

FRIEND OR FOE?

Philippians 3:17-21

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Big Idea: A friend of the cross is not identified by a perfect life, but by a life increasingly shaped by Christ.

I. Find and Follow Godly Mentors | *Know whom you should follow*

A. Team up together to imitate godly examples.

Follow believers marked by humility, intentionality, intensity, clarity, and spiritual stability.

B. Hold one another accountable to right living and right thinking.

Watch carefully how faithful believers consistently live, and allow others to observe and correct your own walk.

Application

- ☐ Who is a godly believer you are intentionally observing and imitating?
- ☐ Are your closest influences helping you pursue Christ?
- ☐ Is your walk with Christ worthy of imitation by someone else?

II. Be Alert to the Enemies of the Cross | *Know whom you should not follow*

A. They threaten the unity of the church.

Some appear to be friends of the cross until the direction of their lives reveals that they are walking in the opposite way.

B. They threaten the purity of the church.

Their end is destruction; their god is their belly; they glory in shame; and their minds are fixed on earthly things.

World's Lie	Seize the day	Feed your appetite	Follow your heart
Biblical Warning	Your end matters	Christ must rule desire	Submit your heart to Christ

Application

- ☐ What appetite, desire, or earthly pursuit is competing for control of your life?
- ☐ Have you begun to excuse what God's Word condemns?
- ☐ When your feelings conflict with Scripture, do you follow your heart or submit your heart to Christ?

FRIEND OR FOE? — SERMON GUIDE

III. Remind One Another of Our Shared Identity in Christ | *Know who we are because of Christ*

A. We are separated.

Our citizenship is in heaven; we belong to another kingdom.

B. We are saved.

We eagerly await our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. We will be transformed.

Christ will change our lowly bodies to be like His glorious body.

D. We must surrender.

The One who will subject all things to Himself has power to rule every area of our lives.

Resurrection Hope: Joni Eareckson Tada

After decades of paralysis, Joni has said that the first thing she longs to do with her resurrected legs is kneel before Jesus in worship. Her joy does not deny suffering; it rests in the certainty that suffering is temporary, Christ is faithful, and resurrection is certain.

Application

- ☐ Do your priorities reveal that you are living as a citizen of heaven or of this world?
- ☐ How should the promise of a transformed body change your response to suffering, weakness, aging, and death?
- ☐ What area of your life do you need to surrender to the power and authority of Jesus Christ?

Enemy of the Cross vs. Friend of the Cross

Enemy of the Cross	Friend of the Cross
Resists repentance and self-denial	Trusts Christ and embraces the cross
Controlled by appetites	Christ is Lord over desires
Glories in shame	Glories in Christ
Mind set on earthly things	Mind set on heavenly things
Lives for self-gratification	Practices self-denial and sacrificial love
Headed toward destruction	Awaiting transformation and glory

Personal Response

The person I need to learn from is: _____

The worldly desire or lie I need to reject is: _____

The area I need to surrender to Christ is: _____