

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY WE TAKE UP ANOTHER VERY BRIEF SECTION OF PHILIPPIANS, ~ 3:20-4:1.

▶▶ It seems that Paul's mention of the false teachers in [verse 19](#) with their "minds set on earthly things" prompted him to very briefly take up the subject of our heavenly citizenship.

▶▶ Basically, ~ what we have here is an assertion by Paul that believers are citizens of heaven, ~ [verse 20a](#). ~ He then elaborates on his assertion, ~ [verses 20b-21](#).

▷▷ And he concludes with an application, ~ [4:1](#).

▶▶ A note on chapter and verse divisions. ~ Notice this brief section is from [3:20-4:1](#) . . .

IN VERSE 20a, ~ WE FIND PAUL'S ASSERTION.

"OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN."

▶▶ We are "the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" as Hebrews tells us.

MY . . . , ~ THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR US TO GRASP THAT WE ARE citizens of heaven.

IN 1 PET. 1:1 ~ [LEB](#), ~ PETER DESCRIBES BELIEVERS AS THOSE "WHO ARE RESIDING temporarily" in this world.

▶▶ The Greek word behind "who are residing temporarily" means persons who belong to some other land and people, ~ [↯↯](#)

▷▷ who are temporarily residing with a people to whom they do not belong.

↯↯ They are for the time being aliens, ~ foreigners, ~ strangers, ~ and not natives. ~ They never expect to become natives.

▶▶ Loved ones, ~ we live in this world, ~ but we do not belong to this world. ~ We belong to another land, ~ another people.

▷▷ We are temporarily residing with a people to whom we do not belong.

↯↯ We are merely passing through their territory, ~ with no intention of permanent residence or of becoming natives. [↯↯ 1/10](#)

PETER RETURNS TO THIS FACT IN 1 PET. 1:17 ~ LEB, ~ ¶¶

▶▶where he tells us to live our lives with reverence for God "during the time of [our] temporary residence."

THEN, ~ FOR A THIRD TIME, ~ PETER REFERS TO THIS FACT.

▶▶In 1 Pet. 2:11 ~ LEB, ~ he refers to us as "foreigners and temporary residents."

▶▶The two Greek words for "foreigners and temporary residents" are synonyms. ~~ And the distinction between the two is without significance.

▷▷Peter is most likely using a figure of speech here that combines two words to express a single idea.

▶▶The question is why? ~~ The answer is, ~ he did it for emphasis, ~ for persuasive effect.

▷▷Our foreignness, ~ our being "temporary residents," ~ is strongly emphasized by the repetition.

▷▷Peter wants to drive the point home to us that this world is not our home, ~ that we are citizens of, ~ as Heb. puts it, ~ "a better country, ~ that is, ~ a heavenly one."

NOW, ~ WHEN WE COMBINE PETER'S EMPHASIS, /~~/ HIS REPETITION OF THE FACT of our temporary residence, /~~/ and what Paul says here in Phil. 3:20, ~ ¶¶

▶▶loved ones, ~ we should reach the conclusion that God the Holy Spirit is sending us a powerful message. ~~ And that message is this.

▷▷He truly wants us to clearly see and grasp the fact that this world is not our home, ~ that we are just passing through foreign territory on our way to our homeland.

▷▷He wants us to clearly see and grasp the fact that, ~ as the author of Hebrews says, ~ "here we have no lasting city."

▶▶When we truly see and grasp this message, ~ we will gain a better focus on life.

▷▷When we truly see and grasp this message, ~ eternal priorities will, ~ and rightly so, ~ become more important to us than earthly priorities.

▷▷When we truly see and grasp this message, ~ our longing for our homeland will grow. ~~ And we will, ~ and rightly so, ~ not feel at home in this world anymore. ¶¶ 2/10

▷▷ When truly see & grasp this message, ~ we, ~ like Abraham, as Heb. says, ~ will be "looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God."

↳↳ Like the saints of old, ~ as Hebrews tells us, ~ we will acknowledge that we are "strangers and temporary residents on the earth."

→→ And will have the attitude the original recipients of Hebrews had, ~ who "joyfully accepted the plundering of [their] property, ~ 77

↳↳ [because they] knew that [they themselves] had a better possession and an abiding one." ~~ Loved ones, ~ we also have that better and abiding possession.

↳↳ So who cares if our enemies take things from us. ~~ We have a better and abiding possession. ~~ And they can't touch that.

NOW, ~ WE SHOULD MENTION THREE ISSUES LINKED TO OUR CITIZENSHIP in heaven.

▶▶ 1st, ~ as citizens of heaven, ~ temporarily dwelling in this world to which we do not belong, ~ we have a responsibility to live differently than the people who do belong to this world.

▷▷ I.e., ~ since we are not natives of this world, ~ we're not to act like natives. ~~ We are to be governed by the laws of our homeland, ~ which are spelled out for us in Scripture.

▷▷ E.g., ~ we've already mentioned that Peter tells us to live our lives with reverence for God "during the time of [our] temporary residence."

▷▷ Note what Peter says in 1 Pet. 2:11-12 ~ LEB. ☞☞ Dear friends, I urge you as foreigners and temporary residents to abstain from fleshly desires which wage war against your soul, maintaining your good conduct among the Gentiles, so that in the things in which they slander you as evildoers, by seeing your good deeds they may glorify God on the day of visitation.

▷▷ And in 1 Pet. 4:3, ~ Peter says, ~ "For the time that is past ~ suffices for doing what the Gentiles ~ [i.e., ~ unbelievers] ~ want to do, ~ 77

↳↳ [then he gives some examples of what they want to do] ~ living ~ in sensuality, ~ passions, ~ drunkenness, ~ orgies, ~ drinking parties, ~ and lawless idolatry."

↳↳ Basically, ~ Peter is saying, ~ "Enough already. ~~ Put sin in your rearview mirror." ~~ Peter is driving the point home that the past is the past. ~~ It's over and done with.

↳↳ There must be no going back to the things we were involved in before we came to Christ, ~ before we became citizens of heaven.

↳↳ There must be a complete break with every part of our unsaved lifestyle.

▶▶ The 2nd issue linked to our being citizens of heaven that we should mention is this. ~~ This world, ~ to which we do not belong ~ hates us.

▷▷ In [Jn. 15:19](#) Jesus tells us ~ i.e., believers, ~ "If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

↳↳ The Greek word for "hates" implies active hatred in words and conduct. ~~ IOW, ~ the world does not just simply feel hatred toward us, ~ they also act on that hatred.

▷▷ The world would love us as one of its own if we belonged to it, ~ but we no longer belong to it. ~~ Jesus changed our citizenship.

→→ For this reason the world not only feels hatred toward us, ~ they also act on that hatred.

▶▶ And the 3rd issue linked to our being citizens of heaven that we should mention is this. ~~ [Matt. 6:19-21](#).

▷▷ "19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

▷▷ Are we focusing on and investing in the things that will bring eternal rewards, ~ things that will have an eternal impact?

▷▷ E.g., ~ godliness. ~~ In [1 Tim. 4:7-8](#), ~ Paul writes, ~ "7 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

▷▷ The question for us this a.m. is, ~ "Am I focused on and investing in eternal or earthly things?"

▷▷ Earthly things, ~ btw, ~ will be burned up when the present universe is destroyed by fire. ↯↯ 4/10

NOW IN VERSES 20b-21, ~ HE ELABORATES ON HIS ASSERTION THAT BELIEVERS' citizenship is in heaven.

VERSE 20b. ~~ WE ARE CITIZENS OF HEAVEN, ~ AND WE EAGERLY WAIT FOR OUR savior to come from there, ~ Paul says.

LET'S NOTE JESUS' WORDS ON THIS SUBJECT IN JN. 14:1-3.

▶▶ "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

▶▶ Definitely, ~ Jesus would not have told us that he's going to prepare a place for us if the Father's house did not have many rooms.

▷▷ It's definitely true that the Father's house has many rooms. ~~ And it's definitely true that Jesus has ascended into heaven and is preparing a place for us.

↪↪ And it's just as definitely true that he will come again to get us and welcome us into his Father's home, ~ so that we will be with him forever.

▶▶ We have at least four guarantees that what Jesus says in [Jn. 14:1-3](#) is absolutely true.

▷▷ 1st, ~ our Triune God, ~ Father, ~ Son, ~ and Holy Spirit, ~ does not lie.

↪↪ Paul tells us in Titus that God does not lie. ~~ The author of Hebrews tells us that it is impossible for God to lie.

↪↪ Num. 23:19a, ~ "God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?"

↪↪ Loved ones, ~ has God ever spoken and failed to act? ~~ Has He ever promised and not carried it through?

↪↪ Jesus has promised to prepare a place for us, ~ return to get us, ~ and take into his Father's house forever. ~~ He's God, ~ so he's not lying.

▷▷ The 2nd guarantee that Jesus' words in [Jn. 14:1-3](#) are absolutely true. ~ Our Triune God has the power and ability to carry out these words.

↪↪ No one can prevent his words from being fulfilled. 📖 5/10

↪↪ Job acknowledged this. ~ In Job 42:2, ~ he told the Lord, ~ "I know that you can do all things, ~ and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted."

↪↪ In part of his testimony after God humbled him, ~ King Nebuchadnezzar declared, ~ as recorded in Dan. 4:35b, ~ that God "does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ~ 'What have you done?'"

↪↪ And I like this paraphrase of Is. 14:27, ~ NLT. ~ "The Lord of Heaven's Armies has spoken — who can change his plans? When his hand is raised, who can stop him?"

↪↪ Jesus has spoken. ~ His plan is to prepare a place for us, ~ come and get us, ~ and take us into the Father's house to live with him forever.

→→ Who can change his plans? ~ Who can stop him?

▷▷ The 3rd guarantee that Jesus' words in Jn. 14:1-3 are absolutely true is this.

↪↪ That Jesus is preparing a place for us shows us this is a done deal, ~ we are guaranteed to live with him forever in the Father's house.

→→ Preparing a place for us implies that we will occupy that place. ~ No doubt about it.

▷▷ And the 4th guarantee that Jesus' words in Jn. 14:1-3 are true. ~ We see from Jesus' high-priestly prayer that he wants us to be with him. ~ Jn. 17:24.

↪↪ "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world."

JESUS IS RETURNING, ~ AND WE, ~ HIS PEOPLE, ~ ARE EAGERLY AWAITING HIS return.

▶▶ I know I am. ~ Long for the day when Jesus will return and set things right. ~ "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"

▶▶ And what are we to do while we're waiting? ~ At least three things.

▷▷ 1st, ~ right before Jesus ascended into heaven, ~ he told us in Matt. 28:19-20a, ~ "19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20a teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." ↯↯ 6/10

↪↪ So, ~ while we wait for the second coming of our King, ~ each one of us is to do our part in fulfilling the great commission, ~ which Jesus lays out for us here in [Matt. 28](#).

▷▷ Paul spells out the second thing we are to be doing while we wait for Jesus in [Titus 2:11-13](#), ~ [NIV](#), ~ a passage we've alluded to a couple of times recently.

↪↪ "11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

↪↪ So, ~ while waiting for our Savior to return, ~ we're to lead lives that are pleasing & glorifying to God.

▷▷ And here's the third thing we're to do while waiting for Jesus to return. ~~ Added this a.m. ~~ Not on PPT.

↪↪ Ok, ~ here's the 3rd thing we're to do while waiting for the return of our King. ~~ Believers are to pray for and seek the welfare of the countries they happen to live in.

→→ [Jer. 29:7](#) speaks directly to issue of being temporary residents in this world.

→→ "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."

→→ And [1 Tim. 2:1-4](#)

IN VERSE 21a, ~ PAUL SAYS THAT WHEN JESUS RETURNS HE WILL TRANSFORM US.

"WHO WILL TRANSFORM OUR LOWLY BODY TO BE LIKE HIS GLORIOUS BODY."

▶▶ The phrase "lowly body" could be paraphrased as "weak mortal body."

▶▶ The phrase refers not to the human body as being inherently evil.

▷▷ Rather, ~ Paul is talking about the present state of humiliation and weakness caused by sin, ~ making the body vulnerable to disease, ~ temptation, ~ and death.

▶▶ In contrast, the bodies we will receive when Christ returns will be glorious, ~ like his resurrected body. ~~ Our resurrection bodies will not be

▶▶ 1 Jn. 3:2, ~ LEB ~ "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is."

▶▶ Both Paul and John are making the point that believers will become like Jesus in the sense of receiving a resurrected, ~ glorified body when He appears.

PAUL ALSO TALKS ABOUT THIS IN 1 COR. 15:42-44.

▶▶ "42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

▶▶ Now, ~ it's extremely important to understand that these will be physical bodies. ~~ Jesus' resurrection body is physical. ~~ And ours will be too.

▷▷ Paul does not mean here in 1 Cor. 15 that our bodies will be "spiritual" as opposed to physical or material.

↳↳ Instead, ~ "spiritual" refers to a body that is suitable for the eternal state.

▷▷ Today, ~ we have a "natural body," ~ that is, ~ a body suited to an earthly environment.

↳↳ But as Paul says later in 1 Cor. 15, ~ our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. ~~ So we need a body that is suitable for the Kingdom.

↳↳ When Jesus returns, ~ he will transform our natural body into a body that is suitable for his kingdom.

→→ One no longer vulnerable to disease, ~ temptation, ~ and death. ~ No sin nature.

IN VERSE 21b, ~ PAUL SAYS THAT JESUS WILL BRING ABOUT THIS transformation by exercising "the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."

NOTICE, ~ NOT ONLY WILL JESUS TRANSFORM US, ~ HE WILL ALSO BRING everything under his control when he returns.

▶▶ Loved ones, ~ when we look at the world around us and see evil so strong and seemingly victorious and unstoppable, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we must never think that Jesus is powerless to do something about the evil in this world. ~~ We must never think that he doesn't care about it. ¶¶ 8/10

▷▷ And we must never think that this world will continue forever in its present state. ~
That would be very depressing indeed if it was going to.

↪↪ But Paul's words that Jesus will bring everything under control should give us great encouragement.

▶▶ My . . . , ~ Jesus has the power to deal with evil, ~ he certainly does care about what's going on in this world, ~ 77

▷▷ and at some point in the future, ~ he will exercise his almighty power, ~ and bring everything under his control, ~ judge this world, ~

↪↪ burn up the present universe, ~ and create new heavens and a new earth.

▷▷ As Peter says in 2 Pet. 3:13, ~ "But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells ~ [i.e., ~ in which righteousness dwells permanently]."

↪↪ What a contrast to the present heavens and earth. ~ Exact opposite, ~ isn't it? ~
Get a fuller picture of this in Rev. 21-22. ~ Encourage you to read that this week.

JESUS WILL DO THIS WHEN HE RETURNS.

▶▶ In the meantime, ~ Jesus is temporarily allowing the curse of sin and the powers of evil to continue.

▷▷ One of the reasons for this is to give people time to repent and turn to him, ~ as Peter tells us in his second epistle. ~ 2 Pet. 3:9.

↪↪ "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

▶▶ Loved ones, ~ this is the age of grace, ~ between the first and second comings of Christ.

▷▷ As Paul puts it in 2 Cor. 6:2b, ~ "Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

▶▶ But the age of grace will end. ~ Jesus will return and set things right. ~ Peter assures of that. ~ 2 Pet. 3:10 ~ NIV.

▷▷ "But the day of the Lord *will* come like a thief. ~ The heavens *will* disappear with a roar; ~ the elements *will* be destroyed by fire, ~ and the earth and everything done in it *will* be laid bare." 9/10

TO SUM UP SO FAR. ~~ BELIEVERS ARE CITIZENS OF HEAVEN.

▶▶ Jesus is returning to take us to be with him forever; ~~ and we are eagerly waiting for him. ~~ When he returns, ~ he will transform our bodies into glorious resurrection bodies.

↪↪ And also when he returns, ~ he will bring everything under his control and usher in "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

AS WE NOTED AT THE BEGINNING, ~ PAUL THEN CONCLUDES THIS VERY BRIEF paragraph with an application, ~ 4:1.

"THEREFORE, MY BROTHERS, WHOM I LOVE AND LONG FOR, MY JOY AND CROWN, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved."

▶▶ I.e., ~ because of the truths Paul discussed in [verses 20-21](#), ~ the truths we just now summarized, ~ Paul calls on believers to stay faithful to the Lord.

▶▶ These are excellent reasons to not give up on the Christian life, ~ to keep moving forward on the road to full Christ-likeness.

▶▶ Having these truths lodged squarely in our minds and hearts will help us steadfastly resist the negative influences of temptation, ~ false teaching, ~ or persecution.

▶▶ A solid grasp of these truths will help us persevere when challenged or opposed.

CONCLUSION.

AND WITH THAT WE CONCLUDE THIS BRIEF PARAGRAPH.

▶▶ Certainly, ~ a very good news paragraph! ~~ Something to definitely write home about.

LET'S PRAY 10/10