

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL
007 - LESSON – SUNDAY - February 8, 2026

A HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP

Philippians 4:6 (NKJV) “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

Most important, we need not place our hopes in earthly systems of government, which regularly disappoint us. As Christians, we are citizens of God’s heavenly kingdom. And with that citizenship comes privileges, wonderful privileges.

ROLE MODELS

All of us have, at one time or another, found people we admire and want to emulate. For children, it’s especially important that they have good role models. Ideally, this would be their father and mother. As they grow, they will find other role models, perhaps connected with their chosen career or even in biographies they have read. They can also learn how various Bible characters dealt with challenges and compare them to their own life experiences.

Unfortunately, in today’s media, bad role models abound. We are bombarded with clickbait—stories detailing the salacious problems and messed-up lives of celebrities. Paul’s readers in Philippi, though of course not dealing with the internet, nevertheless faced similar challenges.

How are good and bad role models described in this passage? What keys are given to distinguish between them?

Philippians 3:17-19 (NKJV) “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. (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.”

We must not miss Paul’s love toward those with whom he disagrees—he weeps over them! Notice also that he doesn’t call them *his* enemies but “enemies of the cross of Christ” (*Phil. 3:18*). Paul recognized that much larger issues were at stake, namely, how the cross breaks down barriers and places us all on the same level, as sinners in need of a Savior.

Ephesians 2:11-14 (NKJV) “ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— (12) that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (13) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood

of Christ. (14) For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation.”

1. Remember Where You Came From — Life Without Christ Is Life Without Hope

“You were without Christ... having no hope and without God in the world.” (v.12)

Meaning:

Paul reminds the Gentile us of our PAST spiritual condition — alienated, outside the covenant, and without access to God’s promises. He calls them to remember their hopelessness apart from Christ so they will never take His grace for granted.

Lesson:

- Remembering who we were before Christ deepens gratitude for who we are in Him.
- Forgetting our past alienation can make us forget the price of redemption.

Supporting Scriptures:

- *Romans 5:8* — “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - *Isaiah 59:2* — “Your iniquities have separated you from your God.”
 - *1 Peter 2:10* — “Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God.”
-

2. Rejoice in What Christ Has Done — His Blood Brings Us Near

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” (v.13)

Meaning:

The dividing distance between humanity and God has been erased through the sacrifice of Jesus. What rituals and laws could never achieve, His blood accomplished — reconciliation, acceptance, and peace.

Lesson:

Our nearness to God is not earned but received through the blood of Christ. Every believer—no matter their background—is equally accepted at the cross.

Supporting Scriptures:

- *Hebrews 10:19–20* — “Having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.”
 - *Colossians 1:20* — “Having made peace through the blood of His cross.”
 - *John 14:6* — “No one comes to the Father except through Me.”
-

3. Rejoice in Who Christ Has Made Us — One People of Peace

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation.” (v.14)

Meaning:

Through Christ, Jews and Gentiles are now united into one spiritual family.

The **“wall of separation”** — symbolized by the barrier in the Temple that excluded Gentiles — has been destroyed. **Christ removes both *spiritual alienation* and *social division*.**

Lesson:

The gospel **doesn’t just reconcile us to God — it reconciles us to one another.**

Any prejudice, pride, or barrier that divides believers has no place in Christ’s body.

Supporting Scriptures:

- **Galatians 3:28** — “There is neither Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
- **Colossians 3:11** — “Christ is all and in all.”
- **John 17:21** — “That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me.”

Summary Thought:

- **Before Christ** — separated.
- **Through Christ** — reconciled.
- **In Christ** — unified.

Jesus **doesn’t just give peace; He is our peace**, bridging every divide between God and man, and between person and person.