

Our Citizenship

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 April 2018

[0 : 00] God bless you. We go to Philippians 3. I love the words in that song,! My sins are all pardoned, my guilt is all gone.

! So true, isn't it? The wonder of it all, of Calvary grace. Looking at citizenship in the kingdom of God.

Philippians 3 verse 20. Philippians 3 verse 20 it says, For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you again for your word, for our gathering unto it, Lord, for clarity of thought on my part, Lord, on clarity of delivery, and Lord, for an understanding within each hearer and an action in reception of the word, Lord.

Let it be life-changing. Help us, Lord, to put it into our shoes and make it live. That you would be glorified in every life and every hearer.

[1 : 28] Do a work by your Spirit's power, Lord. Despite flesh here, despite earthly limitations, do a work by your Holy Spirit's power, Lord, we pray.

We surrender to your will. We submit to you, Lord, as our Master and Saviour. May your word penetrate. May it be sharp.

May it pierce. May it cut. May it heal. We bless you, Lord.

We ask you, Lord, to be lifted up. Be magnified. May we put aside anything of self that would get in the way of you doing your work in us.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. For our citizenship, our conversation, our citizenship is in heaven. This is how you could likewise translate this word, conversation, citizenship.

[2 : 40] We're talking about citizenship in the kingdom of God. Our citizenship, our conversation, our way of life, our conduct, our way of living. This is the sense of this word, conversation.

Our conversation, our life, how we live, what life is all about. Our conversation is in heaven.

From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. It's telling us here that our community, where we really belong to, is heaven.

It's where we belong. It's who we identify with, the king of heaven, the kingdom of heaven. Question is, are you a citizen of that fair land?

Dual citizenship is in the media a lot lately, isn't it? We see our deputy prime minister. We don't know whether he's really a New Zealander, just pretending to be an Aussie, even though he was born here.

[3 : 54] But no, because he's got dual citizenship, they're saying, well, that's yet to be clarified. But the point is, what would happen in the very unlikely event that New Zealand declared war with Australia?

What if we went to arms against New Zealand and there was this conflict between these two nations? And we wouldn't know the loyalty of our deputy prime minister if he's got this dual citizenship where he's still half New Zealand, half Australian.

Who's he going to side with? Where's his loyalty lie? Who does he belong to? What country has his loyalty? And really, for we that believe, there is this sense of dual citizenship.

We're citizens of this world, but we're citizens of heaven to come. And I know I've talked about this before, but I've got dual citizenship because I've not renounced my birthplace of the formerly Great Britain.

I don't think it's great anymore, but I used to belong to the nation of England. And it's certainly not Great Britain anymore. It's a woeful place.

[5 : 13] I probably should pronounce citizenship of... Don't want to belong to that place anymore. But, you know, there's that sense where I still have that dual citizenship because I became naturalised. I took Australian citizenship.

Julie's still got her... She's only a UK citizen, so she's still a foreigner. But we see that there's this sense of dual citizenship. And as a Christian, we know that our citizenship is in heaven. That's where we belong to. And to become a citizen of heaven, we don't have to, like these days, that I'm told there's moves to make it such that you've almost got to have university-level English to apply if you may...

If English may not be your first language, how hard that might be to qualify, to pass the test, to meet all the requirements and to pass through these stringent requirements to become an Australian citizen now, it's almost becoming harder and harder and you've got to live in the country a certain amount of time.

They're saying three years, I think. There's all these... Oh, four. So they're making it harder and harder to become a citizen of Australia. But how easy is it to become a citizen of heaven?

[6 : 23] How easy is it to trust Christ as your Lord and Saviour and then you've got your passport. It's stamped. It's signed.

It's sealed. It's delivered. And we can be a citizen of that fair land by virtue of the blood of Christ. Are you a citizen of that fair land?

How will we know if we belong there? How will we know if we are a citizen of heaven? I put to you some three things that we could number that point us in this direction of how we can know that we belong in heaven.

Number one, rule. There's a different rule. A different ruler. Matthew 6.33 is a familiar one which tells us, but seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

The context was of people asking, what shall I wear? What shall I eat? And such. And the Lord says, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

[7 : 42] It's not so much about rules but a rule, a ruler, a ruler. A citizen of heaven will be recognised as a person who comes under God's rule, God's rulership.

Now in some places, in some churches it's all about the rules. About this rule and that rule and this requirement and that requirement but in the kingdom of heaven it's about the rule, the rule, the ruler.

Does he rule? Does he rule over our lives, over our hearts? And becoming a citizen of a kingdom means that we come under a rule. It says, you know, when I pledged allegiance to the, as she still is, the Queen of Australia, I ultimately recognised her rule over me and as Australians we still have that system such that there's a royalty over the governance of our nation.

The point is there has to be someone who has rule and in the kingdom of God he has the reign and authority over us.

He is the ruler. As a Christian we ought to be governed by the word of God. You know, there's statements of faith that says this is our rule of faith and conduct.

[9 : 13] This is the measuring stick, this is the plumb line, this is the what we measure everything by. Does it line up? Does it measure up? This is our rule, the Bible, of our faith and conduct, of how we govern our lives and living.

And when Christ reigns as king over our hearts and lives, we'll want to be true and faithful and obedient to his rulership. We want to come under his reign, under his rulership.

I've seen it pictured in representations when a man or woman becomes a Christian that's like a throne in their heart, a little throne. And it's like we take self off the throne and Christ comes and seats himself on the throne room of our hearts.

And that's the picture of how we as Christians come under his rulership, the king of kings and the lord of lords. The government ultimately shall be upon his shoulder and his government shall be a righteous rule.

It will not be some dictatorship or despot. And you know, there's history about Great Britain that is not so great as well. How they've taken over nations and they've done much harm in the past.

[10 : 29] I acknowledge that too. In some nations, as much as they brought civilisation as we know it, they also took a lot of resources and they used the native populations and did some bad things in the past.

I acknowledge that. It hasn't been a good history. But we know that this ruler, our lord and king, will be righteous, he'll be just and his righteous reign will be rightful and proper and good and a

blessing.

And so, when Christ reigns and rules over our hearts and lives, we want him to have our first and foremost affection and consideration. Now, some pretend Christians will not come under the government of God.

In Luke 19, 14, they sound like the people in Luke 19, 14. When they were talking about Christ, they said, we will not have this man reign over us. We don't want him reigning over us.

You know, they were calling him king of the Jews. No, we don't want him as our king. We don't want him reigning over us. That's how the world is today, isn't it? They want to come under their own fleshly ways and not submit themselves to the righteousness of God, not submit themselves to the king.

[11 : 47] Where does Christ rule as king? His kingdom is spiritual. He rules in the hearts of men and women and he sets his throne up there. And he is truly king when we resign to his reign and rule over our will and affections, over the power that will guide our conscience and lead our desires.

In Micah 7, 79 it says, Micah 7, 79, he will subdue our iniquities. He will so dominate us in a good way that he will subdue our iniquities such that sin won't have that attraction as it had.

He will subdue those things. He will take rightful reign. He will take authority over us. And his authority is not as it were under a thumb under some burdensome grievous type of rule as in a dictatorship like North Korea.

He's not that kind of ruler. But he is a loving king, a loving saviour and lord. And he is deserving of our utmost allegiance and loyalty.

The question is does he rule in your heart and life? That's very vital. If Christ is to be king, he must govern you. He must govern you. So, of course, we're all, I think, while speaking for myself, I don't always measure up.

[13 : 29] But God helping me, God helping us, that we'll come to that place that will have that mind that will seek him such that when we make considerations, when we make decisions, we'll have a view to the kingdom.

We'll have his kingdom in view. When we decide this or that, we'll think, what does God think of this or that before I decide? And first of all, we'll consider God's point of view of a thing before we do it.

And let's God's kingdom have prime place, first place. Seek first his kingdom, the kingdom of God.

And number two, righteousness.

We've seen the rule. Look at righteousness now. This is the kingdom's culture. This is the culture of the kingdom. This is the language and way of life.

This is the culture of the kingdom. Now, I had to let go of my pommy culture.

[14 : 37] I had to learn a new way of talking. I had to stop talking Coronation Street kind of language. I let the odd little bit of accent slip through now and again.

I had to let go of the culture of where I came from. And when we become a Christian, we have a new culture. It's a culture of righteousness. It's diametrically opposite to the culture of this world, isn't it?

It's like we're polar opposites to the world because they serve another ruler. They serve another culture. And so what is Christ's culture?

What is Christ's standard? A citizen of heaven will be recognised as a person who demonstrates God's righteousness so that where we walk, we're walking in his steps, that where we have walked, people will say, well, notice, they'll be influenced by that because Christ's standard is absolute purity.

1 Timothy 5.22, in part, Paul tells Timothy, keep yourself pure. Wow. That's a high standard, isn't it?

[15 : 53] Pure, pure, pure. Keep yourself pure. Keep yourself from sin. Well, recognise a Christian who's fair dinkum because they're living faithful and righteous in the sight of God and men.

What does he say for those who would serve? They should be above reproach. Above reproach. That's a high standard, isn't it?

And for every believer, that's the ultimate, is the purity of God. How do we attain that? 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. A scepter is this rod that represents the authority of the king or queen. It's that visible representation that they have an authority.

And the authority of this king, this throne, O God, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ referred to as O God here, that the rule, the sign of his authority is righteousness.

[17 : 11] It's the sign of his kingdom. It's the emblem of the king's authority and power. And if you will be a true Christian, there will be a righteousness that comes out of you.

1 Corinthians 6 from verse 9, it tells us of the other culture. 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9 through 11, Paul writes, know ye not 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 the kingdom of God.

But here's the good news, and such were some of you. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

There's hope for no one outside of Christ, but if you're washed, if you're justified, if you're sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, there's hope in Christ.

[18 : 30] Paul says, don't kid yourself. If you are unrighteous, don't kid yourself. We read these days of football players that disgraced themselves and their team.

Now you hear these stories of footy players, they've got a standard, don't they? Otherwise they're on the front page of the newspaper that such and such a footy player went off with such a woman. What a disgrace. Even in the AFL they've got a code, they've got a certain expectation to meet, a certain, they set the bar somewhere, even the world does, doesn't it?

And even like in the military, conduct becoming, conduct unbecoming of an officer, that they would do something that would be damaging to the reputation of the military, that such a man or woman could be conceived as having conduct, unbecoming of an officer, so they get kicked out, they get demoted, they get disciplined.

So the world has such standards. What about conduct, becoming of a citizen of heaven? What conduct, what a standard citizenship of heaven, that this kingdom is righteousness and godliness, that's the conduct becoming for the citizen of this kingdom.

[20 : 10] We read in 1 Peter 2 verse 9, it says that we are a royal priesthood, a holy nation. Wow, that's you and me. God says you're holy, a holy nation.

He says you're a royal priesthood. 2 Peter 3 verse 9 through 14. We see the times that we're living in, how important it is to get things sorted with God.

How important it is. We see in 2 Peter 3 verse 9 the context of destruction and of the day of the Lord. I know I spoke about this last Sunday night and had some video footage that kind of made it even more telling about such things.

Mind you, you just have to turn on the world news lately. What's going on in Florida and around these hurricanes of late? Total destruction. Imagine living in a nation such as an island nation where 90% of it gets flattened.

Brothers and sisters, who knows when disaster will strike us? Who knows? And 2 Peter 3 verse 9, let me read through and consider this time.

[21 : 23] occasion. And I put to you that it's not far away. The Lord is not slack concerning his promises. Some men count slackness but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to 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 a fervent heat, and the earth also and all the works that are 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 and godliness? Holy conversation and godliness.

Holy citizenship, in other words, and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things, be diligent that you be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

[22 : 48] Seeing these things shall be dissolved, it's time to be diligent, it's time to be looking for and hasting unto, it's time to have holy conversation and godliness, to be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless, the kingdom of God.

Now, Paul tells us of the kingdom of God, in Romans 14, 17, for the kingdom of God is not in meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy ghost.

Some would say it's about churches that actually preach about the diet you have. Now, of course, we could always maybe use some wise advice about our diet, but the kingdom of God is not in that. It's not meat and drink, not in trivial side things, but it is in righteousness, peace and joy in the holy ghost. What a joy we have.

That's the kingdom of God. Our Lord tells us in Matthew 5, verse 20, he's telling his followers, in contrast with the Pharisees, he says, for I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of God.

[24 : 17] High standard, isn't it? If you claim to belong to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, shouldn't it show, shouldn't it be clear?

And where you fail, that you're aspiring still, keep aspiring to it, keep aiming for it, the highest possible standard, higher than the AFL, the military, the government of Australia, you name it, higher than any worldly standard of conduct, the standard of character and godliness, of Christ likeness.

And really it's about how spiritual are you truly? It's where are you spiritually at? It's not so much rules and regulations and man-made expectations of you, it's wow, what he expects of me, what he wants of me.

His best for us, his spiritual life, what's your relationship to this world? Is our citizenship, are our affections focused down below?

When the word tells us set your affection up here, set your affection on things apart. That might mean falling out with some people. I know someone was telling me just at the door how they've lost a friend lately because they said they don't think that marriage should be redefined.

[25 : 58] that marriage is what God says it is. A man and a woman, one flesh, leaving their father and mother, leaving as man and wife.

That's marriage. It doesn't matter. They can rebadge things, whatever they want to call them, but it's not marriage. Even if the government calls it marriage one day, it's not marriage.

It is not. Yet we're losing friends when you speak for Christ, when you speak for righteousness, when you speak for the kingdom of God, when you say, no, I believe what God says.

This is what I believe. What's in these covers, I believe that. And I know another sister was saying, oh, people are calling us bigots and haters.

That's what they're calling Christians now. God, but this world's culture, there's a clash of cultures, isn't it? The kingdom of God, the culture of the kingdom of God and the culture of this temporary planet.

[27 : 08] Where are we spiritually is a big question. And let's aspire to his kingdom, his righteousness. righteousness. So we've seen the rule, the ruler, the great ruler, the great king, our Lord and saviour.

We've seen the standard righteousness. And we see, thirdly, the rights and rewards of this citizenship. You know, as a citizen of this nation, you've got rights and rewards and responsibilities. You've got a, you've got a, it's an optional vote, this coming one, but when the next election for who governs us comes up, as a citizen, you've got a compulsory vote to decide who governs.

And so that's a responsibility, isn't it? And a right. And as a citizen of the kingdom of God, consider the rights and rewards that you have.

as a citizen who enjoys the privileges and blessings and benefits of the greatest possible government that we can ever have in terms of protection and provision.

[28 : 26] Our Lord, as the king of kings, he protects and he preserves and he provides for his citizens. A good government will take care of its citizens.

And a citizen of heaven is a person who enjoys God's rewards. I was just thinking, just in days of late, how blessed we truly are. How blessed we are.

Blessed beyond measure. Even if we've got very little, we're blessed just to have fellowship with God and to know him personally.

Our governor is not someone remote, living in some faraway place, in some citadel, in some fortress, in some faraway castle or palace.

But this governor, we can know very personally. We can know him intimately and he knows us intimately. And we know his personal presence and his protection.

[29 : 27] Our governor protects us. In Psalm 3, verse 3, the psalmist says, Thou, O Lord, art a shield unto me. Thou, O Lord, art a shield unto me.

He protects us, doesn't he? We don't ever have to be afraid. We never have to be afraid because he protects us. And one of our rights and privileges is the joy of being his servant.

It tells us in 2 Timothy 2, 21, that we are vessels of honour. He's honoured you. He's honoured us to fill us, that we can be containers for God, receptacles where he fills us.

And we can be his servants for his service. And what greater honour can we know than to serve our Lord, than to have kings serve us?

You know, even if you were an earthly king and served by servants, it's a far greater honour for you to be a servant of the king of God, the king of kings, God our king.

[30 : 35] The question is, are you his subject, his servant? One day Christ will make all his subjects kings. In Revelation 2, verse 20, it says, I will give thee a crown of life.

So one day he'll crown you. He'll give us a crown of life. Let me pull this together by appealing to you now.

I know there's some in our number, there's someone I was communicating with just yesterday, he says he's moving house. And he's moving to a new place to live.

And I appeal to you today to make a move to this perfect kingdom. Make a move to this perfect kingdom. I saw a tract actually that had, it was almost like a real estate advert of, you know, there's homes going free in the perfect city.

You know, he says, I go to prepare a mansion, to prepare a place for you. There's going to be many mansions. You know, this is a perfect place in a perfect city.

[31 : 47] Everything's perfect in heaven. And it's free. It's free. You know, it's not a con. It's absolutely free. Because it's paid for in full.

So I urge you today, make heaven your home. Make heaven your home and your love. Choose heaven as your ultimate destination. Of course we might have some temporary dwellings here and there on this planet, but make heaven your ultimate destination.

And there's only one agent. Only one agent that can arrange this journey. There's only one person you can apply to for admission to this citizenship.

And again, like I say, there's all sorts of rules and restrictions about even living in Australia, let alone becoming a resident, let alone becoming a citizen of this nation.

There's so many obstacles for people who want to become an Australian citizen who might come from other places. And it's like, you know, when you apply for a job, that there's all these restrictions or not that they can say so anymore, but you've got to be a certain age or, you know, you've got to have certain qualifications, you've got to have certain abilities, certain skills to apply for a job, in a certain vocation.

[33 : 18] But to be a servant, a son of God, there's no height requirements, age requirements, health requirements, there's no requirements about your physical capabilities or your mental capacity or whether you don't have to pass some kind of aptitude test or some sort of selection process or pass some kind of interview, you simply have to trust him.

You simply have to trust him. And there's only one agent who can arrange this journey to this perfect kingdom. One person with a capital P that you must apply to for admission to this citizenship.

Colossians 1.13, it says, who our Lord Jesus hath delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear son. He's delivered us.

He's relocated us. He's translated us, transferred us. And so how do we become a citizen of this kingdom? Submit to him. Submit to the king of kings and the Lord of lords.

Leave the power and dominance and domination of the devil. Why would you want to stay in the power of darkness? Why would you want that? He has delivered you from the power of darkness.

[34 : 41] Translated us into the kingdom of his dear son. Enter into God's family, his kingdom life. Now Christianity is offensive. It's like it's almost becoming more and more offensive to become a Christian.

You see the left leaning media and education systems. Christians. It's like they're, you know, they're talking about homophobia.

Well, there's a Christophobia now. People are becoming Christophobic. Hating Christians. Hating Christianity. Hating the gospel.

Hating the Bible. Hating the truth of God. And Christianity is offensive. When we go witnessing, it's like there's a hostility that wasn't there before.

There's a greater hostility. A greater skepticism. There's more and more vocal and vicious attacks against Christians and what they believe. Christianity is offensive.

[35 : 43] It's about blood. It's about sin. It's about death. It's about an innocent man bleeding in our place for our foul and vile sin.

That's offensive. It's about a king who says flee from the wrath to come. A king who hates your sin and corruption.

Christianity is offensive. Some would say preach soft and light. We're in comfort. Don't be blunt or pointed. People might get offended.

We might lose somebody from the church. Yet God has called his people to confront the culture. We're not to absorb the culture. We're meant to be different. It should be like oil and water, shouldn't it? We're not meant to...

[36 : 44] They try to mix it in. No, it eventually just comes back to how it is meant to be. Separated. God has called his people to confront the culture.

Our culture finds sin entertaining. What does the word say? Fools mock at sin. The most popular comedians these days have got the foulest of mouths.

Dirty jokes. It's just like that's... That's what everybody laughs at. That's funny now. Sin is entertaining. People hate what is good.

And they love what is evil. And our days are marked by a denial. That there is such a thing as absolute truth.

There is such a thing. And people deny the truth and live for pleasure. 2 Timothy 4 verse 2. The Bible tells the preacher, preach the word.

[37 : 48] Be instant, in season, out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Just think of that.

Some would say, preach it light and breezy. Let's just be easy, carefree, easy going. Don't rock the boat.

Don't ruffle too many feathers. God says, reprove. Reprove. What does that mean? It means show people what is right and what is wrong.

Not the most popular thing. Reprove. Reprove. It's hard to reprove. It goes against my nature to have a face-to-face with someone. But some things are right and some things are wrong.

There's no toying with that. He says, rebuke. It means tell them to stop doing the wrong thing. Stop doing the wrong thing.

[38 : 53] Rebuke. I've got to tell myself that. Rebuke. And exhort. It means to appeal and support people to get right.

Exhort. It means you're doing the right thing. Keep on doing it. Keep on doing that. Grow in your faith. Grow in your following Christ.

Grow in your holiness and truth. Grow in your godliness and Christ-likeness. Exhort. Reprove. Rebuke. Exhort. With all long suffering. So keep on doing it.

No matter what. So I urge you today. I'm reluctant to say it but in effect I'm in the stead of Christ. That I'm in the place of Christ. Not that I'm anything more than you. I'm just your brother in Christ. But I'm speaking to you in the stead of Christ. As if Christ was speaking this through my voice piece.

[39 : 52] through my lips. Make peace with God. Make peace with God. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the great day of God. There's no time to waste.

Get right with God. The Lord Jesus one day is coming back and in Revelation 19, 93 what will he be wearing? A vesture dipped in blood.

It's shocking isn't it? This man coming, the man, the God man, his vesture dipped in blood. Gross. Blood shed for you, for me. Precious blood. And he has a golden scepter, the sign of his kingship, of his rulership, of his authority.

He's got a golden scepter to rule his people but an iron rod to break his enemies. He will come to regain rightful reign of his rulership of this planet.

[40 : 56] It's just got a temporary imposter as the small g God at the moment. It's just got a temporary bit of liberty.

That's why there's such a chaos going on and yet people follow him and worship this small g God of this world. God of God. Let me close with a quote from Spurgeon, an old time preacher.

I think he puts it quite aptly here. To think of the days we're living in and to consider back to Old Testament days when there was a city of refuge where people could run to to find shelter and to find mercy, to escape from wrath, from judgment.

They ran to the cities of refuge. And Spurgeon 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 endeavours are intensely earnest when he knows that he must escape or else the devouring fire will lay hold on him.

[42 : 12] 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 with all his might. Stop, you say, stop, dear friend, you will exhaust yourself.

But 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 he says, no, no, I must away, away, away. Why?

Wherefore, you say, he has gone so far ahead. You run after him with all your might and scarcely able to turn his hand 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 is after him, you can well understand that he would never pause or rest until he found the city of refuge.

[43 : 22] 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.

The picture here, Old Testament times, where there was a place of grace, cities of refuge, where a guilty party could flee to and find safety from the judgment.

And a picture here is the picture of Christ, the city of refuge. And heaven is a city. We've got to come to Christ.

We've got to run like that man ran, run from the devil, run from the law of God, and find the security and safety in Christ.

[44 : 27] Find shelter from the wrath to come. People of God, there's no time to waste. We've seen the citizenship of heaven. We've seen the rule.

We've got a rightful ruler, the king of kings, the lord of lords, the ruler, and he is deserving of your love. His rulership is loving rulership.

His kingship is a loving reign and rule over your life because he wants you to be blessed, to know him. We see righteousness, the standard of his kingdom, that he expects it from his subjects, and he gives us grace such that we can attain it and aspire to it and know his gift of his righteousness. And thirdly, we see the rights and rewards much greater than any citizenship of any worldly country. As fair as Australia can be, these rights and rewards are beyond compare, out of this world, of heaven to come.

And we are assured them from his hand. So why wait? Seek ye first, seek ye first, first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

[45 : 44] Let us pray. Lord, we thank you that you are the king of kings and the lord of lords. One day you're coming with your vesture dipped in blood. One day you're coming with the scepter of your throne, the scepter of righteousness to take rulership again of this planet that is astray and misled by another god at this time.

Lord, we pray each one here might know the peace of God, to know they fled from wrath and they found peace and safety in the city of refuge today.

Lord, let us come unto you while we can. Pray for every believer that they'll be strengthened, that they'll deal with you, they'll make business, to make business with God today and get things sorted that need sorting and not put it off.

Help us, Lord, help us to be a people seeking first your kingdom, your righteousness and knowing that you'll grant it to each one as each one trusts in you.

We can receive that great gift. In Jesus' name, Amen.