**MORE TO LIFE**

[**Philippians 3:20**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Phil%203.20)**, 21**

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the problems of life today for many people is that they have no direction. Many are like Alice in Wonderland, who asked the Cheshire Cat: “Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?”

“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the cat. “I don’t much care where,” said Alice. “Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the cat.

The truth is, it matters a whole lot where all of us are going. As Christians, we live and die, hope and suffer, achieve and fail with a lasting, and obvious joy because we see something greater. We’re the only ones who can fully realize that this life is a gift from the hand of our Father. True enjoyment of life present and eternal is ours in Jesus Christ.

We read earlier in **Philippians 3:20** that we are citizens of high heaven. When someone leaves one country to become a citizen in another, there’s a process they have to go through. When it comes to our citizenship in Heaven, Jesus Christ has already gone through the necessary process by dying for us on Calvary. By the oath and covenant of His blood. He has earned this privilege for us. So we’re no longer alienated; we are sons and daughters of God. As Christians we’re different from non-Christians who belong to just the kingdom of this world. *“There’s far more to life for us.”*

**I. CITIZENS OF HIGH HEAVEN! (vs. 20)**

**a. A Colony of Heavenly Citizens**

We read in **Hebrews 11:10**, [NLT](http://www.christianbook.com/page/bibles/translations/nlt?navcat=Bibles|Translations|NLT): *"Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God."* Paul says in our text, *“We’re citizens of high heaven!*

WarrenWeirsbe says that this *“word ‘citizen’ is where we get the English word ‘politics.’ It has to do with one’s behavior as a citizen of a nation. Paul is encouraging us to have the spiritual mind, and he does this by pointing out the characteristics of the Christian whose citizenship is in heaven. Just as Philippi was a colony of Rome on foreign soil, so the church is a ‘colony of heaven’ on earth”* (Wiersbe, *Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2, 92).

In **Acts 16**, in Paul’s second missionary journey, we read: *"Putting out from the harbor at Troas, we made a straight run for Samothrace. The next day we tied up at New City and walked from there to Philippi, the main city in that part of Macedonia and, even more importantly, a Roman colony. . ."*

A Roman colony was made by at least three hundred Roman citizens, mostly veterans of the Roman legion. They went out from Rome, usually with a pension, after they’d fought in wars.  They would go out to places given to them by the Caesar all around the Roman Empire, and build a model of Rome, a copy of the great capital city.

The people living in these colonies were proud to be Roman citizens. So it had great meaning for them when Paul wrote to them: *"For our citizenship, is in heaven"* [**Philippians 3:20**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Phil%203.20)**.**

William Barclay’s paraphrase of this verse says: *"We have our home in heaven, and here on earth we are a colony of heaven's citizens."* Paul is saying: *"Just as the Roman colonists never forgot that they belong to Rome, you must never forget that you are citizens of heaven; and your conduct must match your citizenship."*

**b. Conducting Ourselves Like Believers**

As God’s people and citizens of heaven, God expects us to be different. Jesus said when he stood on trial before Pilate in [**John 18:36**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/John%2018.36): "My kingdom is not of this world".  Not long before that He said to His disciples in [**John 14:2-3**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/John%2014.2-3): *"I go to prepare a place for you.  And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also".*

Our hearts by faith in Jesus Christ are settled in Heaven. That doesn’t mean that we are not identified with this world too – we still experience everything that has to do with our life on earth; the fear and danger of war; disease; famine; cold and heat; the laws of the land; the influence of people and things around us. We don’t close our eyes and pretend we’re not here; we make a decision to live differently in our short span of life. We try to influence others for God and pray that He will convict them by His Holy Spirit, to turn their hearts to Him. But our home and our future are not here. They’re where Jesus is – in Heaven. And by the grace of God we live like we believe that.

Having our citizenship in heaven causes us to be the opposite of those Paul warns about in **verse 19** whose god is their appetite, whose glory is their shame, and who set their minds on earthly things that are passing away. A mind set on heavenly things looks for all that is related to heaven including the glory of our returning Lord and all that means for us. We seek and find eternal satisfaction in our God instead of the fleeting pleasures of our appetites.

Paul says: **7-9 (The Message)** *“The very credentials these people are waving around as something special, I’m tearing up and throwing out with the trash—along with everything else I used to take credit for. And why? Because of Christ. Yes, all the things I once thought were so important are gone from my life. Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant—dog dung. I’ve dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by him. I didn’t want some petty, inferior brand of righteousness that comes from keeping a list of rules when I could get the robust kind that comes from trusting Christ—God’s righteousness. But there are some great and wonderful things that belong to us, and that characterize us, we who are children of the King, citizens of heaven, whose commonwealth is in glory.”*

People who don’t have a relationship with Christ might put all their hopes on shifting things of earth, but not we who belong to Him. There’s more to life for us. Our set of laws is a different one than the world follows. It was given by Jesus in **Matthew 5:17-48**.

We are not to live in this world as though we belonged. We’re pilgrims here.  God does not intend for us to live like this life is all there is.  We’re not to grasp things here as though they were forever ours.

**c. Conveyed into His Kingdom.**

As Christians, we are never to regard this earth as our permanent dwelling place. [**Hebrews 11:14-16**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Heb%2011.14-16) refers to the old saints who died with their faith in the Lord**:** *“Each one of these people of faith died not yet having in hand what was promised, but still believing. How did they do it? They saw it way off in the distance, waved their greeting, and accepted the fact that they were transients in this world. People who live this way make it plain that they are looking for their true home. If they were homesick for the old country, they could have gone back any time they wanted. But they were after a far better country than that—heaven country. You can see why God is so proud of them, and has a City waiting for them.”*

These saints are in heaven now, home in glory, with many more, who died with their faith in the same Lord. Some of them were very close to us and we miss them, but everything and everyone we love on this earth is fleeting, just like we are. But our hope and lasting home is in glory. We belong to a glorious kingdom now that we’ve inherited already – it’s not future –.Paul writes in **Colossians 1:12-13: “***12giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.”*

This verse saysthe Father **has** qualified us; He **has** delivered us from the power of darkness – and He **has** conveyed us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love. We’re already enrolled by the blood of Jesus as citizens of a kingdom that is yet to come.

Yes, we’re living here for now, but our real home is in heaven.  We have family here, but our real family is in Heaven.

We have fellowship here, broken and fading away, but our real fellowship is in heaven.  We have a body here, a house made of dust and clay that ages, and suffers all the pain and trouble of this world, but [**2 Corinthians 5:1**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/2%20Cor%205.1) tells us that our real house is *made without hands, eternal in the heavens*.

Our names are known in Heaven. They’re all recorded in one book, along with every person who has ever trusted Jesus as Savior. In **Revelation 21:27** this book is called the Lamb’s Book of Life, and no one whose name is not written there will enter Heaven:  *“Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”* We belong there, not here.

That’s why Paul dumped in the trash all the things that he used to think were important before he met Jesus Christ.

**II. WAITING FOR HIS COMING (vs. 20)**

***“We’re waiting the arrival of the Savior, the Master, Jesus Christ, who will transform our earthy bodies into glorious bodies like his own.”***

Does it get any better than that?

**a. Alive in the Promise**

We read in [**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/1%20Thess%204.16-17) **(The Message):** *“We can tell you with complete confidence—we have the Master’s word on it—that when the Master comes again to get us, those of us who are still alive will not get a jump on the dead and leave them behind. In actual fact, they’ll be ahead of us. The Master himself will give the command. Archangel thunder! God’s trumpet blast! He’ll come down from heaven and the dead in Christ will rise—they’ll go first. Then the rest of us who are still alive at the time will be caught up with them into the clouds to meet the Master. Oh, we’ll be walking on air! And then there will be one huge family reunion with the Master. So reassure one another with these words.”*

What a glorious hope! Jesus’ return is the pivotal event of the future, but Paul stresses here that it is the **person** that we are eagerly waiting for. The event itself and its consequences are secondary.

Jesus Himself already promised His disciples that He would return in **John 14:2-3**: *"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* We have Jesus’ own word on it!

Donald MacLeod, in his book: “A Faith to Live By”, Christian Focus, Fearn, 1998, p.262) says this: *“Jesus is coming back in person to this world he came to as a baby in. He is personally returning to this world which he once visited personally two thousand years ago. But this time his return will be in glory. The first advent was a real presence, but it was in lowliness and humiliation. He came in obscurity, incognito. He came in hiddenness, in anonymity. He came into poverty, homelessness, oppression, lowliness and weakness. He came into pain, shame, dishonor, rejection, death on the cross. He came as the great Nobody, the one who looked just like any man, utterly human, a servant. “But when he returns he will return in the glory of the blessed God. He will look like he is. He will look like the world’s Savior. He will look like God. He will come with the doxa, the form, the splendor, the majesty, of God himself. He will come in all the paraphernalia of deity. He will come in the form that he had for a moment on the Mount of Transfiguration. He will come in the kind of glory with which Jehovah came to Mount Sinai in the days of Moses. He will come in the splendor with which Isaiah saw him in* ***Isaiah 6****.”*

**b. Anxious to Receive Him.**

As heavenly citizens we should be eager for Jesus’ return. The phrase “eagerly wait” speaks of zealous anticipation. In Greek, this word has the idea of a child standing on tiptoe waiting for his daddy to come home from work at the end of the day. As believers in Jesus, we should have this same type of childish excitement about the second coming of Jesus. Like Paul, we should have a radical fixation on Christ’s return. Paul tells us in **2 Timothy 4:8** that if we love Christ’s appearing, He will one day reward us with the crown of righteousness.

**III. TRANSFORMED BY HIS POWER. (vs. 21)**

**“*He’ll make us beautiful and whole with the same powerful skill by which he is putting everything as it should be, under and around him.”***

**a. Changed for Heaven.**

*He will transform our lowly bodies:* Our earthly bodies are brought low by disease, old age, accidents, etc. But one glorious day the bodies of those who are in Christ are going to be gloriously transformed, and *“be like Christ’s glorious body”* (**v.21**). this body will be like Jesus’ body when He ascended into glory; like the one Paul saw on the Road to Damascus; like Jesus’ body when He was Transfigured; like the glorious sight John saw on the Isle of Patmos; bright and shining, displaying all the glory of God, fitted for Heaven and for serving the Lord for eternity.

**b. Charged by the Holy Spirit.**

Paul says **in I Corinthians 15:35-43:** *“But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” 36Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. 37And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain. 38But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. 39All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind [*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=I+Corinthians+15%3A35-43&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-28758a)*]of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.*

*40There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. 41There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.*

*42So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.”*

And the all-powerful Lord of Creation will do thisby His Holy Spirit as **verse 21** tells us: *“by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control”*. This is the hope that we have for the future.

**CONCLUSION:**

Knowing all this should have a profound effect on how we live on this earth. It should stir us to live for Christ and to set our earthly goals on heavenly gains. That’s what Paul is saying here – we have so much to live for – so much to live out when we think that we are to be imitators of Christ by the power of His Holy Spirit, so that others will be drawn to Him through our lives.

[**1 Peter 2:11**](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/1%20Pet%202.11) says: *“Friends, this world is not your home, so don’t make yourselves cozy in it. Don’t indulge your ego at the expense of your soul. Live an exemplary life among the natives so that your actions will refute their prejudices. Then they’ll be won over to God’s side and be there to join in the celebration when he arrives.”*

At the foot of one of the Swiss Alps is a marker honoring a man who fell to his death while attempting to climb to the top. The marker gives his name and then this brief epitaph “He died climbing.” This should be the epitaph of every Christian. We should be able to say with confidence as we slip from this world into the next that “we died climbing” experiencing the joy of living for Jesus now with the hope of Heaven in our hearts, looking forward as God’s children to that day when He will take us to be with Him in glory.