

# 20. OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN: Philippians 3:20-21

by Brett Baggett on Sunday, October 11th, 2020

Who are we to imitate? What do godly examples emulate for us? That's what this text is about. **Theme:** "Saints set their minds on heavenly things; they glory in their Savior; their God is the Lord Jesus; their *end* is glorification, and they set their hearts on Jesus' second coming."

## I. SAINTS SET THEIR MIND ON HEAVENLY THINGS (v. 20a)

**Philippians 3:20a** "But our citizenship is in heaven,"

- **The word citizenship means** "commerce, traffic, dealings, trade, conversation—literally it does mean *citizenship*."  
**This is the opposite of fake Christians that** "set their minds on earthly things" (v. 19).
- **Hebrews 11:9-10** "By faith [Abraham] went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents . . . For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God."
- **Hebrews 12:22-23** "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. . . and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel."
- **In Philippians 4:3** Paul says in Christ your "names are written in Heaven."
  - **SPURGEON:** "Every time you prefer the pleasures of this world to the joys of heaven, you spit in the face of Christ."
- **This is why Paul exhorted the church in Colossae with these words:** "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." (Colossians 3:1-2)
- **Q.** Do you prefer Heaven to hell? If so, you may be little better than demons. The real question is this: Do you prefer Heaven to earth?
  - **EZEKIEL HOPKINS:** "[Heaven is where] the unveiled glories of the Deity shall beat full upon us, and we forever sun ourselves in the smiles of God."
- **To take the spiritual eyes of your heart and the physical eyes of your head off of earthly things and set them on those heavenly objects is to take your eyes off the worthless dunghill and set them on the wonderful Deity.**  
**What are you waiting for? Turn from rubbish to the Redeemer!**
- **Q.** Are you staring at the hill of rubbish or the heavenly Redeemer? "Our citizenship is in Heaven!"
- **"Our citizens is in Heaven" means a few things of great importance:** I) We are exiles in the world as it is—we must not feel at home in the world that is. II) We have dual citizenship—we have a citizenship in our city and state and country, but our Passport is issued from Heaven.
  - **SPURGEON:** "If by excessive labor we die before reaching the average age of man, worn out in the Master's service, then glory be to God. We shall have so much less of earth and so much more of heaven. It is our duty and our privilege to exhaust our lives for Jesus." "Our citizenship is in Heaven."
- **Let this reality rebuke you from loving the world and the things of the world—our traffic is in Heaven.**
- **Let this truth woo you away from love of reputation and prestige—we are exiles, our citizenship is in Heaven!**
- **Let this reality free you from the love of money and the promises of wealth—our trade is in Heaven!**
- **Let this truth liberate you from the sin of anxiety and worry—this is a promise: our commerce IS in Heaven!**
  - **WATSON:** "We may here find comfort in the loss of dear and pious relations. They are not only taken away from the evil to come—but are great gainers by death. They leave a wilderness, and go to a paradise! They change their complaints into thanksgivings! They leave their sorrows behind, and enter into the joy of their Lord! Why should we weep for their happiness? Believers have not their portion paid to them, until the day of their death. God's promise is his bond to give heaven to them; but though they have his bond, they do not receive their portion until the day of death. Oh! rejoice to think of the happiness of those who die in the Lord. To them "to die is gain." They are as rich as heaven can make them!"
- **Q.** One day you will be extradited. Where will you be sent? Where is your citizenship? In hell or is "Your citizenship in Heaven"?  
**Forsake sin and trust in Christ alone and His work, then and only then you can know what seal is on your soul's papers.**
- "Our citizenship is in Heaven...And from it we await a Savior!"

## II. SAINTS' GLORY IN THEIR SAVIOR (v. 20b)

**Philippians 3:20b** “and from it we await a Savior,”

- **This is the opposite of those fake Christians who profess to be believers but are not**, which is evidenced by the fact that they “glory in their shame” (v. 19). **Q.** Are you excited to be with Jesus so much so that you are eagerly waiting for Him to come back? Can you pray with the Apostle John, “Maranatha!” which means “Come” Lord Jesus!
- **Hebrews 9:28** “so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.” **Q.** Is that you?
- **If not, you are not yet in Christ or you are still a baby Christian. You are not yet mature in Christ. Oh Pray that God would help you to think and feel like you should.** If you would rather stay here and mark off some things on a sort of bucket list rather than be face to face with the Author of Life, then you have some serious need to be sanctified by God’s Spirit! Jesus is better than you now know! Pray for the desires the Scriptures show you should have.
- **I must Glory in Jesus Christ or I am not thinking and feeling according to the truth!**
- Beloved, I am not waiting to go somewhere else; I am awaiting my Savior! I do not want relief; I want my Redeemer! I do not want Heaven for heaven’s sake; I want my High Priest that will wipe every tear from my eyes. I do not long to be rid of sickness so much as I long to be rid of sin!
- **We are engaged to a the groom of all grooms.** The Prince has been promised to ugly step sister! He has for now clothed us with His stark white cloak of righteousness! **He Has proposed; those who believe in Him have accepted;** we have His ring on our finger; We are waiting for the wedding day! Keep watch! “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- We do not simply await a Judge. Christians await a Savior! We do not simply await a King. Christians await a Savior! We do not simply await a Helper. Christians await a Savior! He will once for all rescue you from every harm both inside and out!
- **Q.** Do you need to be rescued from the battle against your sins? “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- **THOMAS ADAMS:** “Heaven begins where sin ends.”
- **Q.** Do you need to be rescued from suffering, sickness, and disease? “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- **WHITEFIELD:** “All our afflictions, all our temptations are to make heaven more desirable, and earth more loathsome.”
- **Q.** Do you need to be rescued from fatigue and exhaustion? “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- **WHITEFIELD:** “How sweet is rest after fatigue! How sweet will heaven be when our journey is ended.”
- **Q.** Do you need to be rescued from depression and anxiety? “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- **JOHN BOYS:** “In heaven is no war-fare, but all well-fare.”
- **Q.** Do you need to be rescued from your ceaseless feelings of inadequacy? “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- **SPURGEON:** “In heaven we shall see that we had not one trial too many.”
- **Q.** Do you need to be rescued from loneliness? “From Heaven we await a Savior!”
- **Since He did not abandon you in your sin but purchased you with His precious blood on the cross,** He will surely come back to claim His prize. He has paid too high a price to let you be lonely for very long. Jesus longs to be with you, His inheritance; don’t you long to be with Him?
- **Let the promises of Christ Jesus be the medicine to heal your sin wounds:**
- “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.” **John 14:18**
- “Saints Glory in their Savior!...The Lord Jesus Christ.”

## III. SAINTS' GOD IS THE LORD JESUS (v. 20c)

**Philippians 3:20c** “the Lord Jesus Christ,”

- This is the opposite of those fake Christians whose “god is their belly” (v.19).
- A goat’s lord is their belly but a sheep’s Lord is their Beloved, Jesus Christ!
- A Christian is not simply someone who has received Jesus as a Prophet to tell them the truth nor simply as Priest to forgive their sins; **a Christian is also someone who has received Jesus as King to kill their sins and be the controlling factor of their life!** To a true believer He is “The LORD Jesus Christ.”
- **Therefore you must bow down to and submit to Him in joyful obedience.** “If you love me you will keep my commandments” He says, and his best friend the Apostle John “His commands are not burdensome.”
- **Q.** Is Jesus your Prophet? He must be—you must listen to Him. **Q.** Is He your Priest? He must be—you must trust in His blood shed to forgive your sins. **Q.** Is Christ your King? He must be—He IS the King.

#### IV. SAINTS' END IS GLORIFICATION (v. 21)

**Philippians 3:21** “who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body”

- **This is the end/destination for all the saints**—all whom God has saved through repentance and faith in Christ. “Glorification.” **This is the opposite of those fake Christians** “whose end is destruction” (v. 19).
- How Jesus must have desired the day of His ascension back to heaven to be seated at the right hand of God where there are pleasures forevermore.
- **Oh saints, desire death**—it is your ascension day to Heaven! You will ascend to the presence of Jesus Christ your Savior and Lord and rule with Him.
- But Oh more than death, desire the second coming of Christ—that is your glorification day!
- He will reunite your soul with your body, and make you perfect in every way. So perfect you will be that Paul says, “Jesus will transform your lowly body to be like His glorious body.”
- **As one man said**, “Jesus enabled Peter to walk on water in his old body, imagine what he will enable you to do in yours!”
- **Crude caterpillars we are now; beautiful butterflies we shall be!**
- **Counted righteous we are now; *actually* righteous we shall be! Given the identity of saints now; *perfectly active* as saints we shall be!** “He will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body!”
- **Q.** Do you deserve this? Have you earned such a promise? Will you buy this gift? No! Believers only get the blessing of Jesus’ glorification because He took the curse of our damnation.
- Look at the cross to see the price He paid to glorify you: Jesus was made grotesque so that you would be made glorious! He submitted to death so that we would submit to Him! He made His citizenship in hell on the cross so that we would have our citizenship in Heaven!
- **Oh the high price of our redemption! It took nothing less than the bleeding charity of the God-man to redeem we devil-men from the curse.**
- **Q.** Can you think about the cross of Jesus Christ and not trust in Him and His work alone?
- **It is indeed paid in full. Our eternal salvation is secure. Up from the grave He arose! He defeated death so that He would give us eternal life. He was raised to raise us. He walked out of His grave so that we would one day walk out of ours. O death where is your victory? O death where is your sting?**
  - “In Heaven, there is . . . knowledge without ignorance, holiness without sin, beauty without blemish, strength without weakness, light without darkness, riches without poverty, ease without pain, liberty without restraint, rest without labor, joy without sorrow, love without hatred, plenty without excess, honor without disgrace, health without sickness, peace without end, contentment without cessation! Oh, the happiness of those who die to the Lord!” — **Thomas Watson**
  - “Your life is short, your duties many, your assistance great, and your reward sure; therefore faint not, hold on and hold up, in ways of well-doing, and heaven shall make amends for all!” — **Thomas Brooks**

#### V. SAINTS SET THEIR HEARTS ON JESUS' SECOND COMING (v. 21b)

**Philippians 3:21b** “by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”