



OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN

HEAVEN

Philippians 3:17-20

The Value of Citizenship

“From the Republic to the Empire, civitas—full Roman citizenship—was prized by those who had it and coveted by those who did not.”

- In 28 B.C. Roman Emperor Augustus ordered an Imperial census
 - Only **9%** of his subjects were counted as citizens
- Citizenship in ancient Rome was a privileged political and legal status
 - Women had a limited form of citizenship
 - Conquered people could receive a limited form of citizenship
 - Freedmen were not automatically given citizenship (Acts 22:28)
 - Slaves were considered property and lacked legal personhood

The Power and Appeal of Citizenship

“But our citizenship is in heaven...” (Phil. 3:20)

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28)

“You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Eph. 2:19)

- Would have brought to mind the **rights** of citizenship
- Would have brought to mind the **responsibilities** of citizenship
- Would have brought to mind the **rewards** of citizenship

The Impact of Citizenship

- Our Citizenship is in Heaven
 - *“Do citizens of Philippi think of Rome as their native land to which they belong, in whose tribal records they are enrolled, whose dress they wear, whose language they speak, by whose laws they are governed, whose protection they enjoy, and whose emperor they worship as their savior?” YES!*
 - *“In a sense far more sublime and real these Christians dwelling in Philippi must realize that their homeland or commonwealth has its fixed location in heaven.”*
- And we must realize this too... our citizenship is in Heaven

Our Citizenship is in Heaven

Walk Like it (Phil. 3:17-19)

- **Unite in following together the pattern**
 - *“example”* – a type, pattern, or model
- ***“keep your eye on those” = “mark” (KJV)***
 - Be as *mindful* of good examples as you are *watchful* of bad ones (Rom. 16:17)
- **Don't follow those *“with minds set on earthly things”***
 - They are enemies of the cross
 - They serve their own selfish desires
 - The things they take pride in should cause them shame
 - Their end is destruction
- **Set your mind on heavenly things (Col. 3:2)**

Our Citizenship is in Heaven

We're Waiting for Our Savior (Phil. 3:20)

- ***“await”*** - to await eagerly [Strong's]
- Used of looking completely away from this world – and to the upcoming redemption of our body. [Help's Word Studies]
- **We walk eagerly awaiting:**
 - Our adoption to be made final (Rom. 8:23)
 - The hope of righteousness (Gal. 5:5)
 - The return of our Lord (Heb. 9:28)
 - *“will appear a second time... to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”*
- **We face this life with happy expectation of His return**
 - We gladly live like no one else now, so we can live eternally later

Our Citizenship is in Heaven

We Will Be Transformed (Phil. 3:21)

- Our bodies at the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:42, 50-52ff)
 - We look beyond our *“lowly bodies”* - age, pain, heartbreak, sickness, death...
 - Only transformed bodies are suitable to inherit the kingdom of God
- We're being transformed now... with a view toward what is to come
 - *“and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”* (Col. 3:10)
- A transformation that is a conformation...
 - *“we know that when He appears we shall be like Him”* (1 John 3:2)
- We know that He has the power to do it

Our Citizenship is in Heaven

Stand Firm in the Lord (4:1)

- In the faith

- “Be watchful, **stand firm** in the faith, act like men, be strong.” (1 Cor. 16:13)

- In liberty

- “For freedom Christ has set us free; **stand firm** therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” (Gal. 5:1)

- In what you were taught

- “So then, brothers, **stand firm** and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.” (2 Thess. 2:15)

- **Beloved brothers and sisters, stand firm in the Lord**” - Bob



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