

Heaven's Citizens – Phil 3.20

Lesson 3: Uses of this Doctrine

Introduction

We've learned *two things* so far on this topic of heavenly citizenship: 1) *how it is* that Christians are citizens of heaven and 2) several *practical or evidential marks* by which we determine if *we ourselves* have a citizenship in heaven.

Tonight I want to move into application by offering you several **Uses** of this doctrine of heavenly citizenship. And the first is this...:

- I. If, as we've seen, a heavenly citizenship naturally manifests itself in a heavenly conduct, **then** they are very far from being heaven's citizens who know nothing of heaven's conduct, Acts 8.21-23
 - A. The church has always had its professors who profess to be Christians and say they have a hope to go to heaven. But if you look at their conduct, they don't have the conduct of heaven.
*Can those who live for the world and walk in the ways of hell have a true hope for heaven?
No fruit, no root.
- II. If a heavenly citizenship manifests itself in a heavenly conduct, **then** this rebukes those who live as hypocrites, having a show of religion on the Sabbath or in the company of the godly but then living for hell during the week, 2Ti 3.1-7; Jude 12-13. This will be a dishonor to God, a discredit to religion, and a disservice to the church.
- III. If a heavenly citizenship is to be joined with a heavenly conduct, **then** we're not to content ourselves with a mere profession of religion or with being better than others. Rather, we're to pray for a greater love for godliness and aim at heaven, Mt 5.48; 1Pet 1.14-16; 1Jn 3.3; 1Cor 9.24-27; Hos 6.3
- IV. If a heavenly citizenship is to be joined with a heavenly conduct, **then** how far short do we all fall of this!? Earth should be the place of our pilgrimage and heaven our home; but how often do we live as though earth were our home and heaven a foreign land? Col 3.5-10; Rom 13.14; 1Pet 1.13-19; 4.1-5
 - A. Where is our heart? Where are the things we love the most? Where are our non-negotiables? Where are our end goals? What are we living for? What are we trying to get out of life?
 - B. How many are there for whom earth is their throne and heaven their footstool? for whom heavenly things are made subordinate to earthly things?
 - C. **Consider:** we have our portion and inheritance in heaven, 1Pet 1.3-5. How much of our heart, then, should the earth really have? When Jacob was setting out for Egypt, he was told to have no regard for his goods since the best of all the land of Egypt was his (Gen 45.20). We have set out for Heaven and God has told us to have no regard for our earthly goods since the best of all the land of Heaven is ours, Mt 19.24; 1Tim 6.7
- V. It's a great part of our self-denial to live on earth, either content with little or as a good steward of much, while our citizenship is in heaven. But God can help us, Dan 6.10
 - A. Daniel was a citizen of Jerusalem, but he had to learn to live in Babylon as a good steward of his riches and high station in life. How did he do it? He opened his window toward Jerusalem three times a day and prayed to His God—*which is to say*, all the while he lived in Babylon as a wise steward of many earthly riches, he kept his heart in Jerusalem where the Temple of his God was.
 - B. *Whatever our earthly situation, either being called to be content with little to nothing or a steward of much, *let us* open our windows, our eyes, and our hearts to heaven; because not only will this let much of heaven in, but it'll also keep much of our heart's affections and our mind's thoughts on things above, Col 3.1-4; 1Pet 1.17