



CAPITOL COMMISSION

TO: *LEGISLATORS / SPOUSES/STAFF*
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WYOMING

Phil. 3:20-21 THE BELIEVER'S HOPE

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As believers, we must grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord. We must study Scripture to learn truth, growing deeper in our walk with the Lord, which will result in greater discernment. We must pursue Jesus Christ and press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Jesus Christ as Paul has taught. Jesus Christ is pre-eminent to all else, including ourselves. We must follow the examples of the faithful before us and we must be careful to avoid the many ungodly examples and not be deceived. And as a result of knowing Jesus Christ, we look forward to His eminent return!!

I. THE BELIEVER'S HOPE! PHILIPPIANS 3:20-21

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself." Philippians 3:20-21

If our lives as believers are now dedicated towards pursuing Jesus Christ, then what a certain hope and joy to know that He will return for us and we shall see Him face to face. We shall live with the One we have pursued eternally in heaven! Therefore, the believer has a heavenly focus.

A. CITIZENS OF HEAVEN- PHILIPPIANS 3:20A

"For our citizenship is in heaven." Philippians 3:20a

"citizen," Greek word **"politeuma,"** means citizens of another place, a colony of foreigners, the common wealth where one's name is recorded on the register of citizens.

Keep in mind that Philippi was a Roman colony. They were under Roman rule even though they were a long way from Rome. Philippi had its own government that must be obeyed. The Philippian citizens were Romans first and were very proud of their Roman heritage. They would sacrifice all for the sake of Rome.

Paul knew these Philippian believers could identify with the example of being *"citizens"* of a government which was a long ways off. All believers live in this world, but our home, our citizenship is in heaven. Our name is written and recorded in the book of life showing that we are citizens of heaven. And in contrast to those of Philippians 3:19 who have their minds on *"earthly things"*, the true believer is focuses on heavenly things because our citizenship is in heaven. And so we pursue Christ for the *"prize of the upward*

call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14)

B. EAGERLY WAITING FOR JESUS CHRIST- PHILIPPIANS 3:20B

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 3:20b

"eagerly wait," Greek word **"apekdechomai,"** and means to look with neck and head forward, to wait for, hope for. It has two elements: one of expectant looking and waiting and the second of patient waiting.

Paul encourages us not to be so imbedded in this present world with what it has to offer because it is temporary and passing away. Our focus is to be on Christ eagerly looking and waiting for His return! With that perspective, we will desire to be found faithful when He returns, living a life that is pleasing to Him. And remember, we are not anxiously looking forward to an event, but rather a *Person*; our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

B. WHO WILL TRANSFORM OUR BODY, CONFORMED TO HIS BODY- PHILIPPIANS 3:21A

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body..." Philippians 3:21a

"transform," Greek word **"metaschematizo,"** is the word we get schematic from and means denoting a change in condition, to transfigure, to change condition of a body from one to another.

Paul is saying that Jesus Christ will change our present bodies to a new schematic, a new build sheet, a new condition. Our bodies will be refashioned and redesigned. But how? What will we look like? This new body will have a schematic that will be conformed to Christ's *"glorious body."* What does conform mean?

"conform," Greek word **"ginomai,"** and means to become like in form, to become in general. It does not mean to be, but to become

like.

In salvation, not only are we rescued from death, sin and hell, but also Jesus Christ will transform our bodies into the image of Himself. Romans 8:29 says, "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son". We will be transformed into the perfect creation God intended us to be for the joy of perfect fellowship with Jesus Christ forever in heaven! Wow!

C. ACCORDING TO CHRIST'S SUBDUING POWER— PHILIPPIANS 3:21B

"Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself." Philippians 3:21

By what power will our Lord Jesus Christ transform our earthly bodies to be conformed to His glorious body?

"subdue," Greek word "*hupotasso*," and means to have compulsory or voluntary subordination to. It is also a military term that meant that which is of lower rank, subordinate to.

Jesus Christ has supreme and sovereign rule in the universe since He is the Creator of all things. All things are subordinate to Him. And, since all things are under His rule, then He is all-powerful to do whatever He so chooses. It is by that power that He can and will transform our earthly bodies to be conformed to His image!

Remember, salvation is the start of our race as a believer. My life becomes a lifelong pursuit of God to become like His Son, Jesus Christ. On this earth, my citizenship is in heaven and I pursue the prize of the upward call of God. And the *prize* is to become like Christ. Then, as these last verses in Philippians 3 makes clear, the final prize, the reward of my race is to actually be like Christ. How does that happen? Christ transforms my earthly body to be conformed to His glorious body. So, Christ's purpose in saving me becomes my purpose in living. The goal is being like Christ, the prize is being Christlike and that happens when my Lord and Savior returns. Until then, I eagerly wait for His coming!

D. IN CONCLUSION- PSALM 116

When Paul met Jesus Christ, he realized that all his personal and religious efforts for salvation were a pile of _____ rubbish. God was not

impressed with his achievements even if others were. So Paul gives it all up in exchange for "*the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*" (Philippians 3:8) Salvation was not the end for Paul but only the beginning of a life lived to honor and glorify God. Paul saw his life as "*laying hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 3:12) Paul had one driving compulsion to "*press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 3:14) The goal of his life was to be like Christ and Paul pressed hard with energetic endeavor, pursuing with all his might to this end. The final prize, the reward of his race was to be like Christ. And in the end, as a result of knowing Jesus Christ and having a righteousness derived through faith found only in Jesus Christ, we can look forward to living with Jesus Christ in heaven forever!

Paul counted all things as loss compared to the surpassing value of knowing Jesus Christ. It showed in his life as he changed his direction and goals. The pattern he walked was now different. The goal he pressed on for was clear. Indeed, to Paul, there was nothing compared to the surpassing value of knowing Jesus Christ!

Psalm 116:12 says, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Each of us must answer that question for ourselves. What will you render to the Lord for all He has done for you? As believers, we have been given so much through our relationship with Christ. While Christ has no price on His free mercy and grace, the only acceptable gift to the Lord is our lives lived in obedience and thankfulness to Him. Will you?

If you were to sum up your life to this point *now*, how would you have to finish the following statement?

This one thing I do, _____.

If you could change your life to where that sentence would read something else, what would it say?

This one thing I do, _____.

What would it take to make changes for that to be true? What will you render to the Lord for all He has done for you?