
CITIZENSHIP OF THE KINGDOM

Oh what a glorious day awaits us, Friend! A day when we turn in this corruptible for the incorruptible, the perishable for the imperishable. I don't know about you, but I can't wait! I'm with Paul, "to live is Christ... but to die is gain."

Our verses for the day finish up Chapter 3. Let's look at Philippians 3:20-21.

"For our citizenship is in heaven,
from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory,
by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself." (NASB)

The realization of all we have studied will take place on that grand day when we exchange this body with its sinful nature for a new model, one that is full of His glory; one that no longer fights against itself but finally has the experience to match what we positionally possess now.

The Apostle Paul is referring to all believers when he says, "our citizenship", identifying our condition and life as a citizen of the Kingdom of God. Because we are citizens of God's Kingdom we are to live in such a way that we reflect the life style of one who belongs there.

The Apostle Paul learned what Jesus knew, that our focus must be as one whose home is heaven, we are simply here to represent God until He takes us home. Not just focused on heaven, but on being a citizen of heaven while here on earth, as ambassadors to a world that needs to know what our King is all about. That's why Paul is exhorting them to live up to their potential.

He also expresses the idea of continually waiting for the Lord's return, not just when we are in a mess, not just when we are tired of the things of this world, or the situations we find ourselves in, but are continuously mindful of living in such a way that we are eager for Christ's return.

What would that look like to you?

This verse actually introduces us to the Rapture of The Church. Let's look at a brief definition:

The Rapture is the return of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the Church Age. He will be visible only to Believers and does not land on the earth, but believers of the Church Age, both dead and alive, will be caught up to meet Him in the air.

Read I Thessalonians 4:16-17

Read Acts 1:11

The Rapture, while not named in the Bible, was prophesied and promised by the Lord Jesus Christ on the eve of His crucifixion.

Read John 14:1-3

It is the Christian's hope and source of comfort

Look at I Thessalonians 4:18

Read Titus 2:11-13

It involves only Church Age Believers because the Church is the Body of Christ, Christ is the Head.

Look up I Corinthians 12:12-13. What does this say about us?

Look up Colossians 1:18. What does this say about Christ?

The rapture is the completion of the redemption of the body and the believer will receive a resurrection body and ultimate sanctification

Read Philippians 3:20-21

Look at I John 3:2

We don't know when the rapture will take place but what does 2 Peter 3:8-9 say is the reason for the delay:

Someday the “dead in Christ” (Church Age Believers who have died physically) are to be raised first, and then, those of us who are alive will be transformed in a moment - in a twinkling of an eye - and we will be caught up with them to meet Him in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). Hallelujah!

Then our bodies are going to be changed to conform to His glorious body. Our new nature will be manifested in our new, glorified body.

Read 1 John 3:2. What will we be like?

Isn't that the most amazing thing? To be like Him! No more sin nature to wage war with. I can't wait! But, we must wait, and while we do, we are to behave as citizens of heaven, representing Christ to the world. We have been blessed with the instructions and the examples to follow, blessed with the power of His Spirit to accomplish it, all we need now is a little cooperation on our part. Someday all of this will change, we will be changed, by Christ's authority and the power granted to Him by the Father. Until that day, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23 NASB)

I know you've looked at a lot of scripture today, but as we close would you look at the admonitions in Ephesians 5:8 and 1 John 2:6. Those are your marching orders.

Rejoice in that good news and ask the Lord for help in walking as He would have you walk as you represent Him to a world that is very much in need of a Savior.

REVIEW

- ~ At salvation, our citizenship is changed to heaven. We belong to Christ. Our lives should reflect that.
- ~ As citizens of heaven we are to be ambassadors of Christ here on earth.
- ~ Live life eager for our Lord's return
- ~ A rapture is coming, the Lord will return for His bride.
- ~ Our bodies will be changed and there will be no more sin nature to deal with
- ~ Until that day, live Christ! Walk in the Light. Hold fast!
- ~ Rejoice!