

Damsel in Distress

#4 - Settling for cheap imitations (Phil. 3:17-21)

I. The Passage

In this passage, Paul is contrasting two kinds of people: the “earthly minded” (3:18-19) vs. the “heavenly minded” (3:20-21)

A. The “earthly minded” – those focused on this life “the here, the now, the me, the mine!” They have a horizontal perspective – looking around.

1. They are called “enemies of the cross”

1 Cor. 1:17-18 “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. 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.”

2. Their destiny is destruction

Prov. 11:3 “The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.”

3. Their god is their stomach

Rom. 16:18 “For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.”

4. Their glory is their shame

Eph. 5:12 “For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.”

B. The “heavenly minded” – those focused on the next life: Pleasing the Lord, laying up treasures in heaven, others oriented. They have a vertical perspective – looking up.

1. They glory in the cross

Gal. 6:14 “May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

2. They belong to “a city...whose architect and builder is God.” (Heb. 11:10)

3. They are “strangers and pilgrims” on earth

Heb. 11:13 “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.”

1 Pet. 2:11 “Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.”

4. They are being changed...transformed.

Phil 3:21 “who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”

5. They eagerly await Christ’s second coming (See Luke 12:37-40)

II. The problem

Women in our society are too often settling for “cheap imitations” –

- A. We are being ruled by our “appetites.” Modern women are often “Christians with epicurean tendencies.” Our focus is on “eating, drinking and being merry!”

Consider our intense focus on:

1. Beauty and fashion

See 1 Peter 3:3-4 and 1 Tim. 2:9-10

2. Wellness (Diet and exercise)

1 Tim. 4:8 “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”

3. Entertainment

Ecc. 2:10 “I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor.”

4. Money

Ecc. 5:10 “Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is ever satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.”

1 Tim. 6:10 “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

- B. We're spending a lot of time and effort "shining brass." See 1 Kings 10:14-17, 2 Chron. 9:15-16, 12:9-11
- C. We forget that a day reckoning is coming. See Matt. 24:38-39

III. So what? We need a plan

Gal 5:16-17 "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please."

1 Pet. 2:11 "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshy lusts, which wage war against the soul."

Be heavenly minded!!!

- A. **Think like a "tourist"**: "I'm only visiting here" "I'm only passing through"

1 Chron. 29:15 "For we are sojourners before Thee, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope."

- B. **Pack like a "tourist"**: "I need to pack lightly"

Phil. 3:13-14 "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing I *do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- C. **Eat (consume) like a "tourist"**: "I'm not 'used to' these rich foods. I need to eat sparingly."

Enjoy God's blessings. Don't indulge in them!

1 Tim. 6:6, 8 "But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment...And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content."