

CouplesInBloom.com – Destine Yourself For Intimacy

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“Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live **according to the pattern we gave you**. For as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their **destiny** is destruction, their **god** is their stomach, and their **glory** is their shame” ⇨ Philippians 3:17-19. Having a false god changes our destiny from God’s blessings to personal shame.

Discussing destiny often raises the topic of God’s **non-causational foreknowledge**: God’s exclusive ability to know everything in advance *without* causing it. Some people hate this because they **cannot do** it, irrefutably proving their limitations of being merely human. God runs an unpredictable mix of giving us a free will *while* telling us in advance of things to come. His goal in doing so is to mature us *plus* to protect us at the same time.

“**The pattern given us**” was manifested in Jesus’ life on earth: living the way **written** in the Bible, **confirmed** by the Holy Spirit and **proven** by the success of true followers. Destiny involves something we **can do**: making God-directed choices ⇨ Proverbs 3:1-6. It is relationship based on God’s sovereignty, not the destruction from a self-directed life.

People who are angry (i.e. self-preserving) **destroy** the very thing they are angry about not having, full control of their own **destiny**, by arrogant belief in their opinion over God’s Word. This is so pathetic, Paul is in tears saying it ⇨ Philippians 3:18 knowing such continued arrogance will irreversibly send those who keep it to hell forever. People who are humble (i.e. God-preserving) actually **improve** their **destiny** by their humility.

In discussing **the pattern given us**, Paul mentions not living as “enemies of the cross” or literally ‘haters of self-denial’. Jesus accomplished intimacy with us by **not** hating the self-denial that intimacy requires. We, too, accomplish intimacy with **the pattern given us: not hating the self-denial that intimacy requires**. But why would anyone deny self?

Hating self-denial is natural. **Not** hating self-denial is **not** natural. It is only chosen **AFTER** a supernatural revelation that no other method for getting true intimacy exists. Some people selfishly choose self-denial to glorify themselves. To this Paul says, “their glory is their shame.” The goal of God’s **pattern given us** is: helping the lowly one up. Remember this is how- and why- the Bible is Good News... to the one stuck **in** bad news.

Intimacy is impossible for individuals; it comes externally, not internally. This is what makes self-denial necessary. **You** have no intimacy if no one else is denying **them** self for you. So how can we **destine ourselves for intimacy**? Problem: It seems like there is no promised return on investment! Solution: Jesus, **the pattern**, already denied Himself for us; there is promised return on our investment: **Christianity destines us for intimacy!**

How can we **destine ourselves for intimacy in marriage**? Remember non-causational foreknowledge? We **cannot** cause intimacy with our spouse; we **can** make God-directed choices using **the pattern given us**... self-denial for the purpose of bringing our spouse up to a better place. This is more than good advice for marriage: it is a being the Gospel in our marriage! ⇨ 2 Corinthians 3:2. **You, of all people, bring God’s Good News to your own spouse**; in doing so you also **Destine Yourself For Intimacy**. ♥ Loren Falzone