Good News.....Bad News

Philippians 3:18-21 (NKJV)

Please turn with me in your Bibles to Philippians the third chapter. And for our text we will be reading verses 18-21.

PHILIPPIANS 3:18-21 (NKJV)

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

P R A Y E R

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ILLUSTRATION

A lawyer went to visit a MURDER SUSPECT in jail, whom he was defending in a major trial.

Separated by a security glass, the lawyer said over the phone to his client, “I’ve got some GOOD NEWS and some BAD NEWS. “

THE BAD NEWS is they found traces of your blood all over the crime scene.

The defendant said, “Well what's the good news?”

The lawyer said, “The good news is your blood cholesterol levels are great!”

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In our scripture text the Apostle Paul gives us some GOOD NEWS and some BAD NEWS.

Let's begin with....... 

I. The Bad News (v. 18)

v.18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

1. Paul is revealing news to the Philippian Christians that is so heartbreaking it has moved him to tears.

And that bad news is: Many live as “enemies of the cross.”

2. Paul's tears are not for what these “enemies of the cross” are doing to him, but what they are doing to themselves. These “enemies of the cross” despise the message that salvation is through Christ alone.
3. I know I'm not telling you anything you don't already know when I say, we are living in a world that is extremely hostile towards everything you and I believe and stand for.

4. These “enemies of the cross” hate Christ......they hate the teachings of Christ......and they hate anyone who follows Christ.

   - The “enemies of the cross” hate our preaching and teaching that Jesus Christ is man's only hope of salvation.

   - The “enemies of the cross” hate our Christian values and moral standards.

   - The “enemies of the cross” hate it when we speak out against the godlessness and immorality in our society.

   **ILLUSTRATION**

   Just recently we heard the awful story in the news about the attack of Islamic terrorists on that college in Kenya, Africa. The terrorists specifically targeted Christian students, killing 147 and severely wounding 79 others.

5. As the time of Christ's imminent return draws nearer moment by moment, day by day, we are going to see more and more of these kinds of horrific acts against Christians.
6. Some of the most powerful and influential people in our American society are “enemies of the cross.”

* Most of the people that star in and produce the TV Shows and movies we watch are “ENEMIES OF THE CROSS.”

* Many of the writers and editors that print the magazines and newspapers we read are “ENEMIES OF THE CROSS.”

* Many of the judges and lawyers that preside over our legal system are “ENEMIES OF THE CROSS.”

* Many of the politicians that govern our country are “ENEMIES OF THE CROSS.”

* Many of our EDUCATORS that teach in our Colleges and Universities are “ENEMIES OF THE CROSS.”

7. In VERSE 19 Paul lists FOUR THINGS all “enemies of the cross” share in common:

(A) First of all, THEY SHARE A COMMON DESTINY (vs.18b, 19a)

vs. 18 b, 19a They are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction.

All “enemies of the cross” reject salvation through Christ. They have rejected the “narrow road” that leads to eternal life, and have chosen instead the “wide road” that leads to eternal death.

These “enemies of the cross” may have great power and great influence in this world, but one day they will all dwell together in a place of eternal torment where their power and influence will be meaningless.
(B) Secondly, **THEY SHARE A COMMON DESIRE** (v. 19b)

v. 19b “their god is their stomach”

What Paul is saying about these “enemies of the cross” is that their whole lives revolves around satisfying their sensual CRAVINGS and DESIRES.

The enemies of the cross crave MATERIAL THINGS and MONEY ......they crave POWER and PRESTIGE..........the crave SEXUAL PLEASURE and DRUNKENNESS......

Their “god is their stomach” .......they live to please and satisfy themselves.......they are the “god of their own lives.”

(C) Thirdly, **THEY SHARE A COMMON DEGENERACY** (v.19c)

v.19 c “Their glory is their shame.”

This simply means they boast about their sin and wickedness. They boast about their weekend drinking binges and party lifestyle. They boast about who they have slept with. They boast about the drugs they have experimented with. They boast about the laws they have broken. They boast about the people they have got even with. They boast about the bars and nightclubs they frequent.

Enemies of the cross mock everything that is good.... decent......and holy, while GLAMORIZING and GLORIFYING everything that is SINFUL, VILE, and WICKED.
Fourthly, THEY SHARE A COMMON DELUSION (v. 19d)

v. 19d “They set their minds on earthly things.”

Enemies of the cross never think about the eternal because their minds are blinded by the delusion that heaven is here on earth.

The “enemies of the cross” live by such delusional philosophies as:

- “Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you may die.”
- “Life is a party, so party hard!”
- “You only go around once in life, so you have to grab for all the gusto you can!”

8. And so Paul is moved to tears, he weeps bitterly when he thinks about how these “enemies of the cross” are willing to forfeit eternal life for the worthless, temporary pleasures of this world.

Well after sharing this BAD NEWS with the Philippian Christians, Paul now gives them......

II. The Good News (vs. 20, 21)

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.
ILLUSTRATION

Some of my favorite commercials on TV are those GEIKO INSURANCE commercials, not the ones with the gecko lizard, but the ones where they use the good news - bad news approach.

One of my favorites was the one where the BASEBALL PITCHER had “lost his stuff” and was getting pounded by the opposing team. The Manager calls “time” and strolls out to the mound to deliver the bad news to the pitcher that he is taking him out of the game. But before the pitcher leaves the mound, the manager says, “But I do have some good news........I just saved hundreds of dollars on my car insurance with GEIKO.”

1. After Paul delivered “the bad news” to the Philippians that “many live as enemies of the cross of Christ” Paul then delivers the good news.

(A) First, Paul delivers the good news that WE HAVE THE HOPE OF A HOME IN HEAVEN.

(v.20a) “For our citizenship is in heaven.”

Remember all the “enemies of the cross” share a common destiny of eternal death in hell. But we are in Christ share a common destiny of ETERNAL LIFE IN HEAVEN.

Paul is reminding us that no matter how bad things get in this world; no matter how many short-term victories the enemies of the cross win over Christians, we do not need to despair because one day we are going to kiss this old sinful world goodbye and go to our eternal home in heaven.

“This world is not my home, I’m just a passin’ through; my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue; the angels beckon me from heaven’s open door, and I can’t feel at home in this world any more.”
Secondly, Paul gives us the good news that **WE HAVE THE HOPE OF CHRIST’S RETURN.** *(v. 20b)*

**v. 20b** “.....we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the LORD Jesus Christ.”

**ILLUSTRATION:** On my screen saver on my cell phone I have the message: **COME LORD JESUS** in all capital letters. That message is a daily reminder to me of that great HOPE we have as Christians, and that is CHRIST could return at any moment, day or night, to take us out of this world to live forever in His presence.

Notice Paul says, “we also **eagerly wait for the Savior.**” Have you ever been expecting loved ones to come in from out of town or out of state for the Christmas holidays or for a big family reunion? Remember how you looked out the window every few minutes to see them pulling up in your drive. **You were eagerly awaiting their arrival.**

That is how you and I ought to be waiting on Christ. We ought to be eagerly awaiting the day when He breaks through the clouds. We should be looking forward to His coming with great anticipation and excitement.

Paul is reminding us not to get so distracted by all the wicked things “the enemies of the cross” are doing here on earth that we lose our **joyful anticipation of Christ's return!**

**WE HAVE THE HOPE OF A HOME IN HEAVEN.**
**WE HAVE THE HOPE OF CHRIST’S RETURN.**
(C) And the third piece of “good news” Paul gives us is **WE HAVE THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION.**

v. 20b, 21a  “We also eagerly wait for the Savior, the LORD Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body;

Over the last thirty seven years I have conducted many funerals. Many of those funerals were for Christians who left this world with the HOPE of their RESURRECTION to eternal life.

But I have also conducted a number of funerals for those who left this world with NO HOPE of eternal life. In a physical sense, “the grave was the end of the road” for those people. But in a spiritual sense, the grave is not the end of the road, for one day those who died without Christ will have to appear before the Great White Throne Judgment of God to receive their eternal death sentence.

Isn’t it comforting to know that “the grave is not the end of the road” for us? Isn't it comforting to know that one day the grave will give up the bodies of our deceased loved ones who died in Christ.

One day the LORD is going to give us a “new change of clothes.” We will cast aside these old earthly garments that were prone to sickness, disease, pain, and death, and we will be given a brand new glorious body that will never again experience the sorrows and pains of this life.

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CONCLUSION

I remember years ago reading about an entrepreneur who started up a NEWSPAPER BUSINESS with the goal of printing nothing but GOOD NEWS. There were no articles about crimes that had been committed......no articles about accidents that had occurred. The paper didn’t even have an obituary section. Now one would think people would enjoy reading a paper like that; but the publisher under-estimated how much our human nature “feeds off” of bad news. And the paper went out of business less than a year after it was started.

In this world filled with so much “bad news” let us be thankful for the good news of the gospel!

WE HAVE THE HOPE OF A HOME IN HEAVEN
WE HAVE THE HOPE OF CHRIST’S RETURN
WE HAVE THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION