

# “We Are: Citizens of Heaven”

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## Scripture

### Philippians 3:17-21

“Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.”

## Nationalism

Dual Citizenship -> Paul had it (Roman and Hebrew)

## Be Subject to the Government: Honor our Leaders and Pay our Taxes

### Romans 13:1-7

“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Therefore, **whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God**; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

**For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;** for it is a minister of God to you for good.

But if you do what is evil, be afraid; **for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God**, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

**Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.** For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

**Render to all what is due them:** tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.”

If you didn't like Trump; **God put him in office** -> your beef is with God, not Trump

If you don't like Biden; **God put him in office** -> your beef is with God, not Biden

## Pray for the Nation's Spiritual Healing

You have no doubt heard the verse:

### 2 Chronicles 7:14

**If My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.**

Let's Look at the Entire Passage, however

### 2 Chronicles 7:11-22

"Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's palace, and successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the LORD and in his palace.

Solomon achieved David's vision to build a permanent house for God

12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. "If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and **My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.**

"Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place.

16 **"For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.**

**"As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, even to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David,** saying, You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.'

19 **"But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.**

**"As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?"** "And they will say, 'Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore, He has brought all this adversity on them.'"

Solomon was **given a promise of both blessing and a curse,** depending on how he acted in relation to God's Word.

Solomon started well and the Kingdom was united for a while...until he went after other gods, and the Kingdom was divided into the Northern and Southern tribes.

Then both the North (carried away to Assyria in 722 BC) and the South (carried away to Babylon in 586 BC) were punished for their idolatry.

God will only bless and heal the U.S.A. if we follow His word.

So, we must pray for **revival** before He will heal our land.

## Pray for the Nation's Prosperity

You may have heard this verse:

### Jeremiah 29:11

**"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."**

Let's Look at the Entire Passage, however

### Jeremiah 29:4-14

"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

**5**Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease.

**7**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 have welfare.'

**8**"For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,' declares the LORD.

**10**"For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.

**11**For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. **Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.** **I will be found by you,'** declares the LORD, and **I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,'** declares the LORD, and **I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile."**

Those who were carried away to live in Babylon were to pray for the prosperity in Babylon so that THEY would have prosperity while that lived there.

**We are to pray for the health of the nation where we live, for its prosperity, for its protection from enemies.**

The Jews would return to Jerusalem in three waves after the 70 years were completed and Nehemiah led the rebuilding of the walls. Ezra reestablished the temple and the importance of God's Word. God again blessed the temple and His Name through bringing the Messiah to that temple to teach.

**So, we must pray for our nation's prosperity so that we, the believers, may prosper.**

**But the Bible makes it clear, we are to avoid being changed by the world**

## Conformed to This World?

**But we should not be conformed to this world:**

Paul called us to resist conforming to the world system:

### **Romans 12:1-2**

“Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, **to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Conformed is *suschématizó* which means “to have the same outward shape” or “follow the same pattern”.

**We are not to follow the same pattern of life as the world. We are to be different**, set apart, and consecrated as holy.

Jesus prayed to the Father:

### **John 17:13-18**

“But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.

"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15" **I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.**

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

"**Sanctify them in the truth**; Your word is truth. "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."

**We are to impact the world through Christ and the Holy Spirit, not be changed BY the world**

### **The World is Passing Away**

#### **1 John 2:15-17**

“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts**; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”

The world system will not last. It is sick with sin. It will not get better -> It will decay until destroyed -> Revelation 17-18.

We should be separate from that system. **We must live in the world yet not be conformed to it nor should we let it infect us.**

## 2 Peter 3:10-12

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which **the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat**, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, **what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness**, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!”

We know the earth will burn itself up...global warming should not be a surprise to us.

Knowing that this will happen, Peter asks us, “What sort of people ought you to be?”

The answer is **Godly** -> **following a biblical lifestyle and calling and leading others to follow our example.**

## Philippians 3:17-21

**Follow Our Pattern** -> (Paul, Timothy, and others)

“Brethren, **join in following my example**, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.”

## 1 Corinthians 11:1

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

## Hebrews 13:7

“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and **considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.**”

Follow godly examples -> Peter called Elders to prove “to be examples to the flock” (**1 Peter 5:3**)

Observe those who walk well -> “**Mark them**” (KJV) -> “I want to follow THAT guy!”

## Many Are Enemies of Jesus

“For many walk, of whom I often told you, and **now tell you even weeping**, that **they are enemies of the cross of Christ**, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.”

Many are enemies of Christ: **some are overt in their opposition** while **others are more passive** in rejecting Jesus

**There is an unpardonable sin:**

## Matthew 12:30-32

**“He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.**

"Therefore, I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; **but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.**"

The Pharisees knew that Jesus was from God by His works. No one could raise someone from the dead without that being a work of God via the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said that not believing in Him (for a time) because of lack of knowledge of who He was or being ignorant of His life would be forgiven but knowing that God was in Him and calling His works the works of Satan, that **will not be forgiven now or into eternity.**

That is overt opposition: **All Dogs Might Go to Heaven, but All Atheists, for Sure, will go to Hell.**

Their god is their own belly or appetite: they're in it for themselves on the earth and set their mind on earthly things, for their own glory and prestige, like the Pharisees were.

**They can be leading churches, but they are not following God the Father in Heaven.**

## Our Citizenship in Heaven

**“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself”**

KJV uses “conversation” instead of “Citizenship” -> 1611 -> NKJV uses “Citizenship”

That great English pastor Charles Spurgeon spoke of this and gave an example of the Christian life on earth being a business trip: a Londoner working in New York City.

## Colossians 3:1-4

**“Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.**

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

Be focused on Heavenly things, not earthly ones.

**Do not get lost in the emotion of elections and political movements -> none of that matters eternally.**

You're not from here! You are a Londoner just visiting...

## Communion and Prayer