:13, RV, "stretching forward" (KJV, "reaching forth"), ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:1901),

Paul's whole attitude and focus is on what lies ahead. The next goal and the next opportunity. His mind and focus were on what could be done next.

Phil 3:14-17

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead

14. I press on toward the goal

After seeing how empty and worthless all his previous goals and plans were to God, he suffered their loss and looked back upon them as worthless rubbish that was only getting in the way. After meeting Jesus and learning the truth he replaced all those previous things with one "goal." A goal Paul had marked out and never stopped focusing upon. The resurrection from the dead is the ultimate goal he was pressing toward. This goal could only be reached through the righteousness which is from God by faith. He listed 4 steps he had set to reach that goal.

the righteousness which is from God by faith; (1) that I may know Him and the (2) power of His resurrection, and (3) the fellowship of His sufferings, (4) being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Phil. 3:9-11

Righteousness which is from God by faith;

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) that I may know Him | (2) and the power of His resurrection, |
| (3) and the fellowship of His sufferings, | (4) being conformed to His death, |
| if by any means, | |
| I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. | |

All of this had been honed down to one goal or mark that he was pressing on to gain. The term mark came into our language with the term "scope." It can mean watching as in the *telescope* or *microscope*. It can also mean a mark one can hit or miss with the scope placed on a gun. Once a mark has been selected, the hunter focuses on that one mark alone. So also does the olympic

contender who sets a goal and then zealously pursues it by always keeping his eye on it.

skopos ... 1. The word is attested from Homer in **two senses: a. it denotes one who directs a watchful glance on something, e.g., as an overseer, ...** The most common use from Homer ... is the military one for **the guard, spy, or scout, ... b. *skopos* means the "mark," e.g., of shooting in Homer ... which one may hit ... or miss ... a).** Thus **man has a goal which controls his whole life ...** The word occurs in the two main senses in the LXX too ... and means "scout," "watcher" on the wall, Like the watcher the prophet watches over the people, Jer 6:17; ... 3. The only instance in the NT is at Phil 3:14: ... The main point is ... the fact that the Christian's course has a mark or goal (Kittel, TDWNT, NT 4649)

Thus this goal was a remote mark seen in the distant future which will one day be crossed over. Like a runner who looks toward the finish line (1Cor. 9:25-28), Paul looks forward to the end of his life and the crossing of the line into everlasting life. This goal, this mark in the distance is what consumed Paul's mind.

To emphasize his single minded zeal and determination he repeated the same word used in 1:12. He has set this as the goal of his life and he is "*pushing forward zealously, aspiring to, being zealously behind something, endeavor with zeal*" now focused on the goal.

diōkō ... **hasten, run; be behind something; strive for something; persecute** ... The **original Greek sense** of the word is based on the meaning **drive, set in motion, push, which then becomes persecute, banish and, used metaphorically, follow, strive for a person or a thing, push forward zealously, aspire to, be zealously behind something, endeavor with zeal...** (Exegetical Dictionary NT: 1377)

The term "toward" is a preposition for motion or direction. The zeal is directed toward the goal. There is a direct relationship between the pressing on and the goal.

for the prize

The prize will be the result (*eis - entrance into ... the end, purpose and goal*) of reaching the mark and goal he had set. The prize given by the umpire in the games is now used for the prize that Jesus will give to those who reach the mark Paul was revealing here. Only crowned if compete according to the rules.

brabeion "a **prize bestowed in connection with the games**" (akin to *brabeus*, "an umpire," and *brabeuo*, "to decide, arbitrate," "rule," Col 3:15), 1 Cor 9:24, is used metaphorically of **"the reward" to be obtained hereafter by the faithful believer**, Phil 3:14; ... The "prize" is not "the high calling," but will be bestowed in virtue of, and relation to, it, the heavenly calling, Heb 3:1, which belongs to all believers and directs their minds and aspirations heavenward; for the "prize" see especially 2 Tim 4:7,8...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1017)

And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is **not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.** 2Tim. 2:5-6

of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Upward has two distinct meanings. It is only used 9 times in the NT, and 3 of them are translated "*at the top or upward*" and the other six "*above*" in the sense of the heavenly realm.

anō above (adv.), **at the top; upward** ... is an adv. of place... It bears **the sense of both above (at the top) and upward.** ... 2. a) In the sense of **at the top *anō* ... to the brim** (John 2:7). ... it is **synonymous with ... in the heaven above.** ... in Gal 4:26 is **the heavenly Jerusalem**, which is **contrasted with the present Jerusalem** (v. 25). In Col 3:1,2 the Church is exhorted: : **seek, set your minds on things that are above.** ... In John ... **denotes the realm of God from which Jesus comes with the divine message: "I am from above** (John 8:23) ... Exegetical Dictionary NT:507)

Both ideas would fit the context, but "upward" is the predominant translation.

calling us upward. AMP	upward call of God ESV	called me heavenward NIV
upward call of God NAS	upward call of God NKJV	high calling of God ASV

The idea behind this upward call may refer to ever higher realms of spiritual growth and maturity, or like Colossians, may refer to the realm where it comes from and where we are going.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. Col. 3:1-3

The call of God comes to all men through the gospel (2Th. 2:14).. Those who heed the call and come out are the called out (*ekklesia*) church. This call out of heaven bids us come out of the darkness into His marvelous light and then seeking those things that are above and in that light prepare ourselves for heaven.

*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who **called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1Pet. 2:9-10*

God calls all To that call is added the precious and exceeding great promises(II Pet. 1:4) which give one a living hope(I Pet 1:3-5). This call of God proceeding from the gospel is made possible by and is only in relationship to Jesus Christ. He is the gospel. His life, death, burial, and resurrection are all that the gospel is made up of(I Cor. 15:1-4).

Every day a little higher and a little more added.

*Yea, and for this very cause **adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply** virtue; and in (your) virtue knowledge; 6 and in (your) knowledge self-control; and in (your) self-control patience; and in (your) patience godliness; 7 and in (your) godliness brotherly kindness; and in (your) brotherly kindness love. 2 Peter 1:5-11*

Like every other spiritual blessing this one can only be found in Christ (Eph. 1:3). Only because Jesus died on the cross, shed His blood for our sins and returned victorious to heaven can we be made righteous by faith. Only his sins were washed away and he entered into Christ could this upward call have any meaning.

*And now why are you waiting? **Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord. Acts 22:15*

*For **as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ**. Gal. 3:27*

With his sins washed away and his righteousness through faith in Christ, the road to spiritual growth and perfection lay open to him. As he climbed higher and higher, The goal of the resurrection ever moved him to continue his upward call.

15. Therefore let us, as many as are mature (are perfect – ASV)

This is the first time in the letter that Paul has used the term “us” as he bids his beloved and longed for brethren to join him in this quest. Those who choose to join him will become the mature and perfect in Christ. Because of the ambiguity of the term perfect, many of the later translations have chosen the word mature. But both of them have their limitations. There are many places in the NT where it can only be translated perfect and mature won’t fit at all. Our Father in Heaven is perfect! So is the perfect will of God, the perfect tabernacle not of this creation, and the perfect law of liberty.

*Therefore you shall be **perfect**, just as **your Father in heaven is perfect**. Mt. 5:48*

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and **perfect will of God**. Rom. 12:2*

*For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when **that which is perfect has come**, then that which is in part will be done away. 1Cor. 13:9-10*

*But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with **the greater and more perfect tabernacle** not made with hands, that is, **not of this creation**. Heb. 9:11-12*

*But he who looks into the **perfect law of liberty** and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. Jas. 1:25*

That leaves the translators with a dilemma. If they translate the same Greek word with both perfect and mature, it makes it difficult for those reading only English to see the parallel. But if they translate it perfect in contexts where it is not flawless perfection, then the reader may be confused. For our purposes, it is only enough to know that it is the same Greek word that is elsewhere translated perfect as flawless perfection. One thought that comes to mind is that for Christians there is an understanding that there is a flawless perfect and there is also a perfection by the grace of God and the blood of Jesus.

téleios, adjective from télos (5056), goal, purpose. Finished, that which has reached its end, term, limit;

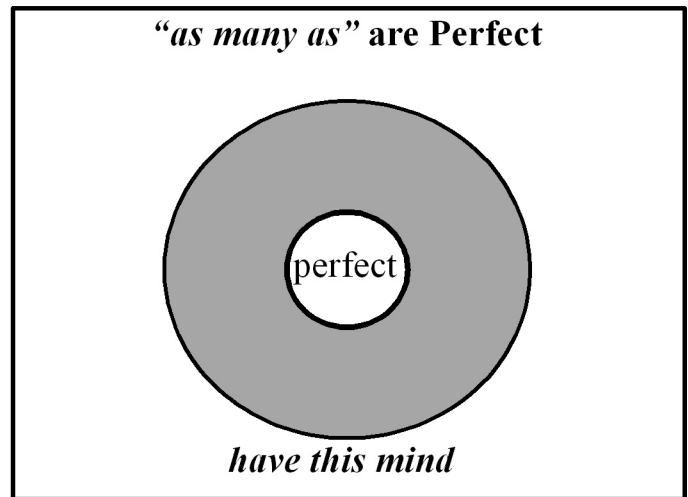
hence, complete, full, wanting in nothing. ... Specifically of persons meaning full age, adulthood, full-grown, of persons, meaning full-grown in mind and understanding (1 Cor 14:20); in knowledge of the truth (1 Cor 2:6; Phil 3:15; Heb 5:14); in Christian faith and virtue (Eph 4:13). ... This image of fully completed growth as contrasted with infancy and childhood underlies the ethical use of *teleioi*, being set over against the babes in Christ (1 Cor 2:6; 14:20; Eph 4:13,14; Phil 3:15; Heb 5:14). ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5046)

The various applications of *teleios* are all referable to the *telos*, which is its ground. In a natural sense the *teleioi* are the adult, who, having attained the full limits of stature, strength, and mental power within their reach, have in these respects attained their *telos*, as distinguished from the *neoi* or *paides*, young men or boys ... This image of full completed growth, as contrasted with infancy and childhood, underlies the ethical use of *teleioi* by St. Paul, he setting these over against the *népioi en christō* (1 Cor 2:6; 14:20; Eph 4:13,14; Phil 3:15; Heb 5:14)... It will be seen that there is a certain ambiguity in our word ‘perfect,’ which, indeed, it shares with *teleios* itself; this, namely, that they are both employed now in a relative, now in an absolute sense; for only so could our Lord have said, “Be ye therefore perfect (*teleioi*), as your Heavenly Father is perfect” (*teleios*) Matt 5:48; ... The faithful man shall be ‘perfect,’ that is, aiming by the grace of God to be fully furnished and firmly established in the knowledge and practice of the things of God (James 3:2; Col 4:12:)... (Trench’s NT Synonyms, NT:5046)

By using the word “as many as” the Holy Spirit forces us to see that only those who think as Paul thinks have this perfection by grace or of full grown spiritual maturity. The only way to become perfect and mature to the fullest possible sense is by having this attitude so if we are in this this circle was are among the as many as, and if we are not, we are still imperfect spiritual babes.

hosos, like Lat. *quantus*, of Size, as great as, how great; of Quantity, as much as, how much; of Space, as far as, how far; of Time, as long as, how long; of Number, as many as, how many; of Sound, as loud as, how loud; in pl. as many as, ... (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:3745)

“*hosos*,... a relative adjective. ... used a. of space [as great as]... of time [as long as]... for so long time as, so long as... b. of abundance and multitude; how many, as many as; how much, as much as:... as many (men) as, all who,... I Tim. 6:1 ... c. of importance: how great things, I. e. how extraordinary,... d. of measure and degree, in comparative sentences,... the more... so much the more, a great deal...” (Thayer, p. 456; 3745).



If we find ourselves with the same mind Paul has here, then we are in the “as many as” are perfect. If we do not feel the same way Paul does then we are not in the midst of those who are perfect.

have this mind;

The Holy Spirit is using the term mind here in the same sense that He did earlier in the book.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, Phil 2:2

The mind is the place where all our thoughts emotions memories goals and desires are contained. It is part of the eternal spirit and soul that continues after the body has ceased to be alive. Within this mind are attitudes and goals that make up this word. This is a partition of the mind where we choose what our goals, mind set and attitudes will be. If we have made the same choices Jesus made we have the mind of Christ. If we have the same “single minded commitment” that Paul made then we “have this mind.

phronéō think, reflect; set one's mind on ... occurs 26 times in the NT: Paul uses this word with striking frequency and usually expresses with it **single-minded commitment to something** and the conditions for such commitment. ... all of a person's thoughts and aspirations. ... (Exegetical Dictionary NT:5426)

and if in anything ...

The Holy Spirit adds a conditional conjunction to describe a “*mere possibility*.” The condition is “if there should be anyone,” or “if there should be anything in someone’s mind” that is different from that described above, then the following conclusion will follow.

ei, a **Conditional Conjunction, if; and in indirect questions, whether**. A. with a verb in protasis, answered by a similar tense in apodosis: 1. with present and future indicative, to **express mere Possibility, ...**” (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:1487)

ei tis; **conditional expression from *ei* (1487), if, and *tis* (5100), any**. If any, if someone...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1536)

... you think otherwise,

The thoughts and attitudes Paul described above must be the aim and goal of every perfect/mature Christian. Yet in the midst of their minds, those who want that to be their mind set and attitude may actually have some things in there that are “otherwise” or in a different manner.

hetérōs; adv. from *héteros* (2087), **a different one**, another of **a different quality**. **Otherwise, differently** (Phil 3:15). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2088)

There are thoughts that are aligned with the apostles who were in fellowship with God and there are thoughts that are otherwise (of an entirely difference sort, quality and kind). Obviously, there must be an objective standard of what should be in the minds of mature Christians. Once we recognize that objective standard we are prepared to understand those thoughts that are of a different kind.

The right kind of thoughts are those based on Jesus own words. His disciples are those who believe in Jesus through their word. The words of the apostles and prophets inspired by the Holy Spirit are the only objective basis upon which we can assess and be certain that our thoughts are not of a different sort.

*I do not pray for these alone, but also for **those who will believe in Me through their word**; 21 that **they all may be one**, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. Jn. 17:20-21*

As John later reminded his readers, we (the apostles and prophets who are in fellowship with God) are of God. If our thoughts are based on their words we know God. If our thoughts are different from theirs then they are different in a deadly way. They are “*of the spirit of error*.”

We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. 1Jn. 4:6

that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. 1Jn. 1:3-7

This is the basis upon which we must all speak the same thing and have no divisions among us. In order to be “*perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment*,” our thoughts and our minds must be perfectly joined with the words of the apostles and prophets.

*Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Cor 1:10-11***

Anything that is not in their words creates another (*heteros*) gospel of an entirely different kind that perverts the gospel and makes on accursed.

*I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to **a different (heteros – an entirely different sort and quality) gospel**, 7 which is **not another (allos - of the same quality and sort)**; but there are some who trouble you and **want to pervert the gospel of Christ**. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. Gal. 1:6-9***

allos [243] *heteros* [2087] ... **allos ... is the numerically distinct; thus Christ spoke we are told ‘another’ parable, and still ‘another,’ but each succeeding one being of the same character as those which He had spoken before (Matt 13:23,24,31,33), ... But heteros ... superadds the notion of qualitative difference.. ... There are not a few passages in the N.T. whose right interpretation, or at any rate their full understanding, will depend on an accurate seizing of the distinction between these words. Thus Christ promises to his**

disciples that He will send, not *heteron* but *allon, parakleton* (John 14:16), ‘another’ Comforter therefore, similar to Himself. ... Thus St. Paul says, ‘I see another law’ [*heteron*], a law quite different from the law of the spirit of life, even a law of sin and death, ‘working in my members’ (Rom 7:23). After Joseph’s death ‘another [*heteros*] king arose’ in Egypt Acts 7:18; cf. Ex 1:8), one, it is generally supposed, of quite another dynasty, at all events of quite another spirit, from his who had invited the children of Israel into Egypt, and so hospitably entertained them there. ... We may bring this distinction practically to bear on the interpretation of the N. T. There is only one way in which the fine distinction between *eteron* and *allo*, and the point which St. Paul makes as he sets the one over against the other at Gal 1:6,7, can be reproduced for the English reader. ‘I marvel,’ says the Apostle, ‘that ye are so soon removed from them that called you into the grace of Christ unto another (*eteron*) Gospel, which is not another’ (*allo*). Dean Alford for the first ‘other’ has substituted ‘different’; for indeed that is what St. Paul intends to express, namely, his wonder that they should have so soon accepted a Gospel different in character and kind from that which they had already received, which therefore had no right to be called another Gospel, to assume this name, being in fact no Gospel at all; since there could not be two Gospels, varying the one from the other. (Trench’s Synonyms of the NT: 243)

All our conclusions and judgments must be made as a result of the proper facts being placed in the mind and the right applications being made of those facts. All Christians are required to take a stand and hold opinions about the subjects revealed by God in the Bible. The goal is for each to hold the same opinions as God does in every realm. When all in a congregation believe the same truths as God has revealed them, then we are not “*otherwise* — an entirely difference sort, quality and kind.”

Every Christian must feel as Paul and the other apostles felt. If in any realm of their life we do not feel that way then there is a serious problem that must be dealt with. In order to do God’s will on earth as it is done in heaven all our thoughts must be based on theirs.

But what if they aren’t? What if (mere possibility) there is something in my heart that is not of the right quality and sort? What if there is something in my heart that is not of the wrong sort?

God will reveal even this to you

What a wonderful promise! But it is a conditional promise — only for those who are perfect/mature because they are seeking to be minded as Paul was minded. If our attitude is to press on toward the goal of the upward calling of God in the Scriptures revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles and prophets then those things that are in our heart that should not be there will be “revealed.”

apokálupsis, fem. noun from *apokalúptō* (601), **to reveal**. Revelation, **uncovering, unveiling, disclosure**. One of three words referring to the Second Coming of Christ (1 Cor 1:7; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7,13). The other two words are ***epipháneia* (2015), appearing** (1 Tim 6:14), and ***parousía* (3952), coming, presence** (2 Thess 2:1). ... ***apokálupsis*, a grander and more comprehensive word, includes not merely the thing shown and seen but the interpretation, the unveiling of the same...**” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:602)

apokaluptō apokalupsis (figurative extensions of meaning of *apokaluptō* and *apokalupsis* ‘**to uncover, to take out of hiding**,’ not occurring in the NT) to **cause something to be fully known** - ‘to reveal, to disclose, to **make fully known, revelation.**’ (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:602)

This is just an additional promise to God’s providential care and intervention in our lives. Not much different that God giving wisdom liberally.

*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of **God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.** 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. James 1:5-8*

These are not Paul’s assurances, they are the assurances of the Holy Spirit who was inspiring Paul and the other apostles.

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.** Jn. 14:26*

*I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, **the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth;** Jn. 16:12-13*

*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might **know the things that have been freely given to us by God.** 13 These things **we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom***

teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1Cor. 2:12-14

Although Jesus was only speaking of the specific event where they were defending themselves in prison, this is clearly what they did in every other matter as well.

*But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For **it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak**; 20 for **it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.*** Mt. 10:19-20

This is God's promise revealed by the Holy Spirit. If there is anything in the mind of a Christian who is seeking to be perfect and have the same mind as Paul, God will reveal that flaw to them so they can remove it. We can rest assured if our goal is to be perfect and in anything we are imperfect, before we stand before God in judgment, He will reveal it to us.

God will reveal those areas which need work and development in us. We need not fear, as sincere and honest people, that on the day of judgment God will reveal areas of our character that will forever bar us from the prize. Those areas that would so bar us from heaven will be revealed to us now while there is still something we can do about them.

This is not a new promise. Jesus gave a much broader promise in the sermon on the mount.

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For *everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.* Mt. 7:7-8

Here, it is reserved for those things we do not know and therefore cannot ask. God is watching over His kingdom. He loves with a love deeper far than anything we can comprehend. When He sees his children struggling to gain the beautiful virtues of the gospel He offers all the assistance possible.

Not only through prayer and through the preaching of the word, but here Paul also revealed that the same providence that worked in the Old Testament is still working and will aid and assist us. When God saw the need to have Joseph in Egypt He made certain he was where he needed to be at the right place and at the right time. When God saw the need to have David's stone strike Goliath's head and render him unconscious, He did whatever was necessary to bring it about.

Jesus gave the same promises to His people. Even to the end of the age He is with us, doing whatever is necessary to help, guide and lead us, just as He was in the first century.

*teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*** Mt. 28:20

*And they went out and preached everywhere, **the Lord working with them** and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.* Mk. 16:20

So God's promise to reveal areas of weakness and failure to us before it is too late, fits perfectly with this. He will do this through the proclamation of the gospel by some preacher, teacher or friend. He will give us the opportunity to learn, but His revealing it to us will still require our willing participation. We must be the ones who after he reveals it, make whatever changes are necessary.

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained

"Nevertheless" is the word that reveals this as the condition. It restricts and expands on the previous promise with a condition.

"plén, ...1. adverbially, **at the beginning of a sentence, serving either to restrict, or to unfold and expand what has preceded**: moreover, besides, so that, **according to the requirements of the context, it may also be rendered but, nevertheless**;" (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:4133)

This promise can only be fully given if our own heart is prepared to receive it. Only those who will use what they are given will be given any more. Twice in the gospel of Matthew, Jesus spoke of this principle. First in answer to why He began to speak in parables. The reason was simple. A division was taking place at this point in His ministry. Those who had applied and used what Jesus had already taught would now be given greater revelation. Mysteries would be revealed to them hidden from the foundation of the world. (Mt. 13:35). But only to those who had taken advantage of what Jesus had already given.

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 He answered and said to them, "Because **it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.** 12 **For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.** 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because **seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.** Mt. 13:10-13

In the parable of the talents, those who traded and made gain according to their ability were treated different from the man who hid his talent and refused to trade or make gain with it. Those who do buy up the opportunities they have, will not only not be given any more, but will lose even the ones they do have.

For to **everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.** Mt. 25:29

Only those who are truly living up to what they have already attained (*eis ho* — entered into) are in the position to receive this promise. This condition may not be on God, but upon the one who must use the information to resolve those things over which he thinks otherwise. If one is not living up to what he has already attained, he is not in a position to do anything with the new things he is learning. Thus those who have will receive more and those who do not will ultimately lose what they had.

The key is in the word "*attain*." Though sometimes it can be come first or be first, in this case, it is to arrive at, come or attain to.

phthánō ... This common verb means "to come first," "to do first," "to be first," "to overtake." ... a. The original sense "to precede someone" occurs in the NT only once at 1 Thess 4:15: "We which are alive and remain unto the coming ... of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep." ... In the other 5 NT references *phthánō* is used with a prepos. phrase: with *epi* in Mt 12:28 and par.; 1 Thess 2:16, with *eis* in Rom 9:31; Phil 3:16, and with *achri* in 2 Cor 10:14. The meaning is always "to arrive at," "to reach," "to come or attain to." (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:5348)

Those who want to gain the blessings of this conditional promise, must keep living up to the degree they have already gained, arrived at and attained. As we follow Paul, pressing on toward the goal of upward call of God, they must at least live up to those levels before they are prepared to move on to the next level. Those who gain information concerning their conduct and life and then seek to forget it, or just don't want to live up to it are not under consideration here. Part of the price of being faithful till death, is in learning all that God expects us to learn and then no matter what the cost seek to follow through with it. When one attains to a certain plateau of knowledge and maturity they are expected to live at that level and not drop back to the level in which they lived before they gained that knowledge.

let us walk by the same rule,

This is a different term for walk, only used once in Philippians and only five times in the NT. The emphasis on this word is staying in a row. Advancing in rows or ranks. To "walk orderly," "walk in the steps of Abraham," "walk by the Spirit," "walk by the same rule." There is always someone or something we are walking with.

stoichéō, from *stoichos* ... row, line, rank. To stand or go in order, advance in rows or ranks. In the NT used figuratively, meaning to walk orderly, with the dative of rule, to live according to any rule or duty, to follow (Rom 4:12; Gal 5:25; 6:16; Phil 3:16); (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4748)

stoicheo from *stoichos*, "a row," signifies "to walk in line," and is used metaphorically of "walking" in relation to others ... in Acts 21:24, it is translated "walkest orderly"; in Rom 4:12, "walk (in... steps of Abraham)"; in Gal 5:25 it is used of walking "by the Spirit," ... it is used of walking by the rule expressed in vv. 14,15; in Phil 3:16..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary , NT:4748),

The rule here is continually walks from one level of maturity to the next level, and while living in one level of understanding, of self-control, and of love, walking in that level. Those who shrink back are not walking by the same rule. No one wants to know how to do good, but not do it. To do this is to refuse to use what we have.

Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin. Jas. 4:17

Those who will not walk by the understanding they have gained of the gospel will not have any more revealed to them. Thus a great and a wonderful promise is given, but it is a conditional promise. The condition is to strive with all ones being to be what God wants them to be, and to live up to what they know, to the best of their ability. The promise is an assurance that no one will ever stand unprepared at the judgment seat of Christ.

Phil 3:17-21

Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

17. Brethren, join in following my example, NKJV Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, (ASV)

Once again, brethren is a term binding family ties and equality, of care and concern, and a desire to help. They are all to jointly seek to imitate Paul. He is the example and pattern and every Christian who seeks to be mature and perfect must jointly follow his example. Imitators is actually a closer translation than example. It comes from the Greek “*mimeoma*” which comes into English with a *mimeograph* machine which duplicates precisely the master template time after time.

mimeomai (NT:3401) imitate mimétés, ou (NT:3402) imitator ... 1. This word group appears only 11 times in the NT, ... 2. The verb means **imitate, emulate, follow after**, with the acc. of the person or thing; i.e., it **represents the imitation of an example**. The substantive refers to the imitator. In the NT the substantive is always used with *eimi* or *ginomai* and with the genitive. ... 4. **Exhortations to imitate the apostle are present** in 2 Thess 3:6-9....” (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:3401)

Added to imitate is the preposition that speaks of fellowship and joint participation, because Paul wants this to be an imitation they are sharing so that others can see it in the future and share it too. Those who know Paul must accompany, associate with, participate with and have fellowship with him in all that has been said in this chapter.

“*sun*... a preposition... it takes the Dative after it and denotes **accompaniment and fellowship whether or action or of belief, or of condition and experience**... *with* II. In composition *sun* denotes 1. **association, community, fellowship, participation**...As to its Form, *sun* in composition... before *g, k, ch* into *sug*...” (Thayer, P. 599; 4862)

“*sún*; (together) with ... In the NT there are only 127 occurrences of “*sún*; ... **refers to mutuality of being or doing: spend time “with the disciples”** ... “ (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4862)

When these two words are joined together, we have an imitation that has reciprocity and equality. This is the only time in the NT where this word is used. These “imitators together with others.

summimétés **one who joins others as an imitator - 'to join as an imitator, to be an imitator together with others, joint imitator.'** ... 'join in being my imitators' Phil 3:17...” (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:4831)

summimétés ... denotes “**a fellow imitator**” (*sun*, “with,” and *mimetes*” **an imitator,” “follower,” is always used in a good sense in the NT, RV imitators together** Phil 3:17, ...”) (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:4831)

All that Paul wrote here has the divine stamp of inspiration. By reviewing this section, the type and exact nature of this imitation is revealed and explained. This is what we are looking for in ourselves and in the other Christians in a congregation.

what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.	We jointly imitate
count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord	We jointly imitate
suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, gain Christ	We jointly imitate
not having my own righteousness, from the law, but which is through faith in Christ,	We jointly imitate
I may know Him: power of His resurrection, fellowship of His sufferings, conformed to His death	We jointly imitate
if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.	We jointly imitate
I have not already attained, or am already perfected;	We jointly imitate
I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.	We jointly imitate
I do not count myself to have apprehended;	We jointly imitate
one thing I do, forgetting things which are behind and reaching forward to things ahead	We jointly imitate

I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

We jointly imitate

Just as young children move quickly to maturity in walking and talking, reading and writing by imitation, so also a child of God can move quickly from immaturity to maturity by imitating those who are mature. The first priority then is to assess Paul and seek to be like him. The second is to find others who are imitating so we can jointly imitate him.

and note (mark - ASV) those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

“*Note*” was used as a noun in 3:14 (*mark* — *skopos*) and is now a verb. The difference is one of action. Instead of a mark to be aimed at, it is now the marking itself.

skopeō. “to look at, behold, watch, contemplate,” (akin to *skopos*, “a mark,” ... , is used metaphorically of “looking to,” and translated “mark” in Rom 16:17, of a **warning against those who cause divisions**, and in Phil 3:17, of **observing those who walked after the example of the apostle and his fellow workers, so as to follow their ways.** ...” (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4648),

skopeō c: to exert effort in continually acquiring information regarding some matter, with the implication of concern as to how to respond appropriately - 'to be aware of, to be concerned about, to consider.' ... 'each of you should be continually concerned about not only your own interests, but also the interests of others' Phil 2:4. ...” (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, NT:4648)

First, Paul wants them to assess and see clearly the qualities and attitudes Paul had exhibited in pressing on to the them mark of the upward call of God. Then having found it look for others in the Lord's body. His example must be assessed and then applied to the other members in the church. They are to “*watch and contemplate*” the conduct of other disciples of Christ. When they see Paul being imitated by them, they are to join them.

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ... 15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. 1 Tim 4:12, 15-16

-No babe in Christ should take this lightly. Once one has assessed Paul, and understands his example, they are to look for it in other Christians. Paul is now the pattern and they are to look for others who fit that pattern. others in the congregation are then to be also considered. Those who show a resemblance are to be marked out, then watched and imitated. Because God has made Paul a pattern

tupos (NT:5179) ... occurs 15 times in the NT ... *antitupos* (NT:499) occurs only in Heb 9:24 and 1 Peter 3:21. ... 2. In secular Greek *tupos* is used to describe the process of casting and forming and refers both to that which has been cast and to that which itself forms, whether a mold and its impression (e.g., a signet ring or a die [for coins]) or a raised form such as a relief or a sculpture. This basic meaning develops from the concrete to the abstract, so that *tupos* comes to be used of “pattern, model, copy, prototype, outline sketch, general impression, version of a document.” ... Paul uses *tupos* in the context ... of *mimēomai* ... (4) in a sense usually rendered by “example.” ... In 1Th 1:6 f. Paul writes in the context of the preamble: “**You became imitators (*mimetai*) of us and [thereby] of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with joy [as given by] the Holy Spirit, so that you became a strikingly formed model (*tupos*) for believers in Macedonia and Achaia.**” The category of exemplary ethical behavior also encompasses the meaning of *tupos* in 1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7, and 1 Peter 5:3. ... 1 Peter 5:1-4 first admonishes the presbyters not to “tend” the individual churches out of greed or desire for domination, and then gives the positive directive to “**be examples to the flock**” (v. 3);...” (Exegetical Dictionary NT 5179; NT:499)

Paul likens himself to the printed type on a page. Just as the blow of the type against the ribbon and page leaves the image of a letter on the page, so also Paul and others like him have been made like Christ and have the right to be imitated. Even uninspired men and women in a congregation if they measure up as those who walk worthy can have this honor. Each should strive to grow and live in order to be such an example to new converts and young children. This is the heart of Paul's exhortation here.

The other uses of this term help us see clearly its scope.

● “*Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.*” *Jn. 20:25*

- "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the **pattern** that he had seen, Acts 7:44-45
- Now these things became our **examples**, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 1Cor. 10:6
- so that you became **examples** to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. 1Th. 1:7-8
not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an **example** of how you should follow us. 2Th. 3:9
- Let no one despise your youth, but be an **example** to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1Tim. 4:12
- in all things showing yourself to be a **pattern** of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, Titus 2:7-8
- as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the **pattern** shown you on the mountain." Heb. 8:5-6
- nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being **examples** to the flock 1Pet. 5:3

As we consider the many commands to be an example and to look at patterns and follow them, we understand the need to find the right men. As "evil companionship corrupts good morals," good companions whose example we follow will speed our quest to reach the prize of the upward call of God in Christ.

18. For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping,

When Scriptures speak of the saved they use terms like "few" and "remnant."

- Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are **FEW** who find it. Mt. 7:14
For many are called, but **FEW** are chosen. Mt. 22:14
Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, **The REMNANT will be saved.** Rom. 9:27*

But when they speak of the lost, the wicked and those in error, it is often many.

- "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are **MANY** who go in by it. Mt. 7:13
- "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **22 MANY will say to Me** in that day, 'Lord, Lord, ... then **I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** Mt. 7:21-23
- there are **MANY insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers**, especially those of the circumcision Titus 1:10
- For **MANY deceivers have gone out into the world** 2Jn. 6
- Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because **MANY false prophets have gone out into the world.** 1Jn. 4:1
- But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, ... **2 And MANY will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.** 2Pet. 2:1-2

Many is a word of multitude, abundance, numerous and plenty. It is an adjective that when it modifies things that are good and a blessing, It is a word of joy and contentment. When it is an adjective describing things that are cursed or of a bad nature it is a word of great sorrow and loss.

- "polus,... much used a. Of multitude, number, many numerous, great... abundant, plenteous... b. with nouns denoting an action an emotion, a state, which can be said to have as it were measure, weight, force, intensity, size, continuance, or repetition, much l. q. great, strong, intense, large... c. of time much, long..." (Thayer, p. 529; 4183)*
polus occurs 359 times in the NT (418 times with comparative pleion and superlative pleistos) ... As an adjective it modifies a substantive. (singular or plural, with or without article) in the numerical sense of much, many (Mt. 7:22; Luke 7:47), (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:4183)

The Greeks and Hebrews used the term "walk" in the same way English speaking people use "live." In Scripture is "to regulate one's life, to conduct one's self." While some walk "after the Spirit," "in newness of life," others "in the vanity of their mind" and "after the flesh."

- "peripateo... to walk a. prop. to make one's way, make progress, b. Hebraistically, to live... a. to regulate one's life, to conduct one's self..." (Thayer, p. 504; 4043)*

peripateō ... is used (a) physically, ... (b) figuratively, "signifying the whole round of the activities of the individual life, whether of the unregenerate, Eph 4:17, or of the believer, 1 Cor 7:17; Col 2:6. ... The Christian is to walk in newness of life, Rom 6:4, after the spirit, 8:4, in honesty, 13:13, by faith, 2 Cor 5:7, in good

works, Eph 2:10, **in love**, 5:2, **in wisdom**, Col 4:5, **in truth**, 2 John 4, **after the commandments of the Lord**, v. 6. And, **negatively, not after the flesh**, Rom 8:4; **not after the manner of men**, 1 Cor 3:3; **not in craftiness**, 2 Cor 4:2; **not by sight**, 5:7; **not in the vanity of the mind**, Eph 4:17; **not disorderly**, 2 Thess 3:6." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4043)

Who are these people whose walk makes Paul weep? Are these members of the church or the ungodly in the world? From his description they could be either. They are those who crept in secretly, those who with feigned words make merchandise of you. Those who went out from us because they were not of us. these could not even be weak members of the church. But more probably the false teachers from among the Gnostics and those who were being influenced by them in the church.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| (1) enemies of the cross of Christ: | (4) whose glory is in their shame |
| (2) whose end is destruction, | (5) who set their mind on earthly things. |
| (3) whose god is their belly, | |

Since the context is speaking of imitating others, these would be people they could be influenced by and possibly even knew. Among them are those who turn God's grace into lasciviousness.

of whom I told you often,

This is not the first time Paul has spoken of these things. He has spoken many times.

pollákis; adverb from *pollá* (neuter plural of *polús* [4183]), many, and **the suffix -kis, a numerical term denoting frequency. Many times, often, frequently ...** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4178)

pollakis, akin to *polus*, "much, many," is variously translated, e. g., "**ofttimes**," Matt 17:15 (KJV, "oft," 2nd part); "**many times**," 2 Cor 8:22, RV (KJV, "**oftentimes**"); "**oft**," 2 Cor 11:23; "**often**" v. 26. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4178)

Paul is not alone in warning of these things many times. Jesus and all His apostles and prophets gave similar warnings. They pose one of the greatest threats to God's children

- **there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways,...**
- **3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words 2Pet. 2:1-3**
- **For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 4**
- **"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Mt. 7:15**
after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Acts 20:29-30
Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. Col 2:8-9
- **For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11**
- **whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. Titus 1:10-11**
- **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 2Tim. 4:3-4**
- **They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. 1 John 2:19**
- **Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1John 4:1**
- **They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. 6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. 1Jn. 4:5-6**
- **He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1Jn. 2:4**

and now tell you even weeping,

Paul had many times warned these brethren that the lifestyle of some individuals was not what it ought to be. This now leads him even to weep. This is a stronger word that the tears he spoke of

to the Ephesian elders. It includes wailing and “any loud expression of grief.

“*klaio* ... to weep or wail, with emphasis upon the noise accompanying the weeping - ‘to weep, to wail, to lament, weeping, crying.’ ‘he went out and wept bitterly’ Matt 26:75; ‘be sorrowful, grieve, and weep’ James 4:9. (Lou & Nida NT:2799)

“*klaio* ... is used of “any loud expression of grief,” especially in mourning for the dead, Matt 2:18; Mark 5:38,39; 16:10; Luke 7:13; 8:52 (twice); John 11:31,33 (twice); 20:11 (twice), 13,15; 39; otherwise, e. g., in exhortations, Luke 23:28; Rom 12:15; James 4:9; (Vine’s Expository Dictionary, NT:2799)

Hence Paul feels deeply hurt over the fate of these. Though they deserve death and it will one day be meted out to them, it causes Paul inward pain. Just as it had for the Jews and for those in Corinth.

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh Rom. 9:1-3

For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you. 2 Cor 2:3-4

that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ

There are two difficulties in this verse. The first because enemy can be someone who actively hates feels enmity or is hostile toward the cross or passively, by their actions they have made themselves an enemy of the cross. The first actively seeks to destroy and harm all that the cross stands for. The second, although they may feel no animosity and even believe they are a friend, but by their actions they make themselves an enemy because all that they do is destructive and negative to it.

echthros, adjective from *echthos* (n.f.), **hatred, enmity. Hostile, inimical.** (I) In Rom 11:28, enemies, in contrast to *agapetos* (27), beloved. (II) **In an active sense, as a substantive, *ho echthros*, an enemy, adversary** (Matt 5:43; 10:36; 13:25; Luke 1:71; 19:43; Phil 3:18, "enemies of the cross"); **in a passive sense, a person hated or rejected as an enemy** (Matt 5:44; 13:28,39, the adversary, Satan; 22:44, the adversaries of the Messiah; Mark 12:36; Luke 1:74; 6:27,35; 10:19, ...) Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2190

In its literal sense the cross is the instrument of death that Jesus was executed upon. It carries that sense in all the passages that speak of His death and the events surrounding it. But that is not its sense after Jesus used it to bring salvation to all men. After that it is used more of what it represents it, the gospel in its entirety.

- (1) The cross of Christ is made of none effect when it is preached with human wisdom. Those who think it is foolish and seek to change it become enemies of the cross.
For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1 Cor 1:17-18
- (2) In the first century circumcision was the offense that made those who preached it enemies of the Jews.
And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. Gal 5:11-12
- (3) The cross represents our crucifixion to the world and the world to us so anything that hinders that would make one an enemy of the cross.
But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Gal 6:14-15
- (4) The peace and reconciliation between Israel and the Gentiles was gained by the cross so anything that hinders that peace would make one an enemy.
*and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. Eph 2:16-17
and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Col 1:20*
- (5) The Old Law was nailed to the cross so anything that seeks to bring that law back would make one an enemy of the cross
having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Col 2:14-15

The was the instrument of Jesus’ death and the instrument through which his church was

purchased. Hence to be an enemy to the cross of Christ would be an enemy of all that it brought into being. This is strong but necessary language. All must be made aware of what their influence and their deeds do to them. Those who use the cross as their own instrument to crucify themselves and their fleshly desires are the friends of the cross. Those who refuse to bring themselves under its power become its enemies for they stand in its way. There are perhaps no greater enemies than these. They pretend to be friends and thus influence others to become like them. Woe unto the worldly church member! We will weep for them, but little else can we do unless they be willing to repent.

19. whose end is perdition,

The end of each man terminates in His final judgment and the decision by God whether that life will end in eternal life or the second death.

telos ... the **fulfilment or completion of anything**, Lat. effectus, i.e. its **consummation, issue, result, end**, ... its issue, ... to **put a finish to a thing**, i.e. give it effect, ... one's prayers are accomplished, ... to have reached the end, to be finished or ready, ... II. the end proposed, chief matter, ... 2. the end of action, , the chief good, Cicero's finis bonorum, 3. perfection, full age, ... man's full age, manhood, ... to be grown up, ... 4. a final decision, determination, ... 5. the prize at games, Pind. ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:5056)

The end of those who are enemies of the cross is perdition. This is a terrible word describing waste, ruin, and loss of well-being.

apoleia indicating "**loss of well-being, not of being**," is used (a) of things, signifying their **waste, or ruin; of ointment**, Matt 26:8; Mark 14:4; **of money**, Acts 8:20 ("perish"); (b) **of persons, signifying their spiritual and eternal perdition**, Matt 7:13; John 17:12; 2 Thess 2:3, where "son of perdition" signifies the proper destiny of the person mentioned; metaphorically of men persistent in evil, Rom 9:22, where "fitted" is in the middle voice, indicating that the vessels of wrath fitted themselves for "destruction", of the adversaries of the Lord's people, Phil 1:28 ("perdition"); of professing Christians, really enemies of the cross of Christ, Phil 3:19 (RV, "perdition"); **of those who are subjects of foolish and hurtful lusts**, 1 Tim 6:9 ... of **false teachers**, 2 Peter 2:1,3; of ungodly men, 3:7; of **those who wrest the Scriptures**, 3:16; ... (c) of **impersonal subjects, as heresies**, 2 Peter 2:1, where "destructive heresies" (RV; KJV, "damnable") is, lit., "**heresies of destruction**" (marg., "sects of perdition"); ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:684)

The graphic ways which Jesus pictures hell, with darkness, fire, worms never dying, weeping and gnashing of teeth pictures dimly the terror and horror of those who share such an end. They will perish, they will be destroyed, they will be miserable throughout all eternity.

whose god is the belly,

While they might believe and proclaim otherwise, their actions make it clear they are not serving the one true and living God. But by their affections and actions they prove that the only god they serve is themselves. The belly (abdominal cavity) represents the process of the food after it enters the body until it is eliminated (Mt. 15:17).

koilia, belly, abdominal cavity, womb ... appears 22 times in the NT, of which 1 is plural (Luke 23:29). **The basic meaning is belly, abdominal cavity.** In the saying of Jesus in Mark 7:19 par. Matt 15:17 ("**Do you not understand that everything that enters through the mouth goes into the stomach/belly and then is eliminated?**") ... *koilia* refers to the belly as a part of the digestive apparatus. This meaning for *koilia* is also present in 1 Cor 6:13 ("foods are for the belly and the belly for foods"); Matt 12:40 (Jonah in the belly of the fish); Luke 15:16 (fill his stomach with the husks = allay his hunger"); (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2836)

It is clearly being used as an idiom for bodily appetites. Since they are not serving the true God they serve another. The god they serve is their own own fleshly appetites which have taken the place of God. Paul uses this same term in the same way to those in Rome.

Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple. Rom. 16:17-18

Those who live for today, with the motto of if it feels good do it, would fall into this category. So also would those Christians who allow their own fleshly desires, whether it be for food, clothing, shelter, or lusts for evil things to dictate to them how they will live. When one enters this type of a lifestyle and never repents of it, they are no longer servants of the true God.

and whose glory is in their shame,

The things they suppose will bring them glory and honor are going to lead only to shame. Glory is “favorable human opinion” leading to “praise and honor. The problem with the glory of men it is “shifty, uncertain, and often based on error.”

dóxa, ... **to think, recognize, glory.** ... A look at the root word of *dóxa*, i.e., *dokéō* (1380), to think or suppose, is necessary. Etymologically, the word **primarily means thought or opinion, especially favorable human opinion, and thus in a secondary sense reputation, praise, honor (true and false), splendor, light, perfection, rewards** (temporal and eternal). Thus **the *dóxa* of man is human opinion and is shifty, uncertain, often based on error**, and its pursuit for its own safety is unworthy. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1391)

An even greater problem is revealed here. Sometimes the things that bring human praise and honor will ultimately lead to shame and disgrace. This is the greatest danger those who seek to be disciples of Jesus face. What is highly esteemed among men is an abomination before God. It is so easy to glory in things that will ultimately bring disgrace.

*And He said to them, "You are those who **justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.** Lk. 16:15*

The glory of men should not be something to be sought or even considered. The only way one can be certain that we seek the glory of God is if we are looking only at His word and finding out exactly what He has asked for and then give it to Him. When we love the glory of men it is easy to lose sight of and ultimately lose the glory from God.

*Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for **they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.** Jn. 12:42-43*

There is a terrible shame coming. The disgrace, dishonor and shame that will come at the judgment day when God rejects our works.

aischúné, fem. noun from *aíschos* (n.f.), **shame. Disgrace, shame.** ... (I) Subjectively meaning **a sense of shame resulting from exposure of one's weaknesses or sins. It is that feeling which leads one to shun what is unworthy out of the prospect and anticipation of dishonor, fear of disgrace** (Luke 14:9). (II) Objectively meaning **disgrace, reproach** (Heb 12:2;) ... (III) **Cause of shame, i.e., a shameful thing or action, disgraceful conduct. Hidden things of shame, clandestine conduct of which the disciples of Christ should be ashamed** (2 Cor 4:2). See also Phil 3:19; Heb 12:2; Jude 13. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:152)

This is exactly what all those who call Jesus Lord, but do not actually do the will of the Father in heaven will find on the last day. Imagine how they will feel for all eternity the disgrace of Jesus' words.

*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then **I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** Mt. 7:21-23*

Others take pride in sinful things? They boast of how they cheated someone out of what was rightfully theirs, they feel great when they have told someone off after their feelings have been hurt. They do not comprehend enough about the gospel and its standards to understand that these are things to be ashamed of, not to brag about.

who mind earthly things.

This is the seventh time the term “mind” has been used in this letter. It is a mindset, opinion, and attitude. attitude

phronéō ... From *phrēn* (5424), mind. **To think, have a mindset, be minded.** The activity represented by this word involves **the will, affections, and conscience.** (I) Generally, **to be of an opinion.** ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:5426)

Paul started the previous chapter by asking the Philippians to be likeminded and to have the mind of Christ within them. He has just told them that all who are mature will think as Paul does. These men are different their minds are not on Christ and Paul, but on the things of the earth. The earth, like fleshly lusts sees things only from the perspective of the earth. Without heavenly things to put

things into their proper context, earthly things are sinful and ungodly things.

epígeion ... adj. from *epí* (1909), *upon*, and *ge* (1093), the *earth*... **earthly**, being upon the earth (Phil 2:10; 3:19). Earthly, belonging to the earth or wrought in men upon the earth (John 3:12). Earthly, terrestrial, made of earth (1 Cor 15:40; 2 Cor 5:1 [cf. Job 4:19]). **Earthly, arising from the earth and attached to it (James 3:15)**. In the NT, opposed to *epouránios* (2032), that which pertains to heaven (1 Cor 15:40); (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 1919)

Paul spoke of similar things to the Colossians which was written about the same time as this book. Genuine Christians must seek and set their minds on things above. Only when seen from the eyes of God can we properly evaluate the true nature of all activities. If we only see the earthly, then even fornication and covetousness do not appear to be the evil and wicked things that God reveals them to be.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ... 5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. Col 3:1-2, 3:5-7

But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. Jas. 3:14

Those under the influence of this earth (world) are still living under the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life and are enemies of God.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:15-17

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jas. 4:4

Sad enough for weeping are those who remain in the kingdom of God, but who are in fact the enemies of Christ, and who have long ago returned in their hearts to Egypt (Acts 7:39).

20. For our citizenship is in heaven;

He completes the comparison between the “*mind*” and “*walk*” of the devout Christian patterned after Paul and the “*mind*” and “*walk*” of the worldly and ungodly who set their mind on the things of the earth and this world. The choice of who our own mind and walk will imitate will determine if we belong in this passage or not.

let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; if in anything you are otherwise minded Brethren, join in following my example note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. our citizenship is in heaven waiting for a savior

many walk, of whom I have told you often, and whose glory is in their shame whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly they are the enemies of the cross of Christ who set their mind on earthly things.

“Citizenship” is a perfect word for those in Philippi to understand for that was their exact circumstance. Philippi was a Roman colony. Although at the outer edges of the empire, dwelling in the midst of those they considered foreigners, they were Roman citizens. That citizenship was a vital part of their lives and they never forget their loyalty was first and foremost to Rome.

politeuma, NT:4175 ... **commonwealth, state** ... *politeuomai* NT:4176 **be a citizen; govern the state; lead/conduct one's life** 1. The verb occurs twice in the NT (Acts 23:1; Phil 1:27). In his speech before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30-23:10) ... (23:1). Almost all translators follow the Vulgate, which renders *politeuomai* with ... “lead/conduct [one's] life” ... translated here without any political overtones. This is not, however, entirely convincing. Considering the great scene before the Sanhedrin (22:30 ff.) **political implications should come to expression as well**. Hence Schmidt's tr. (15) probably comes closest: **“In all good conscience up to this day I have been a citizen for (before) God.”**... Phil 1:27 is to be interpreted similarly: **“conduct your community life so that it is worthy of the gospel of Christ.”** One should not equate *politeuomai* with *peripateō*, which in Judaism replaces *politeuomai* in the sense of “live, conduct one's life.” Paul takes up a term here in

common usage in the Gentile Christian community in Philippi and adapts it thus into the vocabulary of the Church.” (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4175)

Just as the Philippians were a Roman colony in the midst of Macedonia, submitting to the laws of Rome and Roman citizens, so also are Christians. Our home, our government, our laws by which we live all are in heaven. That is why we are strangers and sojourners on the earth.

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.** 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that **they seek a homeland.** 15 And truly if they had called to mind **that country from which they had come out,** they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now **they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.** Therefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.** Heb 11:13-16*

*Beloved, I beg you as **sojourners and pilgrims,** abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, 1 Peter 2:11-12*

There is a lot more to the “is” in “our citizenship **is** in heaven” than those who speak English can see. It is not just a verb of being. It is a compound word that is literally translated to make a beginning under. It often involves “existence” or condition both previous to the circumstances mentioned and continuing after it.”

huparchō primarily, “to make a beginning” (hupo, “under,” arche, “a beginning”), denotes “to be, to be in existence,” involving an “existence” or condition both previous to the circumstances mentioned and continuing after it. This is important in Phil 2:6, concerning the deity of Christ. The phrase “being (existing) in the form (morphē, the essential and specific form and character) of God,” carries with it the two facts of the antecedent Godhood of Christ, previous to His incarnation, and the continuance of His Godhood at and after the event of His Birth (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, NT:5225),

Not only does the word speak of a condition both previous and continuing after it, but the tense of the verb also loudly proclaims it. Because it is in the Present Indicate Active, it is continuous action stretching back to its beginning and continuing on into its future.

Phil 3:20-21;

Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern...18 For many walk, ... the enemies of the cross of Christ

20. For our citizenship is in heaven;

The Holy Spirit now completes the comparison between those with the “mind” and “walk” of a devout Christian using Paul as their example and pattern and the “mind” and “walk” of worldly and ungodly setting their mind on earthly things. For the first group, the end is destruction. The choice each disciple on where to place their own “mind” and “walk” will determine if we can take our place in this passage or not.

Citizens of Heaven

Mind of the Mature

*Pressing toward the goal of the upward call
let us, as many as are mature, have **this mind;**
If in anything you are otherwise **minded**
Brethren, join in following my example
note those who **so walk,**
as you have **us for a pattern.**
our citizenship is in heaven waiting for a savior*

Citizens of Earth (This World)

Mind set on Earthly Things

***many walk,** of whom I have told you often,
and whose glory is in their shame
whose end is destruction,
whose god is their belly
they are the enemies of the cross of Christ
who **set their mind** on earthly things.*

“Citizenship” is a perfect word for them to understand and relate to since that is exactly how they were living in Philippi. As a Roman colony, at the outer edges of the empire, they were dwelling in the midst of those who were not Roman citizens. That citizenship was a vital part of their lives and they never forget their loyalty was first and foremost to Rome. Their language, customs, laws and values had come from and continued to be those of Rome. That is what this term meant and they

were in the fullest position to understand its fulness.

politeuma, NT:4175 ... **commonwealth, state** ... *politeuomai* NT:4176 **be a citizen; govern the state; lead/conduct one's life** 1. The **verb occurs twice in the NT** (Acts 23:1; Phil 1:27). In his speech before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30-23:10) ... (23:1). **Almost all translators follow the Vulgate, which renders *politeuomai* with ... "lead/conduct [one's] life" ... translated here without any political overtones. This is not, however, entirely convincing.** Considering the great scene before the Sanhedrin (22:30 ff.) **political implications should come to expression as well.** Hence Schmidt's tr. (15) probably comes closest: **"In all good conscience up to this day I have been a citizen for (before) God."**... Phil 1:27 is to be interpreted similarly: **"conduct your community life so that it is worthy of the gospel of Christ." One should not equate *politeuomai* with *peripateō*, which in Judaism replaces *politeuomai* in the sense of "live, conduct one's life."** Paul takes up a term here in common usage in the Gentile Christian community in Philippi and adapts it thus into the **vocabulary of the Church.**" (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4175)

Just as the Philippians were a Roman colony in the midst of Macedonia, so also are Christians in this world. Our home, our government, our laws by which we live all are in heaven. That is why Jesus' disciples were called strangers, sojourners and pilgrims on the earth.

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.** 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that **they seek a homeland.** 15 And truly if they had called to mind **that country from which they had come out,** they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now **they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.** Therefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.** Heb 11:13-16*

*Beloved, I beg you as **sojourners and pilgrims,** abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, 1 Peter 2:11-12*

There is a lot more to the "is" in "our citizenship **is** in heaven" than those who speak English can see. It is not just a verb of being. It is a compound word that is literally translated "exists," "a beginning has been made," "belong to," "existing circumstances, present advantages," "possession."

huparcho (hoop-ar'-kho); from NT:5259 and NT:756; to **begin under** (quietly), i.e. **come into existence (be present or at hand)**; expletively, **to exist** Strong's Numbers/Concordance Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. NT:5225)

huparcho **to begin, make a beginning**, absol. . 2. gen. to **make a beginning of, ... to begin doing, ... a beginning of it had been made, B. to begin to be, come into being, arise, spring up, ... 2. to be in existence, to be there, to be ready, III. to belong to, fall to one, accrue, ... 1. existing circumstances, present advantages ...2. what belongs to one, one's possessions, means..."** (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:5225)

huparcho "**to be in existence,**" and, in a secondary sense, "**to belong to,**" is used with this meaning in the neuter plural of the present participle with the article signifying one's "possessions," "the things which **he possesseth,**" Luke 12:15; (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:5225),

When this verb is also placed in the present indicative active, it is a continuous action in the present moment. Thus both in grammar and in definition, this citizenship is already in existence. It is our present possession and belongs to us. This is not the only passage that teaches that we have a dual existence. Although we cannot see it yet, our citizenship in heaven is already in existence and we have already come (Perfect Indicative Active) to heavenly Jerusalem.

*But **you have come to Mount Zion** and to **the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,** to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to **the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven,** to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:22-24*

Hence, just as those in Philippi were citizens of Rome and lived the life of those in Rome, we are citizens of heaven, living as those in heaven.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Lk.11:2

whence also we wait for a Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ:

From the same heaven where we are already citizens, is where (whence) we are eagerly expecting our Saviour. This is another element of the example and pattern of Paul. As he eagerly waited, so must we.

apekdechomai... assiduously and patiently to wait for, [Eng. wait it out]:..." (Thayer p 56; NT:553)
apekdechomai... await eagerly or expectantly... to look forward eagerly, to await expectantly. (Lou & Nida, NT:553)
apekdechomai... to expect, wait or look for... (Harper Analytical p. 37 NT:553)
apekdechomai...to await or eagerly expect... (Vine Vol 4 op 193; NT:553)
apekdechomai...to expect anxiously, look for, ...: (Liddell & Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon, NT 553)

We are eagerly waiting and expecting for Him to return at His second coming to bring in our resurrection, new heavens and new earth and a city prepared for us. Christ promises so much more than this.

eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1Cor. 1:7
 For we through the Spirit **eagerly wait** for the hope of righteousness by faith. Gal. 5:5
 To those who **eagerly wait** for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. Heb. 9:27
 For the earnest expectation of the creation **eagerly waits** for the revealing of the sons of God. Rom. 8:19
 we ourselves groan within ourselves, **eagerly waiting** for the adoption, the redemption of our body. Rom. 8:23
 But if we hope for what we do not see, **we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.** Rom. 8:25

21. who will transform our lowly body

The same words that were used to describe Jesus emptying Himself of the form of His glorious body to take on form of a bondservant in the likeness and appearance of a man are now, with slight modifications used to describe how He will transform our lowly body to be conformed to His glorious body. The roles will be reversed. He was in our form and returned to His form and now He will change our form to be conformed to His form.

being in the form (morphé) of God, taking the form (morphé) of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.
 8 And being found in appearance (schéma) as a man, Phil. 2:6-8

who will transform (sum-morphos) our lowly body that it may be conformed (meta-schématizō) to His glorious body, Phil. 3:21

Just as the Word remained the word even though He changed outward form, so also we will remain the same even though we change our outward form. Our essential being will not change. Our memories and who we are will remain. It is only our body that now needs to be redeemed.

*Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even **we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.** 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.* Rom. 8:23-25

At His return He will “transform” our lowly body. This compound word is made up of the prefix “meta” which means to change and *schema* which is our outward form. Thus our outward body made of flesh is going to be changed into an outer body of spirit.

“meta-schematizo,... The verb means to transform, “to alter,” “to change the outward appearance of a person or thing,” Kittel TDWNT 3345)

metascématizō, from metá (3326), denoting change of place or condition, and schématizō (n.f.), to form, which is from schéma (4976), shape, outward form. To transform, change the outward form or appearance of something. ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3345)

Jesus will begin with our lowly body, which for many will have already turned back to dust. Lowly is used to describe things that have a low rank, that are small, poor, or weak. This is the word the Holy Spirit chose to use regarding the body we are presently dwelling in.

“tapeinos... to live in low regions, Pind.; of stature or size, low, ... 2. of the condition of persons, brought down, humbled, submissive, ... of low rank, lowly, mean, ... small, poor, weak, ... to be poorly off, ...” (from Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:5011)

“tapeinoō... to make low, bring low... a. to level, reduce to a plain... b. metaph. to bring into a humble condition, reduce to meaner circumstances; i.e. a. to assign a lower rank or place to; to abase... c. to lower, depress, [Eng. humble]:... one’s soul, bring down one’s pride... to have a modest opinion of one’s self, to behave in an unassuming manner devoid of all haughtiness...” (Thayer p 614; 5013)

Jesus at His return will Himself change this lowly sin cursed body. It is important to note that the Holy Spirit wants us to know about the power and greatness of Jesus as the Word. It will be by His own power that all the bodies of the saints will be changed.

that it may be conformed to the body of his glory,

At the same time that our body is transformed it is also being “conformed.” Jesus is going to change the form our our present body to be the same form as the body of glory He not has.

súmmorphos "having like form with" (*sún* "with," *morphé* "form"), is used in Rom 8:29 and Phil 3:21 ... signifies "having the same form as another, conformed to"; (a) of the "conformity" of children of God "to the image of His Son," Rom 8:29; (b), of their future ... "conformity" to His body of glory, Phil. 3:21. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4832),

This verse when coupled with the other passages that reveal more about leave no doubt.

Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. 1Jn. 3:1-2

42 So also is the resurrection from the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power 44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45 And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. 47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. 1Cor. 15:44-49

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 1Cor. 15:51-53

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Col. 3:4

Taking a composite of all these passages, we learn some of the most amazing and clear passages on the resurrection and the glorious body we will receive. It will be conformed to Christ's own body, and as we see Him for the first time, we will be like Him. We have borne the image of Adam with a fleshly body. We shall bear the image of Jesus (the Word) with a spiritual body. It will be a spiritual body of incorruption, glory, power. In our natural body we are made of dust, but in our spiritual body, we will bear the image of the heavenly man. We will then know immortality!

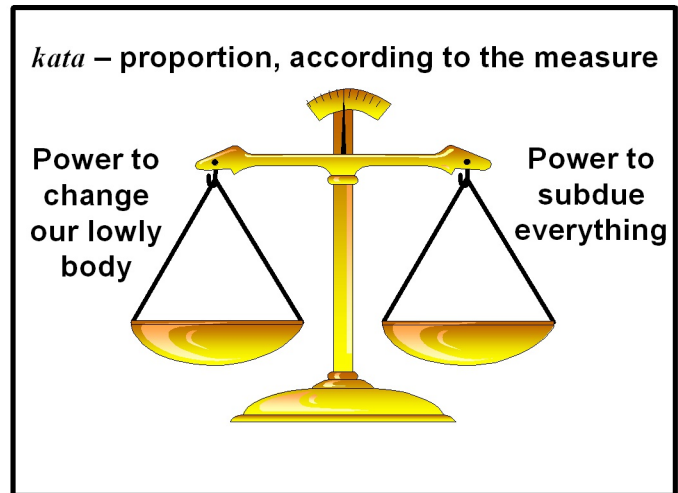
according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.

The comparison between the power that it will take to change our body to be conformed to His body is the same power He has already revealed to subdue everything to His will.

"kata,... with the Accusative... 3. it denotes reference, relation, proportion, of various sorts; a. distributively, indicating a succession of things following one another... b... as respects; with regard to; in reference to; so far as relates to; as concerning;...c. according to, agreeably to; in reference to agreement or conformity to a standard, in various ways (aa) according to anything as a standard, agreeably to...(bb) in proportion to, according to the measure of..." (Thayer' Greek Lexicon, NT:2596)

The power that subdued all things to Himself is first energy and then ability.

"*energeo, energeia, energema, energies* ... is found in the sense of "activity" or "energy"... It derives from *energōs* (which itself derives from *en ergo einai*) and denotes intr. "to be at work," "to act or start to act," and trans. "to set at work", to effect."..." (Kittel Vol 2 p 652-654)



This is the energy that it will take to change our lowly body into His glorious body. It is also the energy that was used in the material creation when he was able to subdue all things to Himself. Along with the energy is the ability. Everything that needed to be done, he not only had the power

to do it, but the ability and capability to do it. This would include not only the energy, but the knowledge wisdom and understanding to accomplish it.

"dunamai... to be able, have power, whether by virtue of one's own ability and resources, or of a state of mind, or through favorable circumstances, or by permission of law or custom... to be able to do something... to be able, capable, strong, powerful..." (Thayer, p. 158-159; 1410)

*dunamis ... words deriving from the stem **duna** - all have the basic meaning of "being able," of "capacity" in virtue of an ability; in contrast to *ischu* -, which stresses the factuality of the ability, the stress falls on being able. ... *dunamis* ... here means potency in contrast to *energeia* or *entelexeia*. As potency it is "possibility," "capacity," "ability." ...* (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:1411)

What did Jesus do to reveal His power to subdue everything?

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. Col. 1:16-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. Jn 1:1-3

But to the Son He says: ... "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; Heb. 1:8-11

This proves beyond any doubt that Jesus can subdue anything and everything. Jesus is the commander of all things. Everything is in submission to Him. "All things were created through Him and for Him."

*hupotasso ... primarily a military term, "to rank under" (*hupo*, "under," *tasso*, "to arrange"), denotes (a) "to put in subjection, to subject,"* (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5293)

This submission is full and complete in all realms. There is only one who is not subject to Jesus and that is God. Everything else, including the power to transform our lowly body and conform it to His glorious body is within that power.

For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. 1Cor. 15:25-28

The Word who become flesh and dwelt among us (Jesus) has power beyond all that we can dream. He will one day soon exert some of it in the resurrection of our bodies. It is no wonder that Paul wanted so badly to know Him. There is none other in heaven or on earth like Him.