

Citizens of Heaven

Philippians 3:17-21

Big Idea: Our citizenship is in heaven, not on earth. Are you walking with someone who follows Jesus? Are you leading someone to Him? Keep your eyes on the cross and remember: Jesus is coming back. Is your trust in Him alone? That's your passport to eternal life.

Key Takeaways:

1. We need godly examples to follow - Paul encourages us to imitate him as he imitates Christ
2. The cross is central - Our salvation and citizenship in heaven come only through Jesus' sacrifice
3. We are citizens of heaven - This world is not our permanent home
4. We will be transformed - We have the promise of glorified bodies and are being transformed now

Scriptures:

- ☐ 1 Corinthians 11:1
- ☐ Romans 7
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
- ☐ Galatians 6:14
- ☐ John 10
- ☐ Matthew 16:13-23
- ☐ Hebrews 11:13-16
- ☐ 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

Opening Question:

Who is someone that has been a significant example or mentor in your spiritual journey, and what impact have they had on your life?

Discussion Questions:

Who is your Paul? Share the name of someone who has helped you grow in your faith. What specific qualities do they demonstrate that draw you closer to Jesus?

Pastor Tim mentioned that when we get close to people, we'll see "chinks in their armor." How do we balance learning from imperfect people while keeping our ultimate focus on Christ?

Why do you think Paul could confidently say "imitate me" without being prideful? What does this teach us about spiritual leadership?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 together. Why do you think the message of the cross is considered "foolishness" to so many people today?

The sermon stated that "people reject the idea of the cross of Christ because of the reality of its truth." What makes it so difficult for people to admit they are sinners in need of a Savior?

Read Hebrews 11:13-16. The heroes of faith saw themselves as "strangers and exiles on earth." How can we cultivate this same perspective in our comfortable modern lives?

If someone examined your calendar, budget, and priorities, would they conclude that your citizenship is in heaven? Why or why not?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 54-57. How does the promise of a glorified body encourage you in your current struggles (physical, emotional, or spiritual)?

Pastor Tim mentioned we are "justified" but being "sanctified." What's the difference, and why does it matter?

Practical Applications:

1. Write down the name of your "Paul" and schedule time with them
2. Identify your "Timothy" and reach out to begin meeting regularly
3. Memorize Philippians 3:20-21
4. Spend time each day this week reflecting on the cross and what it means for you
5. Make a list of "earthly things" that compete for your attention and pray about surrendering them
6. Share the gospel with someone who needs to hear about their need for a "passport to heaven"
7. Journal about what it means to be a citizen of heaven in your specific life circumstances

Closing Thought/Prayer:

Reflect on whether your life is marked by a pursuit of knowing Jesus and having your "passport" ready, and consider how you can either seek a Paul to guide you or be a Paul to a Timothy in your walk with Christ.
