

# PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In  
The Lord!

## How to be an Enemy of Jesus

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Lesson Thirty-Eight

# Philippians

## Rejoice In The Lord!

**Lesson Goal:** To encourage students to live up to God's calling...His expectations.

**Scriptures:** Philippians 3:18, 19

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

Philippians 3:18

### How to be an Enemy of Jesus

As we saw in our last lesson, Paul was encouraging the church at Philippi to walk according to Paul's example. In the eighteenth verse, he says that some choose to walk another road. These are people Paul had mentioned to the Philippians in the past. He said that he was now mentioning them again in tears.

Here we have this man, this great apostle, who had suffered all kinds of pain and who was in prison as he wrote this letter, telling the Philippians that what really brings him to tears is people who disrespect the cross of Christ.\*

He calls them "enemies of the cross of Christ." What are the primary lessons of, or meanings in, the cross of Christ? Obviously, humility and self-sacrifice. Jesus, according to our earlier study (2:7), humbled Himself and went to the cross as a sacrifice. The first thing, then, that we know about these enemies of Christ is that they were not humble. But also, their "god is their stomach." What an odd thing to say. What can it mean?

Most think that it means that they let their feelings and desires be what they worship, rather than worshipping God. Whatever they want: too much food, illegal drugs, or more money than is necessary are what lead them along in life, not God.

He says that their "glory is in their shame." This is an even more difficult idea to understand. Probably it means that these people think it's "spiritual" to be free to do anything, just because they are Christians. Some of the people at Philippi were convinced that once they were Christians, God would forgive any sin, so they could do just about anything and it not be considered bad. Paul addressed this idea in Romans 6:1. There he says that it is a terrible idea to sin more so that God's grace can increase. He goes on to say that our glory ought to be in the fact of Jesus' resurrection. You can't glory in something that you do if you glory in Jesus' resurrection. If you glory in something that you do, you become an enemy of Jesus.

He also said that their mind was "on earthly things." Their thinking was earthbound. They weren't giving any thought to the things of God. Paul told the Colossians that they should "set their mind on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and

# Philippians

## Rejoice In The Lord!

your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” (Colossians 3:2, 3) If you focus on God, your mind is in the right place and you aren’t an enemy of Jesus.

He says of these folks that their “destiny is destruction.” What is your destiny? Most of us like to think that our destination is something good. We want to live a successful life. We want to have a family, a good job, to be respected, and live happy. That is all good. However, how you do that is most important. If you accomplish that without considering God and His will for your life, your destiny is destruction.

This “destruction” refers to the judgment of God which will at some time in the future, in all fairness, send them to eternal destruction. It also means that what they have gained in wealth, good food, or any other thing that makes one feel happy or full, is all the reward they will get. One can lose their wealth, run out of food, and be denied the other pleasures referred to here. All will be lost! But, when we put God first and live our lives according to His will, we will experience joy that is beyond what any human can make happen on their own.

If you want to be an enemy of Jesus, just do it your way and ignore His cross!

\*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.



### Teaching Tips:

1. Paul takes this very seriously. He indicated this by first saying, “I have often told you before, and now say it again.” He is consistent and insistent with this message. Then, he said “say it again *even with tears*.” This is the only specific reference to Paul’s personal weeping in the Bible. This should say something about how painful it is for Paul to speak this harshly about the enemies of Christ.
2. This is a painful lesson to teach. You should not find any joy in teaching about enemies of Jesus.
3. Songs about the Cross of Jesus, honoring God, following God’s will, and glorifying God are appropriate: Maybe, “All that I need is You, Jesus”
4. Pray with your students: Ask God to show you His will for your life. Ask Him to teach you the best things in life and protect you from temptation that will lead you to do things that lead to destruction.
5. Though this lesson’s title is negative, it would be good not to dwell too long on the side of disobedience. Stress the positive side (emphasis on Student Worksheet), which Paul will enthusiastically address in our next lesson, “Citizenship in Heaven.”

# Philippians

## Rejoice In The Lord!

### *Student Worksheet*

Lesson Thirty-Eight

Page 4 of 4

**For Memory:** “For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ.”  
Philippians 3:18

### How to be an Enemy of Jesus

=This great apostle, who had suffered all kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ and who was in prison as he wrote this letter, is telling the Philippians that what really brings him to \_\_\_\_\_ is people who disrespect the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

=The first thing that we know about these \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ is that they were not \_\_\_\_\_. But also, their “god is their \_\_\_\_\_.”

=Whatever they want: too much \_\_\_\_\_, illegal \_\_\_\_\_, or more money than is necessary are what \_\_\_\_\_ them along in life, not \_\_\_\_\_.

=You can’t glory in something that you do if you glory in Jesus’ \_\_\_\_\_. If you glory in something that you do, you become an \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.

If you focus on God, your mind is in the right place...you aren’t an enemy of \_\_\_\_\_.

=When we put God \_\_\_\_\_ and live our lives according to His \_\_\_\_\_, we will experience \_\_\_\_\_ that is beyond what any human can make happen on their \_\_\_\_\_.

=If you want to be an \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus, just do it your way and ignore His \_\_\_\_\_!

### How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer, and be determined to live for him all the rest of your life.