Citizens of Heaven

Week 9 – Philippians Series – Sozo Church Phil. 3:17-4:1 11/8/26

Phil 3:17-4:1 NLT – "Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. [18] For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. [19] They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth. [20] But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. [21] He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stay true to the Lord. I love you and long to see you, dear friends, for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work."

Phil. 3:17-4:1 ESV – [17]"Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. [18] For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. [19] Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. [20] But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. [4:1] Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved."

Summary of Philippians 3:17-4:1: The Christian life is not one just filled with right beliefs and teachings to follow, but is only known as it is lived out in a community of believers that are putting into practice the teachings of Christ just like the examples of Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus. Staying true to the Lord and not falling prey to false believers whose lifestyles are contrary to Christ in order that others will come to Christ and flourish also, we live now as heaven's ambassadors and we speak the things of heaven, think the things of heaven, and live like the King of heaven.

What is your aim?

-If you're aiming to live as a citizen of heaven you'll walk a certain way. If you are still aiming to live eternally here on earth that changes how you walk.



3:17 "Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example."

If they continue to pattern their lives after Paul, to imitate the Christlikeness they see in him and lean into the Spirit as well as those who they know who are godly they will live a life pleasing to Christ.

They are called to imitate Paul and by extension we also can follow Paul's example. He is showing them how to love not in word only but in deed and in truth.

Don't say you love someone but only care about yourself. If I tell my wife I love her but I never consider her or her well-being it is just a word. If I love in ways that are Christlike that is worth imitating.

3:18 "enemies of the cross of Christ"

Our conduct shows if we are living for ourselves or living for Christ. To be an enemy of the cross of Christ is more than just being a carnal Christian, this means your very life and title of Christian is an offense. These are false believers who think they are saved.

Paul is also laying out for the believers in Philippi on what to follow and what to reject. When people come in that are living ungodly, whose god is their fleshly appetites and are carnal, bragging about shameful things,

If we think just believing in Jesus is what we are called to do we have fooled ourselves. Proof of being an unbeliever according to this passage is:

3:19 "They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth."

1- "**They are headed for destruction**"

2- “**Their god is their appetite”**

a. This language in the Greek here is either speaking about licentiousness, sexual immorality, or Judaizers who exalted food laws above and circumcision above all else.[1] ,[2] Speaking of either sexual immorality, loose moral living, or law keeping leading to idolatry which is exalting anything above God’s ways revealed in Christ.

b. In context of this passage (Philippians 3:17-21) this is being so earthly minded that it is rejection of all things that come from God. Essentially someone making god of their own feelings or reasonings by not wanting to be subject to anything godly which is when someone makes themselves the ultimate authority.

If our god is our appetite, the desires we have that are ungodly we will do whatever we can to feast on those.

4- “**brag about shameful things”**

If we call ourselves believers, we should no longer brag about shameful things (those things that may be honorable in their culture but are dishonorable to God).

5- **“they think only about this life here on earth”**

a. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Thinking only about the temporal things. Being eternally minded is the key.

The worldly way wants to order life by what it desires. What has immediate results. Someone can be an enemy of the cross and not realize it. By not rearranging their priorities to the ways of God they are proving they are. You can be the most disciplined person but seeking to use the ways of the Bible as self-help and not really changing your desires or aim. You

b. Humanism is placing themselves as judge and god of their own lives. That they become a law to themselves meaning what I think and feel today is my truth. My truth is subjective and it can be totally separate from you. It is relative truth.

Relativism undermines not only a person’s ability to relate to this world. you can’t claim relativism and evil exist. To say something is evil is to say that relativism is not true. You cannot have both logically. So humanism fails on its own merits.

It undermines its own claims of independence by ultimately being dependent on others from clashing with itself. In a world that is so interconnected relativism and humanism only works if you’re the only person in it. And now we have entered a fantasy realm.

c. Humanism refuses to deal with the sin problem. That there is sin, that evil exists and that humanity is to blame with it. because to recognize this means you have to look outside of yourself. If man is the problem then the only answer can be a man. I will say this is where the humanity of Christ comes in.

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[1] Martin, Ralph P., Hawthorne, Gerald F., *Word Biblical Commentary: Philippians*, 223-225.
[2] Bruce, F.F., *New International Biblical Commentary: Philippians*, 130.

Jesus has answer here where that the problem of evil and sin needs to be dealt with, we all recognize and hate evil in the world and we get overwhelmed by the darkness around us if we dig deep enough and it can feel like our world is collapsing at times. But we have freedom from sin and death found in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the answer to all the questions we are asking or even do not know to ask.

Enemies of Christ live out of a place of destruction, we live from a place of being heavenly minded.

So Paul first tells them essentially to be aware of what is false. Followed by what is true.

2- Having rejected past sins and wrestling with these things not bragging about it.

a. Some people share about their testimony and share more about the darkness they lived in than the light they walk in now.

3:20 "we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives."

3:20 Our hope is not in certain outcomes in life but in Christ. Just as elsewhere Paul spoke of Christ being His life. Here again he says that we will receive Christ.

c. When Paul speaks of "But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own" this is a call for believers to recognize the tension they live in the kingdom.

> **F.F. Bruce says**, "As citizens of a Roman colony were expected to promote the interests of their mother city and maintain its dignity, so citizens of heaven in an earthly environment should represent the interests of their true homeland and lead lives worthy of their citizenship. This citizenship was theirs already; they did not have to wait for it. But they did eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ."[3]

We can be citizens of a place while not living there yet. Caesar would have called them Roman citizens while not wanting everyone to physically live In Rome as it would be too overcrowded.

"by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself" is to know that Caesar was the ruler of their whole world and would come to defend them if attacked and would give them the same rights as those in Rome despite not being physically in Rome. To be a citizen of a colony of Rome was to be an extension of Rome itself. If that colony is attacked, Rome itself is attacked in essence.

> a. Tom Wright states, "'We are citizens of heaven,' Paul declares in verse 20. At once many modern Christians misunderstand what he means. We naturally suppose he means 'and so we're waiting until we can go and live in heaven where we belong'. But that's not what he says, and it's certainly not what he means. If someone in Philippi said, 'We are citizens of Rome,' they certainly wouldn't mean 'so we're looking forward to going to live there'. Being a

[3] Bruce, F.F., *New International Biblical Commentary: Philippians*, 133.

colony works the other way round. The last thing the emperors wanted was a whole lot of colonists coming back to Rome. The capital was already overcrowded and underemployed. No: the task of the Roman citizen in a place like Philippi was to bring Roman culture and rule to northern Greece, to expand Roman influence there. But supposing things got difficult for the Roman colonists in Philippi. Supposing there was a local rebellion, or an attack by the 'barbarian' tribes to the north. How would they cope? Their best hope would be that the emperor himself, who after all was called 'saviour', 'rescuer', would come from Rome to Philippi to change their present somewhat defenceless situation, defeat their enemies, and establish them as firmly and gloriously as Rome itself. The emperor, of course, was the ruler of the whole world, so he had the power to make all this happen under his authority. That is the picture Paul has in mind in verses 20 and 21. The church is at present a colony of heaven, with the responsibility (as we say in the Lord's Prayer) for bringing the life and rule of heaven to bear on earth. We are not, of course, very good at doing this; we often find ourselves weak and helpless, and our physical bodies themselves are growing old and tired, decaying and ready to die. But our hope is that the true saviour, the true Lord, King Jesus himself will come from heaven and change all that. He is going to transform the entire world so that it is full of his glory, full of the life and power of heaven. And, as part of that, he is going to transform our bodies so that they are like his glorious body, the body which was itself transformed after his cruel death so that it became wonderfully alive again with a life that death and decay could never touch again. Knowing this will enable Christians to 'stand firm in the Lord' (4.1); and now we can see more clearly what that means. It doesn't just mean remaining constant in faith. It means giving allegiance to Jesus, rather than to Caesar, as the true Lord. Paul has described the church, and its Lord, in such a way that the Philippians could hardly miss the allusion to Rome and Caesar. This is the greatest challenge of the letter: that the Christians in Philippi, whether or not they were themselves Roman citizens (some probably were, many probably weren't), would think out what it means to give their primary allegiance not to Rome but to heaven, not to Caesar but to Jesus – and to trust that Jesus would in due time bring the life and rule of heaven to bear on the whole world, themselves included. This is the sense in which they must copy Paul (verse 17). He has described how he cast aside his Jewish privileges in order to gain King Jesus (verses 4–11). They couldn't copy him exactly; few if any of them were Jewish. They must think out, and so must we, what this allegiance to Jesus will mean in terms of the other claims to allegiance that press upon us. As they, and we, engage in this, we must also heed the warning of verses 18–19. All around the church, then and now, are people whose behaviour is conditioned by the world of the senses. It's possible that Paul is hinting that even some Christians end up behaving like this, but the main thrust of the passage is to warn the church against pagan behaviour. The argument is quite like that of 1 Corinthians 6.12–20, particularly 6.14. The fact that God is going to give resurrection life to our bodies means that we shouldn't regard them at the moment as the most important thing. We shouldn't be determined by their various appetites, as though our stomachs were our gods. That way lies destruction; the present body, after all, will die, and if we worship it we are

entering a covenant with death itself. The Messiah's cross (verse 18) stands in front of that path, to turn us back and point us to life."[4]

With that in mind Paul hits them to their core. Just as you have pledged allegiance to Rome, now pledge allegiance as a citizen of heaven.

a. To prioritize our lives as US citizens or residents of the United States over our citizenship to heaven is to be at odds with our King. Jesus said my kingdom is not of this world. You can be a good US citizen and a good citizen of the Kingdom of God. this does not mean renouncing all citizenship and claiming allegiance to no nation.

You can be a Roman citizen as long as it does not press against what it means to be a citizen of heaven. As a Roman citizen if your society is pressuring you to bow to Caesar as Lord and savior that is where it ends. You cannot press past that.

My moral decisions are informed by heaven, my priorities are informed by heaven, my words are informed by heaven, my entire desire is for heaven not this world. I think about the things that heaven cares about. That changes how we live. To be a citizen of heaven means I will speak about the ways of heaven and the king of heaven, Jesus Christ. Heaven is interested in what is happening on earth also. God is sending out angels from the throne of heaven to answer prayers, those spirits that God has designated to carry out His will.

b. "The more profoundly one is concerned about heaven, the more deeply one cares about God's will being done on earth." – **J.I. Packer**

d. Speaking of "citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives" is not to cause us to so gaze upon heaven that we forget where we are now. It is to know that as citizens of heaven we are now ordering our lives not by what is fleshly but is godly.

a. This is living in the tension of the already here/not yet of the kingdom.

i. **Gordon Fee says**, "The kingdom of God is both a present reality and a future hope..[we] have indeed entered the kingdom, of which the Spirit is evidence. But…have not yet fully realized the End, of which the resurrection will be the evidence."[5]

ii. **Compared to Christians:**

1- Following the conduct of godly believers we personally know

a. We need to be an active part of the body. Not just passive or on the outside. b. There is no true love without opening our life to others

3:21 "he will bring everything under his control"

[4] Wright, Tom. Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon (For Everyone Series: New Testament Book 14) (pp. 126-128). (Function). Kindle Edition.
[5] Fee, Gordon. 1 Corinthians, 173.

This is language drawn directly from Psalm 8:6 and Psalm 110 (the most often referred to OT passage in the NT).

How does Jesus rule presently? Jesus is ruling in meekness, praying for all the Father draws to Him and praying for our faith to fail not (Luke 22:32, John 17:2, 17:11-24). Jesus is ruling in a non-coercive way.

e. **Psalm 110:1-4 NLT – "** – **1** The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit in the place of honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies, making them a footstool under your feet." **2** The Lord will extend your powerful kingdom from Jerusalem; you will rule over your enemies. **3** When you go to war, your people will serve you willingly. You are arrayed in holy garments, and your strength will be renewed each day like the morning dew. **4** The Lord has taken an oath and will not break his vow: "You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek."

Jesus is our Priest-King – He is ruling in a priestly fashion. As King He has all authority. But He uses His authority not to destroy us but to bring us out of darkness. He brings light not death. While kingdoms of this world want to instill their culture and government there. Rome did this with their colonies. It was an extension of Rome itself. They made Latin the official language, they added Roman style buildings to transform the public spaces. It was a small model the Rome essentially.

1 Corinthians 15:23-26 NLT – "23 But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back. **24** After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power. **25** For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. **26** And the last enemy to be destroyed is death."

Rome had conquered Philippi and other areas. In establishing its authority in areas you could have outward obedience and submission to Rome while inwardly those who lived despised the Roman occupation and colonization of a city or nation. Because Rome ruled with might and power and would defeat all those who opposed. That is ruling by power and it works in human terms but it does not change the hearts of people

God does not rule like that. With Christ its not by might nor by power but by the Spirit that we get a new heart and actually want to do what God wants. It is never out of an unhealthy fear of being destroyed. The Lord is patient and waiting for people to turn to Him willingly not out of pressure. Now we do have a sense of turning to God because we are ashamed of our sin and past lives because we recognize that we have sinned against a holy God. But the drive is not just to rid ourselves of guilt and shame. A byproduct of repentance is freedom from guilt and shame.

g. **John 18:36-37 NLT** – "Jesus answered, "'My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world.' Pilate said, 'So you are a king?' Jesus responded, 'You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true.'"

ii. Pilate declared Jesus innocent because he realized he wasn't trying to seek earthly power.

i. **John Lennox** - "The one thing you cannot impose on people by power is truth. Anyone who would take up arms to defend Christianity is not standing with Jesus who clearly told Pilate my kingdom is not of this world."

iii. Just like Caesar was ruling Roman citizens from Rome. Jesus is ruling from heaven, so order our lives according to his way, follow him just like Cesar was ruling from Rome and he had certain ways and dictate. We can be certain that Jesus has ways of ruling. How is he ruling by spreading truth through his people? See the verses where Jesus ends before Pilate. Caesar ruled with power, Jesus rules with truth. Knowing truth will win out

Jesus is the truth. Our faith is built upon the person of Christ. The work of Christ on the cross and His resurrection and is now ascended to heaven. That truth is unchangeable. In a world full of uncertainty we know Christ has died and risen from the dead. Everything else may come and go.

It's as if Paul is telling us today, "Don't get so caught up in your American culture that you forget the ways of the kingdom. The benefits and blessings you experience here are great but remember that the so-called freedom of others to go on with putting their own fleshly desires above the desires for the Lord and His kingdom. The desires you have to be successful and provide for your family are good but do not let those be the single driving factor in your life."

The Lord's goal is not to focus so much on reordering this present world's system, but to reorder His people who are present in the world. He is working in and through His church. It is light bleeding out to the world around it. He is Lord of all but has not recreated all of the world yet. But He recreates His people into His image.

This is the heart of the kingdom of God being preached. That the kingdom is ruling in reigning manifested through His people.

This is why Paul tells them to imitate him.

To rule like Caesar he would force submission even to the point of death. But as it stands evil is able to still exist on this earth, people can curse God and not immediately fall dead. Jesus is not intimidated or insecure about His kingdom.

b. **Mark Saucy** states, "Christ's present focus appears to be most directly concerned with the calling out (plundering the strongman's house—Matt 12:44 ff.) and building up his elect ones in the Church for life in the present age. Toward his enemies Christ operates presently only to contain their activities insofar as they concern the primary objectives he has toward his saints. The enemies are still allowed to retain their kingdom (Col 1:13) and to have their work over the sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2) whose eyes they have blinded to the truth of Christ (2 Cor 4:4), not to mention the schemes they are permitted to enact against believers (1 Pet 5:8; 2 Cor 2:11)."[6]

i. The powers of darkness are disarmed against Christ's own people. The enemy has power but it is limited.

[6] Saucy, Mark. Regnum Spiriti, 94.

ii. This is the answer to the problem of evil. There is still evil allowed to rule and reign, the enemy knows his time is short. But God has his people under His hand of protection and guidance. He manifests His presence and power amidst those who glorify Christ. Where Jesus is glorified He dwells.

iii. He is giving time.

Jesus is ruling and reigning over all things now. But He is cleansing His body, purifying His bride, protecting His people.

As believers in the kingdom of God we are in this world but not of the world. This means as ambassadors of heaven we live with the priorities of heaven

N.T. Wright says, "The humanity of Jesus is not simply a necessity for the purposes of rescuing the world, but the fulfilment of the creator's original purpose; and the true humanity of Jesus' followers is designed to display to the world what human life was meant to be like. The way I have come to see this in recent years is to understand the calling of the church as being central to the purposes of God for creation and new creation, and thus to think of the vocation of the church as the call to live as **the small working model of new creation**."[7]

The church is not to seek to escape from this world but has begun the process of modelling what the new creation looks like within the life of its members and its daily life with each other. A small working model of new creation where all things are summed up into Christ and are made subject to Christ. It has begun now in the church. The church at Philippi where Paul is writing. To us here at Sozo Church it should resemble what new creation looks like. Where all that we do and say is informed by the King of heaven ruling from his throne and we willingly submit our lives to His ways because

The question becomes where and when is this citizenship of heaven to come? Who's responsibility is it to do this and how? The Lord's prayer includes this your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. But where? Wherever the church is the manifest culture and rule of heaven is currently.

We now have the responsibility to bring the culture and rule of heaven to bear now.

It is to say Sozo Church, every church community is a colony of heaven.

The Son of God was a citizen of heaven before becoming a man. Now that He has come as the God-Man, made a way for heaven to be opened to us we can now live as He lived.

The Word became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. The word becomes flesh in the body of Christ now, His people collectively. I cannot say I am the body of Christ, I can say I am a member and I only know the body of Christ as I am in fellowship with other believers. No person becomes self-sufficient.

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[7] Wright, N. T.. The Vision of Ephesians: The Task of the Church and the Glory of God (p. 5). (Function). Kindle Edition.

This is why the Word, Jesus is living and active in His body. We know Jesus is present because the truths of Scriptures are seen in flesh. It is incarnational. It is receiving heaven into our bodies.

As we receive heaven we display heaven. We don't just hold heaven out of sight until eternity. It is to be displayed here and now through the people of God.

The Body of Christ is to imitate Christ. As Christians everything is to be lived out. We practice our faith, we don't just hold to a set of core beliefs apart from daily living.

How do we live this out? What precisely is the calling and conduct of the church? – We are called to preach and our conduct is to be lived out.

If we overemphasize we are misaligned with the priorities of heaven and come across as triumphalist (See 1 Corinthians 4:6-13). If we underemphasize our current responsibility then the gates of hell keep people bound in darkness.

Rather it is to remember that the power behind what we do, the authority in which we live comes not from ourselves but from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who is empowering us to stand against the world, the flesh, and the devil. To go out and rule as He rules by His empowering Spirit.

We are under the power of Christ, compelled by the Spirit to do what He wants us to do. We are under compulsion by the Spirit as we submit to Him.

When people come in here it should be like wow they put others before themselves, they are not independent of each other but submit one to another in the fear of God, they are valuing each other as those made in the image and likeness of God, they are not placing value upon people based on social status or background, they are all one in Christ now.

We can put core values on the wall but what is in our heart? Is it lived out in our lives, in our families in our connect groups, in all our interactions with each other.

The body of Christ is called to win the realm it has been placed in. Sozo Church here in Kennewick has been called to win Kennewick to Christ.

5- Our treasure is now being laid up in heaven – LUKE 16 UNJUST STEWARD

Luke 16 deals with this.

b. Luke 16 - Unjust steward: "Here's the lesson: Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when your possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an eternal home." Luke 16:9 NLT. Jesus commended the man not because he was a horrible boss but because the man (though corrupt), used the means at his disposal to secure his future. He made his future and his friends life better financially (by writing off their debt).

The man was corrupt but he used what he knew and had at his disposal to secure his future.

a. People are all we can bring to heaven with us.

We are to use our finances to make us and our friends future better spiritually. Using our resources to bless others and support the work of the kingdom not just enrich ourselves.

We focus so much on this life just like those who have no hope beyond this life. But us with a future in heaven should make sure the future of all those we know is to go there as well by using our finances to further the work of God. We are looking for every opportunity to be a blessing and to enrich and help others rather than every opportunity to enrich ourselves only like those who don't know God.

Us believers who know our future is in Christ should live for the future kingdom, proving it by not storing up treasure here (money), but storing up treasure in heaven (people). Other people are the only thing we can bring with us.

1- Receiving Christ is the end of our faith. Knowing God face to face in the person of Jesus Christ. It is really beyond understanding to say that we will know the infinitely powerful Creator who is the judge of all who can

3:21 "who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body"

1- The call for us to throw our hope into Christ for our future rather than our hope to the here and now.

2- That God sees everything and is sovereign. Nothing escapes His view and His power. He is judge of all.

How easy it is to say we trust God to judge all things, how hard it is to do that. We can say we trust God to work all things out if life is going well. How difficult it becomes when someone hurts you. We know evil exists, but when it comes into our lives it can be hard to keep this perspective.

Paul is calling the Philippians (and by extension all believers) to take their eyes off their life on earth. The only way you can take your eyes off the things that concern unbelievers is because you are eagerly awaiting the Savior's return. You can take your eyes off the mortal bodies when you remember you will have a glorious body.

We have entered the kingdom but not attained yet like Paul speaks of earlier in Philippians. We have not yet arrived. I'm not in my final form yet. What you see is not the best of me. I'm still being transformed into the likeness of Christ who will transform my body.

iii. **2 Corinthians 4:16 ESV** – "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day." We can experience resurrected lives now inwardly, but outwardly is only possible when Christ comes again. He is sanctifying us body, soul, and spirit.

iv. Jesus is still raising the dead. Any time someone comes to Christ they have been raised spiritually from the dead. The Holy Spirit regenerates all those who come to Christ in faith and He is the down payment of the resurrection from the dead. A guarantee that physical death will not have the final say.

f. He has already entered the eternal state, He is already ruling and reigning as the One over all in a glorified resurrected body, securing a place for us there. He is coming to perfect His people and give them resurrected bodies. Jesus has gone on ahead of us into glory and a state of

perfection and we will soon follow. He is already living there yet pleading for us to come and praying for us now.

3- **Life after death**. The fear of death is touched upon in this. We do not need to fear death because just as Jesus was raised from the dead we too will be. Our entire faith is based upon this. There are many Bible passages that may confound you or confuse you but our faith is built upon Christ raising from the dead and the promise He will raise us up from the dead to have new bodies like Him.

These new bodies will be without flaws. No longer will there be any pain or sorrow or sickness or death. No more sadness or suffering but only joy and peace and eternal life will be experienced. This is not a mere metaphor of human suffering that someday there will be a place but our faith is built upon the literal physical historical resurrection of Christ from the dead.

If we stop short of thinking what we experience now is all that we will experience eternally we cheapen the resurrection of Christ. It just becomes a cliché statement instead of a statement to live by. Our entire faith is built upon the resurrection of Christ. If the dead do not raise then our whole faith is meaningless Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15.

a. I've heard it put well by John Lennox a Christian apologist who was asked how did God become a man? He asked the guy, let me ask you about something much simpler than the idea of God becoming a man, please explain to me what is consciousness? I don't mean how it works but what is it? The guy could not answer. Ok something even simpler explain to me what is energy? I don't mean how energy is measured but what is it? Also the guy could not answer. Don't you believe in consciousness and energy? You cannot explain those which are much simpler than an infinitely powerful God becoming a man. Just because I cannot explain something does not mean it is not real or true. We all believe and know certain things are real without the ability to explain them. I cannot explain how someone can be raised from the dead, walk around in a physical body and ascend to heaven in a human body yet I believe that is where Jesus is right now.

i. I don't need to understand it completely to know it exists and produces great power in my life. This is the power of the resurrection.

We can be so secure living our lives for His instead of clinging to this life as if it is our only life.

When Christ returns He will transform our lowly bodies and this world He will recreate eath. At that point every knee will bow. At that point all evil will be judged. At that point every enemy will be destroyed.

v. Transhumanism. The world here is trying to make this world heaven. Uploading their consciousness and all sorts of other sci-fi ideas of living eternally without Christ. That is all in vain. There is no eternal life without Christ.

4- Knowing our lives are in His hands.

Col. 1:20 – "and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross."

-It is already done. It is already here.

He is bringing everything to its proper place. Judging the wicked in everlasting torment where they desire to be apart from God. To reconcile is an accounting term to put things in their proper distinctive categories. Jesus does this, we cannot. The wheat and the tares grow up together. We are to preach to all people as if they are the wheat and will come to Christ but we are not to make that final judgment only God does.

Trusting that God will rework and bring about justice in due time by the power of Christ the sovereign one.

4:1 "you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work"

6- Other believers flourishing are Paul's joy (4:1)

The focus is not out there. In our hearts. Is it in our home?

a. It is that we simply have reprioritized our lives. We are in the world but not informed by it. we are informed by the king of heaven who writes his laws on our hearts and minds.

b. As those citizens of heaven we are constantly receiving the laws of heaven on our hearts and minds. We do not follow the corrupted ways of this world that seeks to draw us back to self-centered and ungodly living that is apart from the Lord. We keep an eye on heaven while we keep living our lives here. Our ears are tuned to heaven while we listen to those around us.

Practically how to live it:

-Am I preaching about Jesus but harboring unforgiveness in my heart?

-Am I loving my wife as Christ love the church?

-Am I bringing Christ into the center of all I do? Not adding Jesus on.

That is what Paul is getting at here it is not about just moralism. Christians should be the most ethical and moral people absolutely. But not just as a front in our dealings with others. But in our dealings with ourselves.

We can forgive others but not forgive ourselves. We can overlook the sins of others and continue beating ourselves up, holding our own sin over our heads. Still trying to atone for your own sins. Look to the blood of Christ to address your sins, stop looking to yourself.

Or maybe you don't forgive others because you don't forgive yourself. Still thinking you will attain to a level of perfection and then God will forgive you so you demand that in others. You are never satisfied.

There is a character in the movie the Big Short played by Steve Carrell. In this he carries the weight of all the corruption in the financial world trying to fix all the evils in the world around him. In doing so he destroys all his relationships and cannot fathom a world where evildoers are not dealt with

and it causes him to spiral out of control lashing out at anyone and everyone who wrongs him in the slightest.

Maybe that's you. You have a sense of justice that cannot but help stand up for all those who have been wronged.

God wants you too. He wants the overbearing, judgmental you. He knows it comes from a place of hurt and pain. That you have been hurt and rejected and cannot let go until justice is done. God is the God of justice. He will right every wrong.

He wants you. He really wants you. Not the fake you. Not the church faced you. Not the one that acts like you've got it all together. He wants you. He's not looking for what you can do for Him. He is looking for you.

To be a citizen of heaven is to be so settled in that reality. That you have found Him. You don't need to look outside of Him because you have Him and He has you. You are so settled in Him and secure in Him that nothing satisfies you.

Let heaven be present here at Sozo Church. Let heaven be present when people enter your home.

From here we can bring heaven to earth.