

Our Citizenship Is in Heaven

by E.L. Bevir

As Christians, our true citizenship is in heaven, and we should live out our faith with a heavenly mode of thought, not retreating from the world but living in it as heavenly citizens.

Scripture: Matthew 6:19, 1 Corinthians 5:10, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:1, 1 John 2:15

Topics: "Heavenly Citizenship", "Eternal Perspective"

Description

E.L. Bevir preaches about our citizenship in heaven as true Christians, emphasizing that our identity and mindset should be shaped by heavenly principles rather than earthly desires. He contrasts those who claim to be Christians but are focused on worldly matters, warning that their end is destruction. Bevir encourages believers to live in the world but not be of it, maintaining a heavenly perspective and eagerly awaiting the return of Christ to glorify them. He reminds listeners that all earthly pursuits will pale in comparison to the splendor of being transformed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body in heaven.

Transcript

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Philippians 3: 20-21

This does not merely mean that we are citizens of the heavens, but that we are formed in such a way by the heavenly order of things that it may be said of us that our politeuma is there. It is in contrast with a very common and popular religion; that is of those who walk in outward Christian profession, but are enemies of the cross of Christ, and mind earthly things. Notice that it is not "who mind only earthly things", but they think of earthly things as being part of their religion. They do not allow the doctrine of the end of the first man, whose history the cross of Christ surely closed; and if asked as what they think of Christianity, they will say that it is a very good thing and that it should be practised in making the very best use of the earth, and in getting as much as possible out of it. Their end is perdition.

The true Christian is already so far (spiritually, or in his soul) above the earth, that it is said of him that all that properly forms him so as to give him a status, is in the heavens. In this world, you will at once know a man by the country to which he belongs; and if any one speaks of a German, Frenchman, or Russian, he means a man formed by German, French, or Muscovite polity, and that the man himself is moulded by it. It is none the less so for the Christian; his whole soul and mode of thought is formed by the Holy Ghost in that heaven where the blessed name of the Lord Jesus is supreme and where everything is ordered

around and under Him.

I shall never forget an aged servant of the Lord saying once, after he had been much alone with the word of God and enjoying the truths of Christianity, that it seemed to him upon getting into intercourse with people afterwards that their conversation was literally nonsense; and so, indeed, it would seem to us sometimes if we were more thoroughly in the sense of our heavenly citizenship.

Can a Christian then retire into a corner, and have nothing whatever to do with those around him? This would be a fatal mistake, and those who have tried to be eremites, from St. Anthony down to our time, have failed entirely to carry out the Lord's mind. I suppose there can be no doubt that Anthony was a Christian, though he never attained what he sought. He predicted that many would wear the weeds of a monk with far less sincerity than himself.

He did not pray that we should be taken out of the world; nor does the apostle suppose that we can go out of it (1 Cor. 5: 10). The point is that we already belong to heaven in such a way that if we were called upon to sing the praise of any "fatherland" it would be this one; our heart and mind is there already, and the formative power of the Holy Spirit will certainly produce the features of a heavenly citizen in each one who truly walks with the Lord through this world. In contrast with what is now called utilitarian, and which is really none else than the minding earthly things of verse 19, there is a true walk with a heavenly Christ, and anxious expectation of Him who shall come forth from the heavens and crown the whole work of salvation by bringing us, glorified ourselves, into that celestial splendour.

All thoughts of human glory and civic honours fade away at once into nothing before the splendour of that day, when the divine might of Him who can subdue all things unto Himself shall transform the bodies of our humiliation into the likeness of His glorious body.

Our home, our place of honour, our all is with Him where he is in the heavens, and a true sense of this will keep us morally outside all the false and earthly religion of this century.

E. L. B.

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