

## Longing for Home

### **Philippians 3:17-4:1** (*The Living Bible*)

*<sup>17</sup> Dear brothers, pattern your lives after mine, and notice who else lives up to my example. <sup>18</sup> For I have told you often before, and I say it again now with tears in my eyes, there are many who walk along the Christian road who are really enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their future is eternal loss, for their god is their appetite: they are proud of what they should be ashamed of; and all they think about is this life here on earth. <sup>20</sup> But our homeland is in heaven, where our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, is; and we are looking forward to his return from there. <sup>21</sup> When he comes back, he will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same mighty power that he will use to conquer all else everywhere.*

*4 Dear brother Christians, I love you and long to see you, for you are my joy and my reward for my work. My beloved friends, stay true to the Lord.*

### **A. The Desire to See**

Over the last century, unprecedented travel and exploration have marked human history. However, despite such wanderlust, a deep-rooted longing for home persists for most. This attachment stems from the familiarity, warmth, and blessings of home, including freedoms, privileges, and relationships. Family reunions and church homecomings embody this sentiment.

### **B. The Need to Understand Our True Home (Philippians 3:20)**

Humans often yearn for home because, as Christians, this world is not our true home. Believers hold dual citizenship— both earthly and heavenly. Paul reminds the Philippians that their primary citizenship is in heaven. This perspective encourages living as pilgrims on earth, representing their heavenly home and acting as ambassadors for Christ.

### **C. This Dual Citizenship Raises Three Questions**

1. What are our responsibilities as citizens of heaven?
2. What are our responsibilities as citizens of earth?
3. What do we do when these responsibilities clash?

### **D. Responsibilities as Citizens of Heaven (Phil. 3:20)**

Heavenly citizenship is gained through faith in Jesus Christ, leading to a new birth and identity. Believers are to represent their King on earth, living in a way that glorifies God. This includes shining their light, living blamelessly, and focusing on eternal values. Unity, joy, holiness, purity, generosity, and hope should define their conduct, distinguishing them from earthly citizens driven by worldly desires.

### **E. Responsibilities as Citizens of Earth (Rom. 13:1-8)**

Christians should be exemplary earthly citizens, respecting and obeying authorities, paying taxes, showing respect, and praying for leaders. Recognizing government as ordained by God, they are to contribute to a peaceful society.

### **G. When Responsibilities Clash (Acts 4:19-20; 5:29)**

Conflicts arise when earthly authorities oppose God's work. In such cases, believers must prioritize obedience to God. The apostles exemplified this by continuing to preach the gospel despite opposition, asserting their responsibility to God over human authorities.

### **H. There Is Cause to Rejoice (Phil. 3:1)**

Despite earthly trials, believers can rejoice because their citizenship and King are in heaven. Jesus, who ascended to heaven, promised to prepare a place for them and will return to take them there. This hope motivates living with purity and urgency, anticipating Christ's return and the transformation of their bodies to be like His.

### **I. Representing Jesus as a Citizen of Heaven**

Believers are called to be good citizens of both heaven and earth, committed to obeying God and impacting the world for Christ.

They have a mission to reach the world with the saving message of Jesus, living in a way that reflects their true identity and represents heaven rightly.