***People to Shun - PH76-01

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 3:17-19***

We are studying Philippians 3:19. This is the third segment of people to follow and to shun. A fundamental principle of Bible doctrine is the fact of the existence of human and divine viewpoint in the thinking of mankind. The apostle Paul has been urging the Philippian Christians to imitate his divine viewpoint outlook. He does this because divine viewpoint is normal. Any other outlook is abnormal. So Paul says, "If you want to have good mental health, and if you want to be a normal person, you must function on divine viewpoint principles. This is what he does, and he holds himself up as an example to imitate.

The apostle Paul also urges the Philippians to identify and to pattern themselves after Christians who share this divine viewpoint mental attitude of the apostle Paul. We are now going to study some of the people who do not share that viewpoint, and who consequently, should be shunned or avoided.

We studied the nature of human viewpoint thinking. We found that human viewpoint turns a person away from recognizing God as Creator, and as the sustainer of this creation. Instead, man is viewed as being autonomous, and as being independent of any force outside of himself. We found that human viewpoint creates its own concepts of truth, and it declares these to be absolute truths. These are arrived at by fallen mentalities who are under the control of the old sin nature, and it simply is an expression of the majority opinion of people. Furthermore, human viewpoint gives false interpretation to observable phenomena. Thus, we have the concept of evolution as the explanation of the origin of the material universe and of life. Human viewpoint looks at these natural phenomena and comes up with false interpretations for them.

Human viewpoint thinking has degraded all reality and produced all of the human misery which is in the world today. Please remember that when God finished creating the world, He said that everything He had made was good; that it functioned perfectly; and, that there was no end that that would produce except pure unadulterated happiness for all of humanity. So the fact that humanity is not happy, and that it does not function well, is not the result of what God created. All of the misery that's in the world today has been put in there by human viewpoint. It's the result of man's thinking.

The human viewpoint that is in the minds of people can only be reversed by the divine viewpoint which is gained through the learning of Bible doctrine. One of the things that makes it so very hard to reverse human viewpoint, and the consequences of human viewpoint, is that everybody is used to it. Therefore, when somebody comes along in any phase of life, whether it's spiritual life; whether it's academic life; whether it's education; or, whether it's on the political scene, if somebody stands up and starts talking from the frame of reference or divine viewpoint principles, everybody in the society is conscious that he's not talking the way the rest of us think. Immediately he is suspect, and immediately he is rejected. Why? Because he does not meet orthodoxy. But just because a person does not meet orthodoxy does not mean that he is wrong, because, generally, what is considered orthodox thinking and viewpoint, is simply that which is contrary to divine outlook.

So human viewpoint, all in all, has a destructive effect upon humanity. Yet, it is very hard to reverse it because people shy off from the very thing that will solve their problems. They're just not used to thinking the way God thinks because they are not drilled and they are not steeped in the Word of God.

So the apostle Paul warns the Philippian believers to follow those who reflect his divine viewpoint principles. But he also warns them to avoid another type of person, a person whom they should not imitate, and that is those who are controlled by human viewpoint thinking. In verse 19, Paul identifies the lifestyle of these human viewpoint unbelievers, which in fact dominate our society today. I think that if you will become acquainted with these four factors that are identifying marks of human viewpoint thinking, it would be tremendously valuable to you in avoiding the same mistakes, and in the protection of your own life.

**People to Shun**

So verse 19 describes these human viewpoint people that we are to shun. These are unbelievers. It says, first of all, "Whose end is destruction?" The word "whose" refers back to professing unsaved church members. It refers to these people who are not in the family of God. He says, "Whose end," which is the word "telos" in Greek. "Telos" is a word that refers to the end result of a process. It's the result of a certain procedure that has been followed. It refers here to the final state of a person who is unregenerate. It is the final result of a person who is not born again – the climax of an unbeliever's life. It says, "The end of this person is," and the word "is" is not in the Greek: "The end result destruction." It puts it in this very concise form without using the word "is."

**Destruction (not Extinction)**

The word "destruction" is the Greek word "apoleia." "Apoleia" does not mean "extinction." There are certain cults which teach people that they don't really have to worry about ever suffering in a place of flames like hell forever. They say that what you do experience is to simply be placed into extinction. You are robbed out of existence. The word "apoleia" tells us exactly what the climax is of an unbeliever's life. The climax of his life is destruction (perdition), or a good translation is "ruined." This word does not mean "extinction." It is used in a physical sense sometimes in the New Testament. The noun here, for example, is used to indicate the waste of things or the ruin of things. You can read about this in Matthew 26:8 and in Acts 8:20, where things are simply ruined. The verb form is used in Luke 5:37. Here it's used about the ruin of wine skins. It uses the verb form of this same word. The wine skins are not put out of existence, but they are simply ruined for their purpose.

This word is also used in the New Testament in a moral sense. This is the word which is used of persons to signify their eternal condemnation to hell. What does it mean to be eternally condemned to the lake of fire? It does not mean to be put out of existence, but to be ruined relative to what God intended for you as a human being? You have a loss of well-being.

So Paul here, with this word, is referring to the fact that the destiny of the enemies of the cross of Jesus Christ is the lake of fire. They are going to be ruined as human beings for all eternity: "Whose end is ruined."

Well, what's the nature of the destiny of this eternal ruin? As you know, the sin of Adam caused every member of the human race to be born a sinner, and thus to be separated and alienated from God. The Bible tells us that the eternal destiny of the natural man (this naturally born unsaved person) is the lake of fire. God did not create people for the purpose of sending them to the lake of fire. Therefore, He has provided a way of escape through Jesus Christ. Though everybody is born into the human race destined for the lake of fire, God has provided a means by which that can be reversed and escaped. We have this in John 3:36.

Therefore, all of humanity today falls into two categories: that of saved people; or, that of lost people. The same people are going in one direction. Their direction is heaven. The consequence of their arriving there will be eternal happiness. We have this taught in John 14:1-3 where Jesus says that He's preparing a place for us. Revelation 21:1 through Revelation 22:7, which we have looked at before in detail, describes for us the joys of being in the third heaven, and enjoying residence in the New Jerusalem.

People who are saved are going to have a part in the resurrection unto eternal life (John 5:29). This verse says that these people have done good, and that's why they're going to heaven. The good that they did was the divine good of Jesus Christ. The way that they did that was by accepting Christ as Savior, so that the divine good of Christ on the cross has been imputed to their account. These people will someday, therefore, reside in the third heaven in the New Jerusalem. We have many Scriptures that tell us about this: 2 Corinthians 12:2; John 14:1-3; Hebrews 12:22-24; and, Revelation 21:1-4. All of these describe for us where the people who are believers are going to spend eternity. As we have pointed out, heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. John 14:1-3 indicates that preparation is being made.

On the other hand, the unsaved are destined to hell in eternal suffering. Luke 16:19-31 and Revelation 20:15 teach this. These are the people which John 5:29 says have a part in the resurrection of damnation. They're going to be raised, but their resurrection will be unto eternal death. These have done evil because they have rejected Christ as Savior. So they're going to be confined forever to this lake of fire as Matthew 25:41, Revelation 20:15, and Revelation 21:8 all teach. You also want to remember that hell is a prepared place, but for an unprepared people. Matthew 25:41 and 2 Thessalonians 1:8 both teach us that hell was prepared.

When God prepared hell, or the lake of fire (as the Bible refers to it), He prepared it for the devil and for his angels. The lake of fire was never prepared for human beings. God only puts human beings in the lake of fire who insist on going there. They insist on doing that by not accepting Christ as Savior, and thus aligning themselves with Satan. When they align themselves with Satan, they share his destiny. This is just as we who have aligned ourselves with Jesus Christ share His destiny of heaven and eternal happiness.

**What Hell Will be Like**

So what is this eternal destruction really going to be like? "Their end is to be ruined." What will that ruin consist of? What is life in the lake of fire going to be like? Well, we have a little bit of insight concerning this. We do have a little bit of a preview that would make a thinking person say, "I don't think I want to be in the lake of fire." For example, the Bible tells us that people who are in the lake of fire are surrounded by human viewpoint unbelievers (John 3:36). We're also told that the physical body of unbelievers will be resurrected, and, therefore, when they enter hell, they will be in a place of physical pain and physical torment forever (Revelation 20:10).

We're also told that one of the things that people in hell will suffer from is memory. They will be able to remember – the memory of all the divine viewpoint that they once rejected as unbelievers. Luke 16:25 points out to us that the rich man was told that he could remember the good life he had, and how indifferent he was to the conditions of Lazarus. So one of the painful things about the lake of fire is that people will remember. Perhaps the most agonizing thing will be that a lot of those people will remember the gospel in detail, and not be able to do anything with it. It's too late to use. That's what it's going to be like to be in hell.

Also, there will be complete separation from God. Matthew 25:41, John 8:21, and 2 Thessalonians 1:9 all teach that people who are in hell never come into any contact or communication with God. The agony of this is to be understood when you realize that a human being was made (down deep inside of him) with a desire for a fulfillment which can only be fulfilled when he comes into a relationship with the living God. Hell is going to be hell, in part, because of a separation from God, and a yearning and a longing for God that can never be fulfilled.

The people in hell will be surrounded not only by unbelievers, but they will also find themselves in the presence of Satan and the demons (Matthew 25:41, Revelation 20:10). Some people have viewed the motion pictures and read books about demonically possessed people that simply make the hair stand on end. How would you like to find that those were your fellow roommates for all eternity? Whatever contact you have had with a mental image of the demonic world, just remember that that creature, at its worst, is what is going to surround the people in hell. Their destruction (their ruining) includes being surrounded by Satan and these demonic angels. Remember that there are millions of them.

Furthermore, John 8:24 tells us that the people in the lake of fire live forever with the old sin nature. This is another part of what makes hell, hell. In hell, the old sin nature will have the patterns of loss that can never be fulfilled. He can never get rid of the old sin nature. He can never fulfill the desires of the old sin nature. So he's torn in a constant agony of non-fulfillment, even of the evil within himself. Consequently, Isaiah 57:21 tells us that the people in hell never have a moment of peace. They never have one single moment when they can just take a deep breath and relax.

Matthew 25:30 tells us that it will be characteristic of the people in the lake of fire to be shedding tears. Whereas the other side of the picture, those of us who are in heaven are told that we will never shed a tear. But in hell, it all goes on, just like it always has been.

Matthew 25:30 and Jude 13 tell us that the people in hell are surrounded by darkness. They're in a condition of darkness. Darkness gets to be very trying and very tiresome, and it adds to the degree of the torment upon their souls.

Finally, Revelation 20:14 says that people in hell simply are in a condition of death. It calls it the second death. It is the death subsequent to physical death from which there is no return, and for which there is no reversal.

So first of all, the apostle Paul says there are certain people you should shun. They are human viewpoint unbelievers. The reason you should shun them is because their human viewpoint is going to take them to the place where they are going to be ruined. God's purpose for them will be completely unrealized. They're going to experience "apoleia." They are going to experience ruination and destruction. Therefore, do not follow those people.

**Sensuality**

Secondly, he says that these people have a god, and their god is their appetite: "Whose God is their appetite." The word "whose" again refers back to these professing unbelievers – these who are not believers, but who move in the circle of believers, and who have contact with Christians, and therefore can influence Christians. The word "god" here is the regular word for God: "theos." They have a God as believers have a true God. So they have a god – a god that they suppose is this true God, but who, in fact, is a false deity. Again, the Greek leaves out words in order to make these statements very strong and very pungent. The words "is there" is not in the Greek. It simply says, "Whose God appetite."

The word "appetite" is the Greek word "koilia." This word literally means "hollow." It refers to the open space in the lower part of the body, so we translate it really as "stomach." The word is used here to connote the lower organs of the body where the ancients believed the feelings resided. We talk about feelings in terms of the physical organ of the heart. The ancients talked about feelings in terms of the physical organ of the stomach, or the bowels – the viscera, the lower organs of the body. They felt that that was where feeling lay. That was a very natural conclusion, because when we experience fright, we say, "I just felt that in the pit of my stomach." We relate emotions, even ourselves, to that part of the body. So this word here is used not simply in terms of the stomach itself as an organ. It is not used simply in terms of people who like to eat a lot. It is used in terms of the concept of sensuality – all lasciviousness and all the physical appetites that are stirred up in an improper way by the old sin nature.

In Greek literature, the stomach is actually spoken of as one's god. The Cyclops in Euripides is referred to as having the stomach as his god. The Cyclops was speaking pure human viewpoint, but there he was speaking specifically what the apostle Paul was referring to here. The Cyclops said, "My god is my stomach." A wise man, from human viewpoint, preoccupies himself with worshiping the God of his stomach. Well, the god that is worshipped in human viewpoint society and thinking today is the god of sensuality – living to satiate the senses. So we are in an era of drugs; pornography; illicit sex; gluttony; and, unrestrained pleasures of every kind. All of this is to feed the "koilia." All of this is to satiate the appetites of sensuality.

The attitude of American society today is self-indulgence; permissiveness; and, lack of restraint. All of these things characterize unbelievers. In Romans 16, the apostle Paul refers to the same concept about worshiping the god of sensuality. In Romans 16:17-18, Paul says, "Now, I beseech you, brethren. Mark them who caused divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them, for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own body, and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the innocent." He identifies these as people who are seeking self-gratification. They are pursuing the god of sensuality. He says, "Identify this type of person, and avoid him." He says, "Identify those who are acting contrary to the doctrine which you have, and avoid them."

Now it takes a very spiritually mature Christian to spot somebody in a local congregation who is shot-through with human viewpoint principles and concepts, and to avoid that person. It even takes considerable Christian maturity to avoid that person when he's no longer part of your congregation, knowing that he is shot-through and functioning on human viewpoint principles. Yet many succumb to his deceptive words; sweet talk; smoothness; and, little kindnesses. There is nothing like a plate of cookies for you to forget that somebody is functioning on human viewpoint. The Bible says, "Avoid him."

The apostle Paul saw a lot of Christians really get hurt, and a lot of good workers for the Lord lose their effectiveness. They did so simply because they did not identify this particular type of person, and follow the divine viewpoint principle to avoid him. 1 Corinthians 9:27 tells us that believers are to control their physical bodies and their physical desires. The sensual desires of our bodies are not wrong in themselves, but they are to be controlled on divine viewpoint principles. The reason we do this is because the Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is to be treated with respect. It is not to be treated with an abandoned, illicit sensuality (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

In the New Testament Times, sensuality was the way of life. All of New Testament society was based upon the fact that there was nothing more in life than to indulge your senses in one way or another. Commonly, in literature, we read about how Greeks and Romans would attend parties. They would take with them a little vial containing some medicine to make them throw up. They would go to a banquet, and at a certain point, after having indulged themselves and enjoyed the banquet, there was out in the patio a pit. Archeology has uncovered these. They didn't know what they were for a while. They were throw-up pits. The guests would go out there; they would drink this little solution that they had brought with them that would cause them to become nauseous; and, they would lean over the pit and heave up the banquet. Then they would wash off and go inside, and sit down for another banquet. They could do this several times, and have just a marvelous Southern Kitchen treatment several times over all in one night.

Now, this was commonly accepted. I mean, these weren't the slobs who were doing this. This was cultured society. All of cultured society went to the banquets, and they had their little vials of throw-up stuff with them, that they would use at a certain point in the banquet. This was class. This was style. This was indulging your senses. Now, the apostle Paul knows all of that, so he's trying to identify these people that you should shun. One of the things that they do is that they are big on sensuality.

In the New Testament world, this was viewed as coming alive. It was viewed as exploring new dimensions of consciousness. Consequently, evil practices were tolerated even in public. The arch heresy of New Testament times was Gnosticism. Gnosticism taught that the body was evil, and therefore, there was no point in trying to restrain the body. As a matter of fact, Gnosticism said, "Just let it go. Give it everything it wants. Matter is evil. Treat matter accordingly." Even among Christians, Paul points out that some believers, like the people in the church at Corinth, were abusing the principle of grace and freedom that we have as believers from legalism; from restraints; and from restrictions – the liberties which are ours as Christians. Liberties to do what? To do what is right. Paul says that some believers were taking that and using it as an excuse to do evil. In Romans 3:8 and in Romans 6:1-2, he warns us against that.

James 1:14 tells us that the natural inclination of the old sin nature is to the worship of sensuality. The final end of sensuality of the unbeliever is the eternally unsatisfied desires in hell, as we find in Luke 16:19-25. Actually you can even be guilty of sensuality through asceticism – through restraining yourself from any sensual urges. Asceticism is really a subtle form of sensuality (Colossians 1:20-23). The kingdom of God is not based on sensuality (Romans 14:16).

So we've seen two things about the people who function on human viewpoint: They're headed for the eternal destruction of the lake of fire, so what God had formed them for is going to be ruined. Secondly, they function on satiating their sensual natures. Sensuality is their way of life.

**Shame**

Then a third thing that characterizes these people is, "And whose glory is their shame." The word "whose" is not in the Greek. The word "and" is the Greek word "kai," indicating that he's adding another point. The word "glory" is "doxa." "Doxa" means honor. It refers to a point of praise. It refers to what a person takes pride in – things that he considers important. The religious unbeliever takes pride in certain things. The people that Paul is speaking of do have a sense of pride. In what? These have a sense of pride, "Whose glory is." The word "is," again, is not in the Greek. These are pungent little statements.

The word "in" is the word "en," indicating location. "Their personal shame" is the Greek word "aischune." The word "aischune" means "disgrace." So these people take pride in something. What do they take pride in? They take pride in their disgrace. They take pride in the things of their personal humiliation. They take pride in the moral guilt that they have. They take pride in their perversions; in their immorality; in their crudities; in their obscenities; and, in their plain lack of human dignity. Everything that should humiliate them are things they take pride in.

I think you have already seen that it's not too hard to observe people like this. Our society is filled with them on every one of these points. In the 1960s, this was one of the prime characteristics of the rebellious college student – that took pride in the things that he should have been ashamed of. The things of shame were the things that he was proud of. Why? Because this was a claim to freedom which, in reality, was an enslavement to abject corruption. It is the opposite of divine viewpoint as expressed in Colossians 3:5-9. Instead of glorying in the cross of Jesus Christ and in righteousness as believers do (Galatians 6:14), they gloried in the things of shame.

The Bible lists for us several things that are things of shame. I'll just give you the Scriptures, and you can pursue them on your own. But each one of these things is a thing that even we as Christians could be, in some respects, taking pride in.

* The Bible says for a man to wear his hair in the style of a female is a shame (1 Corinthians 11:14). The Bible also says that it is a shame for a woman to wear her hair in the style of a man (1 Corinthians 11:6). We have a lot of both of that: men appearing as women; and, women appearing as men. God says that's a shame.
* Public nakedness is a shame (Isaiah 47:3, Jeremiah 13:26, Exodus 32:25, Revelation 3:18, Revelation 16:15). Many Scriptures make it clear that public nudity is a shame.
* Idolatry is a shame (Isaiah 42:17, Jeremiah 2:26-27, Jeremiah 11:13, Hosea 9:10). You may not think you're guilty of idolatry, but I remind you that the Scripture says that covetousness is idolatry. Idolatry can be in a form other than some material object that you bow down before and worship. God says idolatry is a shame.
* Ignorance of Bible doctrine is declared to be a shame. 2 Timothy 2:15 says that we are to study the Word of God so that we're not ashamed. Proverbs 13:18 declares that it's a shame to be dumb in the Word of God.
* Laziness is declared to be a shame in Proverbs 10:5. Our current welfare mentality in this country helps people to enter this shame. We encourage them to laziness.
* Daniel 12:2 says that being unsaved is a shame. People are going to be raised as unsaved people, and find themselves in a position of shame.
* Discussing evil practices is a shameful thing to do (Ephesians 5:12).
* The Bible says that it is a shame to be a fool. It means to be operating on human viewpoint (Proverbs 3:35).
* Women preachers are a shame. 1 Corinthians 14:35 says it is a shame for a woman to get up and to preach in a public church service in which the church is gathered officially for worship, and where men are present. It is a shame for a woman to get up and instruct in that service.
* Undisciplined children are a shameful thing (Proverbs 29:15).
* The abuse of one's parents is a shame (Proverbs 19:26).
* Speaking things of gossip and slander (or passing things on that you've heard or that you know) is a shameful thing to do (Proverbs 25:9-10).
* Gluttony is a shame (Proverbs 28:7). That's a hard one to hide.
* Pride is a shame (Proverbs 11:2).
* Sin in general is a shame (Jeremiah 6:15).
* Taking a fellow believer to a court of law before unbelievers – 1 Corinthians 6:5 says that's a shame. The Scriptures urge us to try to get together a few wise men in the congregation, and for you to act as a court of law in their behalf, and for Christians not to go before an unbelieving judge for adjudication of their differences.

Rulers of nations may actually glory in acts of shame (Hosea 4:18). It has not been uncommon for us to see rulers who actually delighted in acts of shame.

**Earthly Things**

Then Paul has one more admonition in Philippians 3:19: Avoid these people whose end is destruction; whose god is their sensuality; and, whose glory lies in the things that they ought to be ashamed of. Finally: "Who mind earthly things." Their mentalities are centered on earthly things. The word mind is the Greek word "phroneo." "Phroneo" means to think in a certain way. It means a mental attitude. It means to set your mind on something.

This is a verb this time. It is present tense. It means constant mental attitude. It's active – your personal viewpoint. It's participle – a statement of a principle. They have a mental attitude in their mind which is set on what? On earthly things. This is the Greek word "epigeios." These are the things of the earth. This refers to things that have to do with the short span of life on earth. Or we may say, "Preoccupied with temporal things" – not living in such a way as to provide for double dividends in heaven, but preoccupied with making maximum dividends here upon the earth. This is what Paul warns us against in Romans 12:2. This is the opposite of the divine goals which are set in Colossians 3:1-3.

So here's a fourth factor concerning people to shun. These are people that you sense have a temporal outlook mentality. They are occupied with temporal things. Now, of course, the classic example of this in Scripture is the rich fool that you read about in Luke 12:16-23. He was just this kind of person. He was preoccupied not with God, but he was occupied in his thinking with the things of this earth. And you know what a terrible announcement was made to him after he got his bigger barns built – that someone else was going to get the whole thing, and he was going to die that night.

This attitude of human viewpoint outlook, that is centered on temporal things and on an earthly frame of reference, actually goes back to the time of the flood of Noah. After Noah's flood, mankind immediately began to try to build a civilization without God. They were motivated by Satan to seek to counterfeit the kind of millennial kingdom that Jesus Christ is going to bring on this earth. The reason for this is that man has within himself an awareness of how things should be. We call that conscience. We know how things ought to be. But on the other hand, we know that things are not like that. So, man, in trying to bring together the things that ought to be (that he knows would make for happiness), very shortly after the flood, forgot about the knowledge of God and proceeded to produce a civilization that simply eliminated God. Man tried to fulfill what ought to be (to produce happiness) without looking to God through His grace to make that provision for him.

Now, human viewpoint history tells us that civilization arose as a product of some evolutionary process from some very aboriginal type of creatures. From divine viewpoint, we know that all civilization began after the flood as a result of the sons of Noah dispersing from Mount Ararat into different directions on the face of the earth. Now, the knowledge that Noah and his family had, concerning God, was amazingly (very shortly) perverted into mythology. Man very quickly, after the flood, returned to this earth-centered kind of thinking with God completely out of the picture.

This set the scene for the great personality that we read so little about in Scripture (again, we wish we had more on him) named Nimrod. Nimrod came up with a scheme of a temporal orientation to life. Man needs social relationships, but the old sin nature keeps him from having those relationships. Instead, it creates conflicts. So after the flood, man's need for relationships led Nimrod to create the first great civilization in the form of a kingdom.

Remember that the earth was very different after the flood. When they walked off that boat, there weren't a bunch of nice trees and green things growing. There was a little scrub brush, and that was it. The animals very quickly multiplied. Man was really having to fight to survive. The animals were after him. The animals were after the small food supply that man was after. Plus, there was the fact that the world was different now. There were two poles at which there was ice and snow. Mastodons were no longer up there at the North Pole feeding on grass in a mild climate. The whole climate of the earth, which had been uniform, was now radically jarred into a fragmented situation.

So the whole condition of life, after they got off that ark, was totally different. But one thing they did have (that God gave them), that they did not have before, was judicial authority. God said, "Now I authorize you to exercise civil authority over people. Make laws to govern yourselves. Those who break them, I give you authority to punish them. For certain crimes (the crime of taking another person's life, and certain other things) you may take that person's life.

What did man do with this? As soon as they had gone far enough from Noah and the knowledge of God, they used judicial authority to force people into a unity that they felt society must have. People must have unified social relationships in order to be happy. So they knew that this ought to be so, and it was not. So Nimrod used judicial authority to create the Tower of Babel civilization where people were going to be forced into an external unity that they lacked internally. So Ham's grandson, Nimrod, was able to coerce people into a kingdom in defiance of God, and he proceeded to build a tower as a point of rallying to keep them from being spread out and from being splintered (from being fragmented) upon the face of the earth.

The result of this Babylonian culture that they created was that it possessed great material wealth, but it was entirely built on human viewpoint principles when it came to dealing with social problems. It established a system of religion which rejected biblical revelation, and which found ultimate expression in Roman Catholicism today. The ultimate expression of satanic pride was to be found in this civilization that Nimrod began at Babel. Well, the temporal things became the primary factors of life. Rebellion against God became a way of life. It became the preoccupation with things here on this earth.

Communism is the epitome of this expression today of preoccupation with temporal things – centering upon things on this earth. Nowhere is this summed up better than if you could visit Moscow and go by Lenin's tomb. After Lenin died and was placed in that tomb on January 21, 1924, the Soviet Congress made this public declaration about Lenin: "His vision was colossal. His intelligence in organizing the masses was beyond belief. He was lord of the new humanity – the savior of the world." And the savior of the world lies as a dead body in the tomb in Moscow's square now, and he is viewed by millions and looked to as the savior of humanity.

This is what Paul is talking about – this temporal orientation. It began way back there after the flood. Man said, "We are going to build society and civilization without God. We are going to incorporate a way of life so that God is not needed for us to have the happiness, and to resolve these relationships that we need with one another as human beings.

The whole plan was internationalism, and God judged this by fragmenting the one language that they spoke. Once God broke up the language, it made it impossible for there ever to be a world government until the language problem has been solved in some way. The fragmenting of language caused people to fragment, and then they went into the patterns of nationalism, which is what God's will was for them. Acts 17:26-27 and Deuteronomy 32:8 indicate that God's plan is for nationalism.

So the condition that man has come up with is a balance of power – one nation balancing another nation. When that balance of power is disrupted, the world goes to war until a new alignment is made. All of this is because people are centering their attention on things here below, from Nimrod's time on, trying to build a culture (a civilization) that ignores God – instead of looking to Him and saying, "Unless the Lord builds the house, it is built in vain."

So all human culture is an incarnation of human viewpoint principles. Paul says that we are to shun these people. They have no creation. They have no fall. They have no divine judgment on sin. They have no stability, such as God promised Noah that he would interject now in the course of nature, and so on. There is no basis for building anything, and yet man struggles vainly to do it. If you spot these kind of people (these unbelievers), Paul says, "Avoid them." Their destiny is destruction in the lake of fire; they operate on sensuality; they are proud of the things that are shameful; and, they have a mentality which is centering on, and preoccupied with, temporal things.

Human civilization will expand. It will grab for power over people. It will take away their freedom; give it to the state, in order to provide a happy life; and, then the civilization will collapse. All you have to do is read your history books and you will see a trail of non-completed kingdoms. Since Nimrod made his try at the Tower of Babel, and that collapsed, we have had the Napoleons; we have had the Hitlers; and, we have had one after another trying the same thing, and each one eventually collapses. Until Jesus Christ returns, and produces the kingdom upon this earth that men vainly seek, human viewpoint temporal-oriented people can never produce it. But when you find people like this, shun them. That is divine viewpoint.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

[**Back to the Advanced Bible Doctrine (Philippians) index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/philippiansdanish.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)