

Where Do You Hold Your Citizenship?

March 17, 2019 – Philippians 3:15-4:1 (NIV)

“All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. 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 destructions, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body. Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.”

Alexander the Great (356 B.C – June 13, 323 B.C.) is famous for his conquests in the world. He took Greek culture as far as India. The father of Alexander the Great was Philip II - a great Macedonian king. Macedonia was located in what we know as is present day Greece. It was in 356 B.C. that Philip king of Macedonia, changed the name of a city called (Crenides) to Philippi. It is this city of Philippi which after the Romans toppled the Greeks that it also became known “*Little Rome*” because it was a place where retired Roman soldiers / veterans would go to live.

It is at the time of the Apostle Paul’s writing to the congregation in Philippi in about 60 - 63 A.D. (Depending upon which Historian you listen to) that Paul is writing to this congregation as it is having a problem with False teachers as he writes:

Vs. 18 – For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Paul tells the Philippians to - 4:1 – ***stand firm in the Lord, dear friends***

Paul had referred to this group of false teachers earlier in the letter to the Philippians with the following words:

Philippians 3:2 – “Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.”

This group of false teachers are sometimes referred to as the Judaizers. This group of false teachers said that in order to get to heaven one needs to believe in Jesus AND follow the O.T. Laws, especially Circumcision. But Paul tells the Congregation in Philippi that those enemies of the cross of Christ are in trouble.

Vs. 19 – Their destiny is destructions, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.

God through the Apostle Paul instead wants the Christians in Philippi and present day Christians to keep looking heavenward.

Vs. 20 – But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

It is from heaven that the Lord Jesus came to live as our substitute, and to die our death, to suffer our hell, and win heaven for us. There will always be false teachings and false ideas in the world. Do you know every false teaching that is out in the world? Who, other than God could possible know every false teaching that is in the world? But God tells us that as we continue to study God’s Word, He will lead us to grow in our faith and understanding.

Vs. 15 – All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

Vs. 16 – Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

One thing that we can be certain of:

Mark 16:16 – He that Believes and Is baptized shall be saved.”

John 3:16 – For God so loved the World that He gave His One and Only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

As wonderful as America is, our final citizenship is in heaven. Why is it that so many people from other Countries are trying to get into The United States of America? Just think if people in America valued their citizenship in HEAVEN with as much zeal and gusto as foreigners long to get into the United States. Would there be any Christian Churches in the United States struggling to stay open?

Heaven will be bursting at the seams as the Apostle John records for us in **Revelation 7:1-2** ***“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”***

When the day comes and the Lord Jesus takes us to our heavenly home we can also look forward to those new glorified bodies as God tells us through the Apostle Paul:

22 – Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.

We will not be little gods, only Jesus is God, equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, but we will have new glorified bodies because of Jesus our Risen Savior. AMEN