

## Philippians

### Welcome

[Here are some good self-assessment thoughts/questions](#) that will tie in with our discussion.

1. Suppose your life could be summed up into one sentence. What would that sentence be?
2. Complete this statement: When I see a Christian, I see \_\_\_\_\_.  
When others see me, they see \_\_\_\_\_.

### Philippians 3:17-4:9

**Introduction:** Imitation plays a significant role in childhood development. At every stage of development, a child learns by watching, listening and doing, playing hours of games, repeating jokes to others and mimicking words from songs. We learn social rules by imitation, studying facial expressions and body language—and, not surprisingly, a big part of learning language is through imitation. Take for example our son Miles. His favorite activity right now is to move the vacuum cleaner up and down the hallway. This last week he took it one step further and tried to plug the vacuums' cord into the wall. We've never spoken or explained to him what a vacuum is—he has apparently been watching our activity and now is practicing imitation.

Can you think of something that you have imitated from your parents or someone else? Can you think of something someone else has imitated from you?

### Read Philippians 3:17-4:1

Philippi was a Roman colony, and it's likely that many of the local people in that area of northern Greece saw Rome and the colonial administration. In 42 BC, about a hundred years before Paul came to the area, Philippi was the setting for one of the great battles in the Roman civil war that had broken out after the death of Julius Caesar. The two victorious generals, Antony and Octavian (the future Emperor Augustus), had found themselves with a lot of soldiers in northern Greece with nothing more to do. They certainly didn't want to bring them all back to Rome, or even to Italy. It would be dangerous to have thousands of soldiers suddenly arriving in the capital. They gave them land in and around Philippi, making it a colony of Rome.

How would Roman influence be seen tangibly in Philippi? 1. Most citizens would have been retired soldiers who had served their time—21 years. 2. Roman dress was worn. 3. Roman

magistrates governed them. 4. The Latin language was spoken. 5. Roman justice followed. 6. Roman morals in place.

**When Paul says, “Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus”, how do you think this would have been received in Philippi?**

**This passage has often been cited as a place encouraging escapism. What is escapism? It is the idea that life on earth is so bad that we can’t wait until the day that we can go to heaven and get away from it all. Have you heard anyone express this? I think what Paul had in mind was the opposite of escapism. I believe his idea here was that Philippi would be more a colony of \_\_\_\_\_ than a colony of Rome.**

### [Read Philippians 4:2-4:9](#)

Conflict is best dealt with sooner rather than later! Paul mentions by name two individuals—Euodia and Syntyche, who had a falling out. It is significant to see that when there was a quarrel in the church at Philippi, Paul mobilized the whole resources of the church to mend it. Paul thought no effort too great to maintain the peace of the Church. A quarreling church is not a church at all—Christ is shut out. No person can be at peace with God, but quarreling with his/her neighbor.

All we know about Euodia and Syntyche was that they were in conflict. These two are forever known as breakers of the peace. Suppose our life was to be summed up in one sentence, what would that sentence be?

When I see a Christian, I see \_\_\_\_\_.

[Paul’s answer?](#) The marks of a Christian are:

1. **Joy--**
2. **Moderation—a hard word to translate here. Wycliffe—*patience*. Tyndale—*softness* Cranmer—*softness* Other ideas—*modesty*. More modern versions—*forbearance*. “Will meet a person half-way.”**
3. **Prayer—vs. 6. Anyone would have been anxious with the ancient gods way of handling people in Paul’s day. Paul’s God relieves anxiety.**

4. **Peace**—vs. 7.

5. **All of verses 8 and 9. Honesty and Truth.** These are the opposite of what today's media often portrays. What is in the news? Anything that is untrue, unholy, unjust, impure, ugly, of ill repute, vicious and blameworthy. Is this really a true representation of God's good and beautiful world?

How are we doing with portraying these marks?

How are you doing with portraying these marks?

[Closing](#)