

Memory Verse

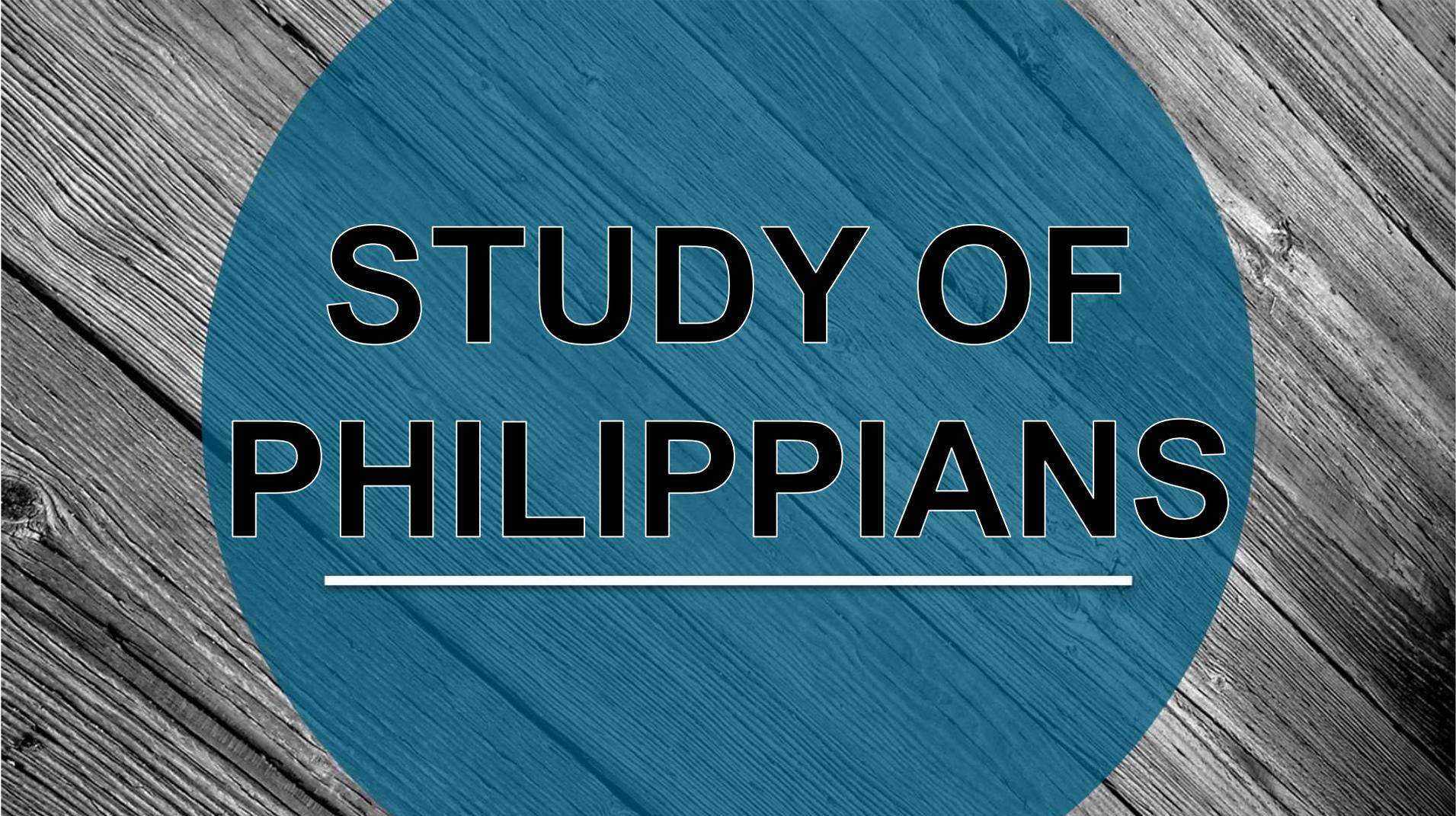
Philippians 3:20-21

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.

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**STUDY OF
PHILIPPIANS**

PHILIPPIANS

Part 17

**Jesus will Return
and We will Rise!**

Philippians 3:17-19

We have learned...

- Paul founded this assembly in Acts 16, about 49AD and wrote about 62AD
- He thanked them for their financial gift, and discussed many issues in chapters 1-2
- In chapter 3, he wrote of a group who said Gentiles had to follow the Law
- He spoke of his past and focused on faith in Christ, and also about running the race for the prize, with Christ, for Christ, towards Christ

Philippians 3:20-4:1

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself. Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

The *enemies of the cross*. Their *end is destruction*, or eternal damnation. The Christians end is *eternal bliss with Christ*. The enemies set *their minds on this earth*. Christians set *their minds on heaven*. The enemies *look only to this earth in the here and now*. Christians *live here, but look there*. The enemies' *god is themselves*. Christians know there is *One God* and we follow *Jesus as the Son of God, God the Son*.

A. 3:20 – Our Citizenship

- Our Citizenship is in Heaven

Paul is contrasting the *enemies of the cross of Christ* with those who have *embraced the cross of Christ* and all that goes with it. It is probable this also goes back to the commands of *verse 17*, to follow Paul's and others example. So there are 2 reasons the Philippians were to live as Paul instructed them:

1. There are enemies of Christ's cross.
2. Our citizenship is in heaven.

“What does Paul mean by the term **citizenship** (politeuma)? It is difficult to be extremely precise since the term is not used in the NT on any other occasion. Various translations have been offered, including: (1) commonwealth; (2) colony; (3) citizenship; (4) state, etc... First, Paul says this “citizenship” or “belonging-ness to a people group” exists in heaven. It is not an earthly citizenship to which Christians belong. This does not imply in any way, however, that the early

Christians did not have responsibilities to the earthly state, province, and government under which they lived (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17). What it does mean is that our ultimate home is in heaven and that we are strangers and aliens here (1 Pet 2:11). Second, since it is a citizenship *in heaven*, the ethical and spiritual standards of heaven, not those of the alien world in which the Christian is found, are *the* standards. This is the primary force of the term citizenship here

(dynamic and active, not just static). The Christian is to **imitate** godly examples (v. 17) and not to live like enemies of the cross of Christ (vv. 18-19) because the standards of their genuine and eternal citizenship in heaven apply now! Third, the term **citizenship** connotes images of a mass of people, all living under one rule... Fourth, the citizenship of which the Christian is a part has a ruler, a governor if you will. He is Jesus, whom Paul refers to as “a savior,” and “the Lord.” *Bible.org*

A. 3:20 – Our Citizenship

Philippi had a special status in the Roman Empire, *along with those who lived there!* While this was a good thing but Paul didn't want that to be their focus. *Their earthly citizenship was eclipsed by their heavenly citizenship!* Their **first allegiance** is to Christ and their home in heaven, *where we will end up one day.* Christ is the **King** and *He will return and set up His Kingdom on earth,* and rule from His throne, from Jerusalem.

A. 3:20 – Our Citizenship

As Christians, we *await that Kingdom to come* and as **its citizens**, we are to *act differently on earth*. We need to be **careful in our own lives** about *letting the world dictate what we think, how we act, what we believe, and what the truth is, and more*. But *our citizenship*, our home is in heaven! We *live life here*, but we are *just passing through*.

A. 3:20 – Our Citizenship

- We Await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

Paul uses the *personal Name of Jesus*, calls Him Lord or *Master* and Christ, or "*anointed One*" and Messiah. He adds: **Savior - salvation**. *He is the Savior, or deliverer or preserver*. For Rome and for the people of Philippi, they knew *Caesar was called a savior*, one who protects them from outside forces that would *destroy them*. Paul uses the cultural understanding to say *Caesar is not their savior, but Jesus is!*

B. 3:21 – Our King

Part of *citizenship* is *one belongs to a kingdom*, with a king. There is the *universal Kingdom* which *God rules* and is spoken of in the Bible, and a *specific Kingdom* God promised to Israel in the Old Testament, where Messiah would rule and reign. There are different views on God's Kingdom, and while the *principles of living apply now*, the *Kingdom is still future*. **Jesus is not ruling on earth yet.**

B. 3:21 – Our King

- Who will Transform our Lowly Body to be like His Glorious Body

This echoes 2:5-11... Because He is **glorified**, we will be **glorified**! He who was *transformed by God's power*, will *transform us*! The word "*transform*" is "change the outward appearance (the dress, the form of presentment) of something, transfigure; adapt."

"Christ at his return will “transform” (... “change the outward form of”) believers’ mortal bodies, so that they will conform to the character of his resurrection body. The present body is described literally as “the body of lowliness”... calling attention to its weakness and susceptibility to persecution, disease, sinful appetites, and death. At Christ’s coming... believers will be transformed and will receive glorified bodies that will more adequately display their essential character... as

children of God and sharers of divine life in Christ. This will be accomplished by the same effective operation (*energeian*) that will ultimately bring all things in the universe under the authority of Christ.” *Bible.org*

This is one reason, we look forward to the transformation of our body into a *form like His glorious body, or a body of honor!* Then will we have a perfect relationship with Jesus, and have a perfect body without sin like Jesus!

B. 3:21 – Our King

- *John 20:19-20*. Thomas was not with them...
- *John 20:26-28*. Jesus was *physical*, though *different*. The *text* does not say *He walked through a wall*. While His *resurrected body* was *and is physical*, it is **supernatural**.
- *Luke 24:36-43*, Jesus appeared to the disciples and ate fish. This indicates what our *resurrected, immortal bodies* will be like!
- Study *1 Corinthians 15:35-58*.

B. 3:21 – Our King

Our *mortal body* will be like His *immortal body*!
Our *perishable body* will be *imperishable*!

One question that arises, is what happens to us **before** we get our resurrected bodies? When *someone dies*, that *person's spirit goes to heaven or hell*. There are **no other options**. Though we have a *disembodied spirit*, we *have a form* we are not given a lot of details about.

B. 3:21 – Our King

- By His Power

By the *power that enables Him to do these things...*
What power? **His power!** King Jesus has the *ability and authority* to do what Paul says, *guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit*. The word for **power** is "*energiea*."
Paul writes Jesus has the *power to give us a new body*.
Paul does not stop there, but, in addition to His power to give us a new body, ***Christ has the power to subject all things to Himself!***

B. 3:21 – Our King

Psalm 2:7-9 - I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten You. Ask of me, and I will make the nations Your heritage, and the ends of the earth Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

B. 3:21 – Our King

Psalm 110:1-2 - The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.” The LORD sends forth from Zion Your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!

B. 3:21 – Our King

Isaiah 9:6-7 - For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His Name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His Kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

C. 4:1 – Our Stance

Paul says "*Therefore.*" This word *refers to what comes before this word!* Paul said "Therefore" in 2:12 and remember, this means... *as a result of the truth and doctrine I have just laid out for you, you should think and live in a certain way. This is his application.*

After showering them with compliments, he gives them a command - *stand firm.*

C. 4:1 – Our Stance

It is a *continuous command - keep on standing firm*. After Paul tells them some wonderfully encouraging doctrine, he says *what to do in response to that doctrine*. ***Keep standing firm***; *keep on continuously persisting and persevering* in this life. He is not only telling them what to do, but *the reason for doing it!* Because we **will** get a *resurrected body, we can stand firm*. He adds "*thus in the Lord,*" or *in this way or manner...*

C. 4:1 – Our Stance

This at least goes back to 3:17, where he *tells the readers to follow his example*, be careful of *false teachings and teachers* and remember where our loyalty lies, as we *await our King*, who will transform us and give us a new body! All this is *included* here! **Jesus is coming and we will rise, and therefore, we can stand firm in the truth in love, in the face of opposition, hatred, confusion, and hopelessness.**

Prayer

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6

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