



July 28, 2019

# DIGGING DEEPER

Philippians 3:17-4:1

**The purpose of this document** is to help us  
take the word beyond our Sunday gathering  
and to **think through the practical**  
**implications of the Scriptures** and then to  
**be intentional about living the word out.**

[michael@vintagenc.com](mailto:michael@vintagenc.com)

Vintage Church Durham



## Copy Christ-like Character

Philippians 3:17-19; Philippians 2:19-30; Philippians 4:9; Romans 12:1-2; Matthew 6:19-25

### Questions Worth Asking

With the DIY (do it yourself) craze, there seems to be an unspoken expectation that we can figure things out on our own. Asking for help isn't seen as a strength but rather as someone not trying. Paul doesn't subscribe to this mode of thinking when directing believers to press into the presence of God and hold true to the word of God. The instructions from this faithful leader to fledgling followers is to copy those who exemplify Christ-like character. Pursing the promise of a future hope is not something you can DIY. There is only one person who came from heaven to earth and made it back...Jesus. Therefore, there is only one person's instructions that we can follow to make it to the place being prepared for us. And Jesus commands us to obey his word and he gives us leaders to guide us on this journey. We must be willing to copy men and women of God rather than trying to figure the faith out on our own.

1. What about this life makes it so difficult to live a life that lines up with the word of the Lord?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- Why is it so difficult to ask for help or take directions from others?
- How has your life been impacted when you took your eyes off of the things of God?
- What did/do you recognize about your thought pattern in the times when you were more concerned about earthly things?

2. How has your life been enriched by the godly influences that you have looked up to and followed the example of?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- In what ways has asking for help improved your quality of life and/or approach to dealing with things?
- What have those you look up to taught you about being a copy-cat?
- What way thinking needs to be renewed so you can position yourself to pursue the presence of God?

### Steps Worth Taking

Here are some steps that will help you copy those who copy Christ...

1. Write out the top five priorities that you have placed in your life based on importance.
  - a. This requires sincerity. Please be honest.
    - i. If you are having trouble ranking, think about which ones you focus on the most or stress over the most.
    - ii. Share your top five and ask someone who knows you to rank them based on how you live.
  - b. Rearrange the list based on what is a priority to Christ.
  - c. Pursue the top priority and make everything else a distant second ([Mark 12:30-31](#)).
2. Identify someone you know or see that is chasing after Christ. Chase after him/her.
  - a. That may mean following from a distance (reading a biography/autobiography)
  - b. If you know the person, ask for a moment of their time (coffee or a call) to see how they are living for Christ.
  - c. Follow the example that he/she/they are living out.

# Celestial Citizenship

Philippians 3:20-21; Hebrews 11

## Questions Worth Asking

The believer has a place where they belong, but that space doesn't exist here on earth. Our home is heaven. Jesus has prepared a room just for you and for me. We are simply passing through here on earth. Yet we sometimes live like we want to continually extend our visas because we are simply enjoying ourselves way too much to leave. This kind of mindset causes us to take our eyes off the prize of the upward call in Christ Jesus and puts us in a position to drift. We must not forget that our citizenship is in heaven. The believer should eagerly and longingly look forward to the day when our lowly body is transformed to be like Jesus' glorious body and we get to be with him in heaven for eternity. This type of anticipation and expectation should fuel the way we live out our faith in a crooked and twisted generation (Philippians 2:15). We must live in the present with our future hope always at the forefront of our mind. Keep pressing toward home.

1. How does past and/or present hurts distracted you from living based on your future home?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- What things (people, items, future plans, etc.) cause you to not look forward to leaving the place where you live (earth)?
- After all the let downs people have experienced in this life, why do so many people still want to have an extended stay here?
- In what ways does your lifestyle choices sometimes communicate a mind that is set on earthly things?

2. How does a focus on our heavenly home provide a perspective that gives you the strength to endure the challenges that come with not being a citizen of the world?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- Why should believers living in this world be excited about what is to come?
- What do you need to do to position yourself to be more focused on where we are going instead of where we are?
- What do you imagine a life that is lived worthy of the gospel, a life the world isn't worthy of, would look like in our Western culture?

## Steps Worth Taking

Here are some steps that will help you continue to look forward to our homecoming...

1. **PLEASE** read and meditate on [Hebrews 11](#).
2. Eliminate distractions and/or distracted (multitasking) habits from your lifestyle.
  - a. Stop trying to do two things at the same time (i.e. don't text and drive)
  - b. Cut back on the over consumption of anything of this world (i.e. cut back on entertainment)
    - i. If you are spending more time watching television than pursuing the Lord (reading the word and praying), there needs to be a switch in time.
  - c. Singular focused living helps us to remember who we are living for and why we do what we do.
3. **LOVE GOD MORE!!!**; more than anything and anyone else. Spend time in his word and in prayer. If he isn't your most important relationship, he won't be your greatest priority. You won't be passionate about that which you don't pursue.

## Standing with the Savior

Philippians 4:1; Philippians 1:27-30; James 1:22-25; Matthew 7:24-27

### Questions Worth Asking

Knowing what our future holds and who holds our future should compel us to stand firm in the faith as we journey with Jesus through this life. Our lives shouldn't be lived in a haphazard, hodgepodge approach. The Lord hasn't asked us to figure out the faith. This isn't a DIY project. There should be a determined intentionality in every action we take, in every step we make. The Lord has provided the blue print, and his directions are better than any GPS device we can conjure up. We simply have to hear and do what he commands. If we are willing to follow the Lord's lead, we will make it to the place that he has promised and prepared for us. Our willingness to partner with Christ and copy Christ-like character guarantees us a place spot in heaven. Obeying Love will provide a firm foundation that will ensure we aren't broken down and separated from our Savior. Take a firm stance on the word of God and you will be saved.

1. Why does it seem okay to make concessions on our convictions for Christ at times?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- When hearing the truth of God's word, why is it imperative that we don't stop to consider the potential drawbacks of obedience?
- What thoughts or imagery come to mind when thinking about a firm foundation? Relate that to how your faith in Christ should provide the same support in the life you live on earth.
- Why wouldn't you compromise on the integrity of a foundation? Consider these truths for our faith.

3. How has doing the truth of God's word emboldened and empowered you in your faith?

Digging Deeper Discussion:

- In what ways have you seen God's faithfulness displayed when you were faithful to do what he said?
- How have you come to know that God is faithful to perform his promises?
- How does God's faithfulness in the past inform the way you live in the present?

### Steps Worth Taking

Here are some steps that will help you stand firm in the faith you confess...

1. Share with someone a time in your life that you experienced the faithfulness of God.
2. Find a story in the Bible of a time when God displayed his faithfulness (i.e. David becoming king, Israel leaving Egypt, etc.).
  - a. **Read and meditate on [Hebrews 13:7-8](#)**. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.
3. Think of the outcomes of your plans (absent of God) verses God's plans. Choose whose plan(s) you will follow going forward.