TALKING POINTS

Uniting Heaven and Earth:
Christ in Philippians & Colossians
Q1L7: "A Heavenly Citizenship"

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MEMORY VERSE: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." Philippians 4:6, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This week we conclude our study of Philippians by looking at some practical aspects of being a citizen of heaven even now.

1. Heaven starts here (Sab, Mon)

- All the practical counsel Paul gives at the close of Philippians is predicated on the fact that we are presently citizens of heaven (see Phil. 3:20; 1 Jn. 3:2, 3).
    - "As Christians, we are citizens of God's heavenly kingdom. And with that citizenship comes privileges, wonderful privileges. And responsibilities, too." Qtly, Sab, par 3
- When Christ returns, He will give us a heavenly body that corresponds to the heavenly character we have grown by His grace (see Phil. 3:21; Rom. 8:18-23; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Jn. 2:28; Heb. 9:26-28).

> When Christ shall come, our vile bodies are to be changed, and made like His glorious body; but the vile character will not be made holy then. The transformation of character must take place before His coming. Our natures must be pure and holy; we must have the mind of Christ, that He may behold with pleasure His image reflected upon our souls. OHC 278.3

2. We should have and be good role models (Sun, Wed)

- As we seek to be faithful citizens of heaven, Paul urges us to pattern our lives after his and other faithful leaders (Phil. 3:17; 4:9).
    - Interestingly, he also urges us to note the behavior of those who are unfaithful to be sure not to follow their bad example! (Phil. 3:18, 19; Rom. 16:17, 18).
    - As we follow godly role models, we become role models to others (see Phil. 4:5; 1 Thes. 1:5-7).

- This transformation is not easy or passive but is entirely possible in Christ's strength.
    - We are urged to "stand fast in the Lord" (Phil. 4:1). By "prayer and supplication" we can experience the "peace of God" that will "guard you hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7).
        - "Interestingly, Philippians 4:7 uses a military metaphor in connection with God's peace. The Greek verb (phroureō) is used to describe a garrison of soldiers guarding a city against invasion (2 Cor. 11:32; compare Acts 9:24)." Qtly, Wed, par 1
    - We can only experience that "peace… which surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7) when we choose to contemplate and practice principles of righteousness—what the lesson calls "heavenly virtues" (see Phil. 4:8, 9).

3. When you have Jesus, you have all you need (Tue, Thu)

- Paul wrote from prison to believers who would also face persecution, nevertheless he remained calm—and even joyful—in Jesus.
    - When we "stand fast in the Lord" (Phil. 4:1) we can "rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. 4:4) and "be anxious for nothing" (Phil. 4:6).
- Paul's trust in Christ had grown to such an extent that he could say, "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" for "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:11, 13)
    - It was this confidence in Christ that Paul desired the Philippians, and all of us, to experience when he wrote in closing how "my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

CONCLUSION

God knows our wants, and has provided for them. The Lord has a treasure house of supplies for His children, and can give them what they need under all circumstances. Then why do we not trust Him? He has made precious promises to His children on condition of faithful obedience to His precepts. There is not a burden but He can remove, no darkness but He can dispel, no weakness but He can change to power, no fears but He can calm, no worthy aspiration but He can guide and justify. TMK 224.3 (Qtly, Fri, par 4)