

Citizenship

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[0 : 00] Music Philippians 3 verse 20! For our conversation, or you could say our citizenship, is in heaven.

! From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. It says, for our conversation, or for our citizenship, is in heaven.

From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our citizenship, our community, where we belong, where we really belong.

For me, it's not England where I was born. I really don't belong to England, the mother country. I don't belong there anymore. I've learnt to get rid of that horrible accent.

That lovely accent. But even when people hear me talk, they say, Oh, there's something about your accent. There's something about it. I can tell that you're not a true blue Aussie.

[1 : 13] But I don't belong to England anymore. I applied to be naturalised as an Australian citizen. And they counted me worthy of that privilege to be called an Aussie.

But really, I don't belong to Australia either. I really don't belong there. And really, if we are God's people, we belong to the kingdom of heaven.

We belong to heaven. Are you a citizen of that fair land? Are you a citizen of heaven? How will we know if we belong there?

Matthew 6, 33 tells us of the kingdom of God. It's a familiar one. Matthew 6, 33. It says, But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6, 33. It's talking about the daily needs of life in the context there. And number one, how will we know if we belong to heaven is the rule.

[2 : 21] The rule that you are under, the rule that you come under will be different when you become a citizen of heaven. The rule will change.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. God will be your king. The Lord Jesus will be that one who is the king of kings.

The Lord Jesus. The rule changes when you become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. And it's not so much about rules as about a rule.

A ruler. A ruler. And this sovereign, this king is a sovereign who is not a dictator. Who is not a dictator, but is a loving sovereign.

A king that you would love to have reigning over you. And a citizen of heaven will be recognized as a person who comes under God's rule.

[3 : 23] And being a citizen of the kingdom means that we come under a rule. We come under the reign. We come under the authority of a government. As a Christian, what is our rule?

We ought to be governed by the word of God. You know, in many statements of faith and how people describe it and honor the word of God, they say the word of God is our rule of faith and conduct.

It's our rule of life, of discipline. It's the rule of our lives. It's by this that we measure, as we'd use a ruler. It's the straight up and down. It's the rule by which we are to be governed.

We ought to be governed by the word of God. And when Christ reigns as king in our lives and hearts, we will want to be true and faithful and obedient to God and to his rule, to his reign, to his word as our first and foremost affection and consideration.

Now, some pretend Christians will not come under the government of God. They sound a bit like the people in Luke 19 verse 14 who are talking of the Lord Jesus. And they say it as they pointed to him, we will not have this man reign over us.

[4 : 37] That is how this world treats the Lord Jesus Christ today. That is how many, sadly, treat the Lord Jesus Christ today. They don't want to come under his rule.

They don't want to come under his authority. We will not have this man rule over us. They reject his reign. They reject his kingship. Where does Christ rule as king?

His kingdom is spiritual. His kingdom reigns and rules in the hearts of men and women. He sets up his throne there. He sets up his throne in human hearts just like yours and mine.

If he is truly king, then he will rule the will and affections. His power will guide the conscience and he will lead our desires. In Micah 7 verse 79, it says, he will subdue our iniquities.

It's got the sense of his domination. And yet it is a compassionate and a loving domination. It is a rule that will do you good.

[5 : 41] It is a rule that will lift you and guide you and govern you in the right way. So friends tonight, come under his rule and reign.

You will not regret that. Don't be as those who said, we will not have him reign over us. Come under his rule. Let every consideration, let every decision of our life be made with his kingdom in view.

With his government in view. With that government of our life in view. And consider God's view of something in making those choices of your life.

That is the wise thing to do. Let God's kingdom have that prime place. That foremost place. Seek ye first the kingdom of God. Number 2. And his righteousness.

So the citizen will be marked by the rule that they acknowledge. The rule that they submit and come under. The rule is the first thing of the citizen.

[6 : 45] And the second thing is of the citizen of heaven. Seek ye first the kingdom of God. And his righteousness. Righteousness. It's the kingdom's culture.

It's the kingdom's culture of the kingdom of heaven. What is this kingdom's culture? What is its language? What is its way of life? A citizen of heaven will be recognized as a person who demonstrates God's righteousness.

A citizen of heaven will be known as a person who demonstrates God's righteousness. In 1 Timothy 5 verse 22. We see Christ's standard is absolute purity.

1 Timothy 5 verse 22. It says keep yourself pure. Keep yourself pure. Keep yourself from sin. Of course we know there's that fight within all the time.

Within the human being that we are. As the flesh. As the like passions of man. As the human creature that we are.

[7 : 51] We still have that battle raging within. But the Bible tells us. Keep yourself pure. Keep yourself true. The true Christian will live faithfully and righteously.

God helping him or her. In the sight of God and man. As we submit to the rule. As we ask the Lord Jesus to give us the strength. That we entirely need to make that possible.

It will happen. Hebrews 1 verse 8. It says. But unto the Son he saith. Thy throne O God is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.

Now we. I know as a young fellow. I think it was in the last days of a trip to England. When we had a holiday there with my family. As a youngster. And we went to the Tower of London.

And we saw there the crown jewels. The different crowns of different kings and queens. Through history. In these glass cases. And there was a scepter there too.

[8 : 55] I could recall that there was such instruments. In this case. And the scepter. It's kind of that mark of the king. It's that sign of kingship.

Of his rule. And it's a feature of our king. That his scepter. That which marks his authority. As the king. Is the scepter of righteousness.

The scepter was a symbol of the king's authority. Was an emblem of his power. The culture of the kingdom. Is righteousness.

It should be evident. As a true Christian. You will be righteous. By his grace. Entirely of his grace. Entirely of his grace. Entirely of his working within.

Entirely of his glory. But you will be righteous. Because of his saving power. 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9 to 11. It says. Know ye not.

[9 : 52] That the unrighteous. Shall not inherit. The kingdom of God. Be not deceived. Neither fornicators. Nor idolaters. Nor adulterers. Nor effeminate. Nor abusers of themselves.

With mankind. Nor thieves. Nor covetous. Nor drunkards. Nor revilers. Nor extortioners. Shall inherit. Shall inherit. The kingdom of God. But here's the good news.

Here's the good news. And such were some. Of you. Such were some. Of you. But. Ye are. What? But ye are.

Sanctified. But ye are. Justified. In the name. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. And by the spirit. Of our God. Thank God. You're not written off.

If you're one of those. Aforementioned. That you can be washed. You can be sanctified. You can be made clean. Paul says though. Don't kid yourself. If you are unrighteous. You will.

[10:49] Be lost. Heaven's door. Will be barred to you. Your only hope. Your only claim. Can be his righteousness. It's your only hope. To. Lay hold. Of the.

Edge of his garment. And. Cling. To Christ. Lay hold. On him. Today. Lay hold. On his righteousness.

The conduct. Becoming. For the citizen. Of this kingdom. Is righteousness. And godliness. What a. A high. And lofty. Aspiration. Out of reach.

It would seem. To humankind. Yet. It tells us. Of 1 Peter 2. Verse 9. Of these citizens. Of this kingdom. They are a royal. Priesthood. A holy.

Nation. That will mark. These. People. Citizenship. In 2 Peter 3. It tells us. Of the Lord's coming. He says.

[11:44] Don't. Don't consider. The Lord is not slack. Concerning his promises. Some men count slackness. But he's long suffering to us. We're not willing that any. Should perish. That all should come.

Unto repentance. But. The day of the Lord. Will come as a. Thief. In the night. In the which. The heavens shall pass away. With a. Great noise. And the elements shall melt.

With fervent heat. And the earth. Shall also. And the works therein. Shall be burnt up. Seeing then. That. All these things shall be. Dissolved. What manner.

Of persons. Ought. Ye to be. In all holy. Conversation. Godliness. Looking for. And hasting unto. The coming. Of the day. Of God.

Where in the heavens. Being on fire. Shall be dissolved. And the elements. Shall melt. With fervent heat. You know. Hollywood's not seen anything yet. It's going to happen. The heavens are going to melt.

[12:39] And the earth. Is going to. Be. Transformed. And verse 13. Nevertheless. We according to. His promise. Look for.

New heavens. And a new earth. Righteousness. There's that word again. What a place. It's going to be. There won't be any. Need for. Locking your doors. Or. You know.

Need for. Concern. About. Who's your next door neighbour. In this place. Will dwell. Righteousness. Wherefore. Beloved. Seeing that you look. For such things.

Be diligent. That you may be found. Of him. In peace. Without spot. And blameless. Romans 14. 17. Of this kingdom. But the kingdom of God. Is not in me.

To drink. Righteousness. And peace. And joy. In the Holy Ghost. Matthew 5. Verse 20. To his. To his. Followers.

[13:34] He says. I say unto you. That except your righteousness. Exceed. The righteousness. Of the. Scribes and Pharisees. You shall. In no. Answer. Into the kingdom of heaven.

The Lord Jesus. He didn't set the bar. Very low. He set the bar. So high. It's unattainable. Yet. By his grace. By Christ. Righteousness. If you can lay hold.

Of him. Tonight. If you can lay hold. Of Christ. Tonight. You can know righteousness. Pure. And entirely. If you will but claim. To belong.

To this king of kings. And lord of lords. And reflect that. In your character. We'll see the culture shift. You know. We see. The culture shifting. In Australia.

Isn't it? Culture shifting. Not always in a good direction. But this culture. Does not shift. It's not going to be shaken. It stands. Forever. And friends.

[14:29] I urge you tonight. To take stock. Take heart. And take stock. Where are you at. Spiritually today. I'm not needing to. Put a yoke of bondage upon you.

Such that. As the Pharisees did. Of a. A heavy weight. Of. Something unattainable. Something unattainable. But. I want to point you.

To flee to Christ. To flee to Christ. That is where your righteousness. Can be found. Lay claim. To his righteousness. Tonight.

To his standard. Of character. And godliness. To find that truly. Christ centered life. It's an exchanged life. It's a transformed life.

It's a. It's a. It's a letting go. Of your. Rags. That are filthy. Unworthy of him. Lay hold. Of his. Robes of righteousness.

[15:29] Of his pure. And spotless garment. By. The virtue. Of what he has done. For you. To aspire. To his kingdom. So we've seen. The rule. The rule.

Of a glorious king. Of a. Perfect king. Of a sovereign. That. If there was voting. I'm sure that people would vote him in. No. But then maybe not.

It's a. Beth. They. They want to have all the. The easy thing. They want to have all the. The blessings of this king. And yet. They will not obey him. They will not have him reign over them. But this rule. Is. Of a ruler. Who is glorious. And kind. And. Has our very best. At heart. And secondly. This culture. Is a culture.

Of righteousness. This kingdom. Has a culture. Of righteousness. And thirdly. We see. As we consider. Citizenship. As. I enjoy. So many.

[16:24] Privileges now. As an Aussie. You know. Even as a. Permanent resident. Even as a visitor. To this country. That you can. Be grateful for. But think. Of the rights.

And rewards. Of being. An Australian. You know. If you were to go. Overseas. And even if you. Commence. Some dastardly act. And you get held. By.

By some. Dictatorship. Of a government. And. Yet. Your nation. Will still care. About you. Australia might go to war. Because you get locked up. Unfairly.

In another country. Wouldn't that. That's amazing isn't it. Julia Gillard. Care so much for you. That she would take the nation. To war. To defend you. To release you. From.

That foreign country. That's held you captive. Unfairly. And unjustly. Now that's the kind of nature. You know. I'm talking. Somewhat tongue in cheek here. But you can imagine that. That that is what your nation.

[17:19] Will do for you. If you are a citizen. Of this fair country. That your nation. May go to war. To see you released. To see you released. From unjust. Captivity. What a right. What a reward.

What a privilege. That is yours. If you are an Australian citizen. Think now. Of the rights. And the rewards. Of being a citizen. Of the kingdom.

Of heaven. What greater country. There's no better country. Than this one. The third aspect. Is rights. And rewards. A citizen enjoys. The privileges. The blessings.

The benefits. Of the government. In terms of protection. And provision. And a good government. Will take care. Of its citizens. So a citizen of heaven. Is a person.

Who enjoys. God's rewards. Think of the rewards. That are yours. In Christ. You've got a book. Jam packed. With promises. From cover to cover.

[18:14] Great and exceeding. And precious promises. And you can take them. Personally. Of course. There's context. And there's. There's dividing the word. And dispensations.

But of course. We can take the word. And as we read it. As it's addressing the church. We can take it. For us. And we can. Be encouraged by the blessings.

Promised to Israel too. That. We can. Take heart in. Likewise. Those rights and rewards. In the word of God. In Psalms 3 verse 3. We see that.

Our governor. Protects us. Our governor. Protects us. Psalms 3 verse 3. It says. Thou O Lord. Art a shield. For me. God is a shield. For you.

Isn't that great. Isn't that good news. Who believes that tonight. Don't you believe that. Don't you believe that. The Lord God. As a shield for you. That's a blessing.

[19:09] Isn't it. Wherever you go. Wherever you go. You've got a shield. You don't need some. Kind of riot shield. That. They wear down. And the police. Have a big riot squad.

A little flimsy. Plastic shield. You've got the Lord. Your God. As a shield for you. No one can penetrate that. And one of their rights and privileges. As a citizen of heaven.

Is the joy of being his servant. In this. It says of vessels of honor. In 2 Timothy 2. 21. What an honor. As an honor being a Christian. It's an honor being a vessel.

A great honor to serve him. To serve Christ our King. More than to serve any human kings. Even to have kings serve us.

It's our privilege to be a chosen. A vessel of honor. And so. Are you his subject? Are you his servant? In Revelation 2 verse 20. One day Christ will make.

[20:08] His subjects kings. Says in Revelation 2 verse 20. Of course. We've got to consider the context. I'm. Stretching it. But. In the context of Revelation 2 verse 20.

The people addressed there. He says. I will give thee. A crown of life. I think they were martyrs. Sketchy somewhat. But of course. There was a context there. But he says. I will give thee.

A crown of life. There's another reward. That God promises. Some of those who follow him. To wrap up tonight. I've been talking about a rule. A reign. A reign. A king. Talking about. A culture. Righteousness. It's going to dwell. In that kingdom to come. And we see the rights. And the rewards. That are yours. Claim them. Read it. Apply it. And I appeal to you now. And as we draw to a close. I appeal to you now. To make heaven. Your home.

[21 : 05] Make it your home. Make plans. To be there. It talks of a. An inheritance. An inheritance. It talks of a. A reservation. In heaven. For you.

Now. There's times when you've got to go to a travel agent. Yeah. And make a reservation. And I'm not meaning to. Demean this.

In any way. But there is a sense where there's a. A definite. Resolve. Resolve. There's a definite transaction that happens. To make a reservation. I know some people made a reservation. To go to another country.

And they. It was. It was confirmed. We can have that reservation. To that ultimate destination. And there's only one agent. That can arrange this journey. There's only one person you can flee to. Who you can apply to. For admission. To this citizenship. In Colossians 1.13. It says. Who hath translated us. From the power of darkness.

[22 : 13] Into the kingdom. Of his dear son. Submit to him. To this agent. To this one. Leave the power and domination of the devil. The darkness.

The despair. And come into God's family. And life. Now. This is no. Light thing.

Christianity. Is. Offensive. If we weren't in this fair land. But in another land. It would be at the risk of your life.

It would be at the risk of your life. It would be at the peril. Of your family. It would be. At the. Risk. That you would face. Awful. Torture. And suffering. To come into this kingdom. Of God.

[23 : 12] And this. Christianity. Is offensive. To some. It's offensive. It talks about blood. It talks about death.

It talks about. Sin. It talks about. An innocent. Perfect one. Bleeding in. Your place. Bleeding. Bleeding. For your.

Foul. And vile. Sin. It's offensive. Isn't it. To think of it. Whoa. Was that my sin? Was it my sin. Was it my sin. That nailed him there. Was it my sin. That cost him. So much. It tells us about a king. Who. Flee. From the wrath. To come.

One day. This king's going to have. Fire. Coming out of his eyes. He's going to have. Judgment. To vent. And friends. It will be too late then. To come to him. A king.

[24 : 07] Who hates your sin. And corruption. Some would say. Preach soft. Preach light. Woo. And comfort. Don't be blunt. Or pointed. But God. Causes people.

To confront. This culture. To confront. A culture. That finds sin. Entertaining. That finds sin. Humorous. That finds sin. Somehow. That.

And. And. And. Make light. Of. And. Dare I say it. That would. Find. His name.

Something. That they can put. In their dirty jokes. And in their. Cursing. And. God. Causes people. To confront.

A culture. Like that. A culture. A culture. People. What is good. When. People. What is evil.

[25 : 02] Days. That are marked. With a denial. That there is. Such a thing. As such a thing. As absolute. Absolute. Truth. Absolute. Truth.

Truth. People. Deny the truth. And they live. For pleasure. The word. Tells the preacher. The instant. In season. And out. Of season.

Reprove. Rebuke. Exhort. With all. Long suffering. And. Doctrine. Reprove. It means. To show people. What is right.

And what is wrong. Not the most popular thing. Rebuke. It means. To tell. Them. To stop doing. The wrong thing. And. Exhort. It means.

To appeal. And support people. To get right. They're all strong words. Aren't they? It doesn't say. Preach. And tickle some ears. And tell a few corny jokes. And. You know.

[25 : 57] Pat people on the back. And say. She'll be right. Mate. It says. Reprove. Rebuke. And exhort. And I urge you tonight. Don't take this appeal lightly. Take it.

Between you and God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God. And God.

I can't. Tell. Where you're at today. But one day. This Lord Jesus Christ. Will come. This reigning one. Who wants to reign. Who will reign. Nothing's going to stop him reigning. One day. He's going to come back. To the world stage. And it says of him. Then. That his vesture. Will be dipped. In blood. Dipped. In blood. Revelation. 19. 93. He'll have a golden scepter. To rule his people. But an iron rod. To break his enemies. Escape the coming judgment.

[26 : 52] Against your sin. Let me close with a quick quote. A man. Spurgeon said this. He said. In the context of. Of judgment. Of the. Fleeing to. Cities of refuge.

There was places in the Old Testament. That were marked cities. There was. Select cities. That someone could. Flee to. To find refuge. When they were. Fleeing. At risk of judgment. At risk of. Suffering. They could go to a place. Of refuge. A city. Of refuge. And this old time preacher.

Tells us. Of escaping the judgment. The coming judgment. Against your sin. He says this. Once let a man know. That hell is beneath his feet. And if that does not make him earnest. What would. No wonder. That his prayers. His endeavors. Are intensely earnest. When he knows. That he must escape. Escape. Or else the devouring fire. Will lay hold of him.

[27 : 50] Suppose now. You had been a Jew. In the olden time. And one day. While taking a walk. In the fields. You had seen a man running. Running with all his might. Stop. You say. My dear friend.

You will exhaust yourself. He goes on. And on. With all his might. You run after him. Pause a while. You say. And rest. The grass is soft. Sit down here.

And take your ease. See here. I have some food. And a bottle. Stop. And refresh yourself. But without saluting you. This man. This running man. No. I must away.

Away. Away. Away. Wherefore. You say. He has gone so far ahead. You run after him. With all your might. And scarcely able to turn his head. He exclaims.

The city of refuge. The city of refuge. The manslayer. Is behind me. Now it is all accounted for. You do not wonder that he runs. With all his might now. When the manslayer.

[28 : 46] Is after him. You can well understand. That he would never pause for rest. Until he has found the city. Of refuge. So let a man know.

That the devil is behind him. That the avenging law. Of God. Is pursuing him. And who can make him stop. Who shall endeavour to make him. Stay his race.

Until he enters. Christ. The city. Of refuge. And finds himself. Secure. This will make a man. Earnest. Indeed. To dread.

The wrath. To come. And to be labouring. To escape. Therefrom. What a picture. A picture. Fleeing. The wrath. Of finding refuge. Of finding safety.

Of finding shelter. Of finding security. Of finding assurance. Of finding. Salvation. Rest. In Christ. You can. Know that peace tonight. You can.

[29 : 42] Know that rule. You can. Enter that citizenship. Of heaven. That kingdom. To come. That kingdom. That is now. Now. Yeah. And citizenship.

Is still extended. Today. You can. Know that rule. That righteous rule. That ruler. Who is deserving. Of our love. The one who loved us. So much.

He is deserving. Of our love. How can you say. We will not. Have this man. Rule over us. Crucify him. Rather say. Hosanna.

Rather say. Blessed is he. Who comes in the name of the Lord. Rather say. Lord. Unto him. Rather say. I trust you. Not understanding the.

Intricacies of it. Yet. Trusting him. That city. That ruler. Deserving of your love. That is righteousness. Made possible. Because. Of his blood. And that which he expects.

[30 : 39] Of his subjects. Him helping them. Attain it. And rights. And rewards. You've got no reason. To complain. You've got no reason. To grumble. Sister. Brother.

Tonight. There is rights. And rewards. Privileges. Honours. Glories. Now. And to come. Of course there is responsibilities too. Responsibilities too.

And there is kingdom. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin.

To sin. To sin. To sin. To sin. There's no idle citizens. Every citizen has a role to play. And friends, you're assured from his hand of those blessings from his hand.

So friends, why wait? Why wait? Seek ye first. Make it your priority. Make it your priority. That's citizenship. And it's a glorious one.
[31 : 38] And it's forever. It's forever. Let us pray. Let us pray.