

Different Home; Different Hope

The Road to Heaven Part 9
Philippians 3:20-4:1 9-11-2016

Summary: We should follow Paul’s example because those who didn’t become engrossed in this world and ended in destruction. But Paul’s example is to live as citizens of heaven with an urgent longing for the return of Christ and the exertion of his power in our resurrection.

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Philippians 3:17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Introduction

longing

noun

strong, persistent desire or craving, especially for something distant:

What do you long for? Most people just long for their current trial to be over. When you go somewhere, you expect some discomfort, but when you finish whatever it is you are doing, you want to be able to just come home and relax and be comfortable and at peace. For most people, this world is their home, and so what they long for is for this life to get comfortable. What are you longing for in your life? As Christians, our longings are different because we have a different home.

A Different Home

Review

We have been studying through the book of Philippians, and we left off last time in chapter 3 at verse 20. The passage started back in verse 17 where Paul said this:

Philippians 3:17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

We should follow godly examples, and then the rest of the chapter is Paul telling us the reason why it is so important to follow godly examples. In the next two verses he describes what happens to people who don't follow his example. He describes people who have become engrossed in this world, and as a result they live lives that are at odds with the purposes of the cross of Christ, and their end is eternal destruction. All of that can result from a wrong lifestyle, because very often your beliefs will follow your way of living.

So instead of that kind of lifestyle, imitate Paul's lifestyle which is described starting in verse 20. Paul is still explaining why it's so important to follow his example in the way we live.¹ He draws a stark contrast between the way those people live, and the way we will live if we follow Paul's example. The way we live is drastically different because we have a different home and a different hope. First, our home.

Heavenly Citizenship

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven.

Notice that is stated as a present fact, not something future. The present, current fact is that your home country is in heaven. The word translated **citizenship** is actually **country** – the *place* of your citizenship, or the government of your citizenship. And the point here isn't that we are going to go there someday. The point here is that right now, your home country where your current citizenship resides is heaven, not this world. We have a different home. And we need to learn from godly examples how to get the hang of the Christian life because it's crucial that our lifestyle be consistent with our citizenship. If you are a citizen of one country but you try to live as if you were a citizen of the country you are visiting, that's not going to go well. You are going to focus on the wrong things, invest in the wrong things, value the wrong currency, root for the wrong teams, and, if the two countries go to war, you might end up fighting on the wrong side.

This is the second time Paul has brought up this idea of our citizenship. Remember back in chapter 1 when he said:

Philippians 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves [lit. live as citizens] in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.

That's powerful language to use with the Philippian church because Philippi was a Roman colony, which means even though it wasn't in Rome, the people who lived there were given the privileges of

¹ The first word in the sentence is actually *for* (*Gr gar*), not *but*. Paul is introducing a second reason for why we should follow godly examples. **17 ... take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you ... 18 for many live as enemies of the cross ... 20 for our citizenship is in heaven...**

Roman citizenship. They were very proud of that. The tiny little town of Philippi was considered the leading city in all of Macedonia because of that Roman citizenship they had. And the people who lived there did not consider themselves Philippians or Macedonians. They considered themselves Romans, even though most of them had never set foot on Italian soil 800 miles away. So they knew all about having a citizenship from another place. And so Paul reminds them a second time, their citizenship is not in Macedonia, nor is it in Rome. It is in heaven. They are a colony of heaven. They are an outpost of the heavenly city, with all the full rights and privileges of heavenly citizenship.

The reason we need to really be on the lookout for godly examples to follow to get the hang of the Christian life is because that's our identity. That's our home. This living situation here, where we reside in the United States – that's just a temporary living arrangement. You don't invest yourself in a temporary situation. If you are on vacation, you don't spend thousands of dollars renovating your hotel bathroom.

Imagine you had an accident that put you in a coma for a long time, and when you woke up you learned that while you were asleep you got transferred in your job to Hawaii and your family moved your home there. So you went to sleep as a Colorado resident, and woke up as an out-of-town visitor. Your home, your family, your job and all your possessions are all in Hawaii now, even though you have never been there.

So your boss calls and says, "Before you come to your new home, I've got one last assignment for you to finish up in Colorado." So for now you're still here, but some things will change about the way you live. You'll probably spend your money a lot differently. You are not going to go out and spend \$500 on a new down parka. People give you strange looks when you buy a surfboard instead of a snowboard. You won't run for Denver city council. You won't enroll your kids in school here. All your business (with the exception of your present assignment) is now in Hawaii.

Paul's Example

So that's how it might look if your home moved to Hawaii, but how does it affect your life when your home is in heaven? Probably the two biggest areas where you will see a difference are in the areas of selfishness and suffering. When you realize your home is in heaven, it will be easier for you to let go of selfishness and you will find more joy in the midst of suffering. If you look up other times when Paul calls us to follow his example, those are the areas that stand out.

Selflessness

1 Corinthians 10:32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews ... even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. 11:1 Follow my example

If this world were his home, he would be seeking his own good here and now. But since he belongs to heaven, his values shift so that getting people saved is way more important than getting his way or being comfortable here and now. The spiritual progress of the saints, spiritual growth, the health and success of the church, the progress of the gospel – these are all so much more important than his temporary comfort in this world. That's your attitude when you realize your home is in heaven. And so you don't have to fight for your way. If your rights are violated, it doesn't matter. If your temporal desires go unfulfilled, it doesn't matter. This world is the Titanic, and so if someone messes up your state room or even takes it away from you, it doesn't matter. There is a rescue ship that has a whole suite reserved for you, so you don't feel like you have to grasp on to anything on this sinking ship.

Joy in Suffering

That's one category. The other main category where Paul calls us to imitate him is joy in suffering.

1 Thessalonians 1:6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

If your home is here, then there is no joy in suffering. Suffering makes you miserable, and pleasure makes you happy – period. But if your citizenship is somewhere else, and all your joy is wrapped up in what happens up there rather than here, then you can have joy even when things go really bad here.

Imagine a Denver native who is a huge football fan. He goes on a business trip to Ireland. And while he's there, the Irish lose a big soccer game on the same day that the Broncos win the Superbowl. So everyone around him is depressed, and he's ecstatic. And they say, "How can you be happy when such a horrible thing just happened – we lost the big game." And he says, "Your team lost; mine didn't. My team did great!" That was Paul's attitude.

"How can you be smiling, Paul, when things are going so wrong?"

Answer, "They aren't going wrong in my hometown. Things are always great in my home country."

So those are the two categories where Paul typically calls us to follow his example, and they happen to also be two of the main themes of the book of Philippians. He wrote this book because the Philippians were suffering, and that suffering was bringing out selfishness and pride. And so Paul writes to them to teach them about selfless humility and how to have joy in suffering. And that's why he spent so much of the book describing himself, because they could learn how to have joy in suffering and how to have selfless humility by following Paul's example.

A Different Hope

So we have a different home. That's the present reality. And from our present home comes our future hope.

20 Our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a Savior from there

Our hope is in the return of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. Your hopes are the things that keep you motivated and moving forward in life. And the things that keep citizens of this world going in life are all things that are tied to this temporary world. They live for the weekend, or for their next vacation, or for the next phase in life. Their main hope is the day they get married or the day they have kids or the day some dream or aspiration is finally fulfilled. But our hope is set fully on the Day Jesus will return.

Eager Anticipation

The Christian life is a life of eager anticipation of that event. We are encouraged, motivated, and energized, not mainly by temporal things in this life, but by the Day Jesus Christ will return. I have to confess, this is one of the most convicting areas of the Christian life for me. I get so comfortable in this life; I go long stretches without even thinking about the Second Coming. I read what Paul says about how eager Christians are about Christ's coming -

Romans 8:23 ... we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons

1 Corinthians 1:7 you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

Galatians 5:5 But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.

Hebrews 9:28 so Christ ... will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are eagerly waiting for him.

2 Timothy 4:8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord ... will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

It sounds like that's the definition of a Christian – someone who longs for and is eagerly waiting for the return of Christ. I read verses like that and I think, "Is that me? Could you really describe my life as eagerly longing for the Second Coming?"

What does that look like in practical terms? Does it mean we are miserable in this life and can't wait for it to end? No, Paul has a whole section in chapter 4 of Philippians about how we are to be content in any and every situation. And the whole book of Philippians is about joy. We are not to have an attitude that says, "I can't stand this life. I can't wait till Jesus comes and it will all be over." No, we are to be happy and full of joy and contentment here and now. But if that's the case, how can you be happy with this life and still be longing for something else?

The answer has to do with why you're happy with this life. Back in chapter 1 Paul was wrestling with the question of whether he would rather die and go to be with Jesus, or stay here in this life, and he decided he wanted to stay here. Why? Because he was so comfortable in this life? No, he was in prison.

Philippians 1:23 I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith

If staying here was more beneficial for the Philippians' progress and joy in the faith, then he wanted to stay. Progress towards what?

Philippians 1:9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you ... may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ

The reason he was so happy in this life, and the reason he wanted to stay was because he had an opportunity to help get the Philippians ready for the day of Christ. I am here in this world for two reasons: to get myself ready for the day of Christ, and help get you ready for the day of Christ. And you are here in this world for two reasons: to get yourself ready, and to help get me ready. That's what we are doing here. So we can be happy and content in this life because of the fact that we have opportunities in this life to get people ready for the next life. The Christian life is a life in which everything you do is shaped by anticipation of the coming of Christ. When the things in this world are useful for heavenly purposes, great. When they aren't, then we let them go.

Love God; Use the World

We use the world, but we love God. That's the Christian life, but if we fail to follow godly examples, and as a result we don't really get the hang of living the Christian life, we end up like those people in verses 18-19. Those people became engrossed in the world, so now instead of loving God and using the world, they love the world and try to use God to get more of what they want in this world. That is the danger Paul is warning us about – not only here, but other places in Scripture.

1 Corinthians 7:29 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they did not; 30 those who mourn, as if not mourning; those who are happy, as if not being happy; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

That's a difficult passage, but I think the gist of it is that last part – we are to use this world but we are not to become engrossed in it. When you handle earthly things, use them for eternal purposes, but don't let them anywhere near your heart.

And he says at the beginning that all that is because **the time is short**. When you realize how temporary this life is, it changes your attitude toward the stuff in this world. I had a friend a while back who was about 50 years old, seemed perfectly healthy, and one day he went to the doctor for a headache and they said, "You have a grapefruit-sized tumor in your brain," and they told him he had two weeks to live. And it was amazing to see how all of his priorities changed. His attitude toward all his possessions

probably changed the most. He had a whole new perspective on everything. Everything he did was focused on preparing to meet the Lord.

One person compared this principle to the way a comedian tells a joke. When you tell a joke, the punchline at the end shapes the whole telling of the joke. Everything you say in the joke is leading up to that. That's kind of what the Christian life is like. We have a lot of things going here and now, dealing with temporal things like money and family and cars and computers and careers. But all our dealings with those things are handled the way they are handled because of the final punchline that we see coming. You do the things you do with your stuff for the sake of bringing about the best eternal results, even if that means the temporal results in this world aren't very good. And so you end up making decisions that seem crazy to people who have this world as their home. In Acts 21 Paul makes a decision to go to Jerusalem even though he knew he would be arrested and thrown in prison if he went there. The people around him were all perplexed – "Why would you go down there?" And Paul was just as perplexed at them – "Why wouldn't I go? There's an opportunity to preach the gospel down there." When the whole punchline that everything in your life is moving towards is the Second Coming, you make decisions that, a lot of times, make no sense from the temporal point of view, but they make perfect sense when you understand the punch line.

So we love God and use the world. Are we miserable in this life? No. We thoroughly enjoy God's temporal gifts, but they are not the determining factor of the direction of our lives. They are not the controlling issue in our emotions or decision making. We use them for what they are good for, and that's it. Just like you use a paper towel for what it's good for, then you're done with it – no further attachment. That's the way a Christian sees the things in this world – you use them for what they are good for, and that's all. And what are they good for? Helping you love God more and helping you carry out God's eternal purposes. Use them for that, and that's the extent of your attachment.

My dad loved life. He loved hunting and fishing and travel and motorcycling and whitewater rafting and golfing and ping pong – all kinds of things in this life he thoroughly enjoyed. But when the cancer ravaged his body and he couldn't do any of that, did we look at him and say, "Oh, too bad. He's lost everything he was living for"? No, not at all. We were happy for him because he was finally on the precipice of *gaining* everything he had lived for. All that other stuff was kind of like the magazine in the waiting room. You enjoy looking through it, but the second they call your name, you toss it aside and don't give it another thought. Why? Because you're not there for the magazine. You're there for something much more important.

So let's follow Paul's example and keep our eyes on the prize. Enjoy the magazine for now, but don't forget why you're here. It's not for the magazine. Keep the end in sight. Paul talked about the Day of Christ constantly. He didn't miss his appointment because he became engrossed with the magazine of this world. The Second Coming was always on his mind.

Grows Out of Relationship

And that comes from knowing Christ personally. Getting excited about the Day of Christ is not so much about the Day as it is about the Christ. The more I enjoy fellowship with Christ in this life, the more I will long to see him face to face. So my longing for his return is not just a longing for what's broken in this world to be fixed, but a longing for the one who will fix it.

Luke 12:35 "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, 36 like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. 37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them."

There are two ways to be interested in end times. Some people are on the calendar committee and some people are on the welcoming committee. Remember when the Magi came to Jerusalem and asked the Bible experts where the Messiah was to be born? They said, "Oh, that's easy – Bethlehem." They

knew the answer, but none of them actually went with the Magi down to Bethlehem to see him. They were on the calendar committee but not the welcoming committee.

There are so many books out there about the end times written by the calendar committee. My library is loaded with them. I don't need any more books about the timing or the controversy of it. What I need is a book that will show me how to live my life in such a way that my daily activity is driven by a consuming desire for the return of Christ. I need someone to teach me how to have that in the foreground in my thinking rather than it being so far in the background. I need a godly man or woman who can show me by example how to be insulted by someone, or hurt by a family member, or have my car break down in the rain, and have an emotional response that rises up out of the soil of thoughts about the Second Coming. I need godly examples to show me how to live that way, because if I don't live that way, the natural tendency will be for the fallen part of me – the part of me that is attached to this world – to call the shots in my life and I'll end up in verses 18-19.

Powerful Glorification

So we long to see a person. But let's not over-spiritualize so much that we try to say that we don't care about reward or about any of the benefits that we will receive on that Day. That might sound spiritual "I don't care about anything else – just Jesus. I don't need any reward – just Jesus." That's not a biblical attitude. Scripture teaches us to not only long to see Christ, but also to long for all the rewards and blessings and wonders that go along with seeing Christ. If I really, truly miss my wife – she's been gone a long time and I'm longing to see her – I'm longing for all that goes along with seeing her. I want to see her face, but I also want to hear her voice, and feel her touch. I want her companionship. I'm looking forward to her gestures of love. If she asks me, "Do you look forward to all those things?" I won't say, "Nope! I only look forward to seeing your face – nothing else about you." That wouldn't honor her. It honors her when I not only love her, but I love everything about her, and all the delights that go along with being with her. And that's how we are to be with Christ. We are to long not only to see him, but to receive all that he has promised. Because when you get excited about something Christ has promised, that's proof that you trust him. In this case, the focus is on the resurrection.

Philippians 4:20 ...the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

New Body

Body of Our Lowliness

Right now we have **lowly bodies**. Or literally, **the body of our lowliness**. We are in a lowly condition, and our bodies reflect that. Our bodies are weak, aging, corruptible, perishable, and temporary. They get diseased, cancerous, arthritic – something goes wrong with your hormones and you suddenly feel depressed for no reason, we have physical impulses that push us toward sin, you see someone attractive and your body forgets that you're married to someone else. Your brain forgets to pray for the person you said you'd pray for this week.

This phrase, **the body of our lowliness**, refers to more than just the physical part of us. Yes, my eyes are going bad, my hearing is going, I've got bad knees – but it goes beyond just that stuff. We are in a lowly condition through and through – body, mind, will, emotions, desires, values – our entire being, and that lowliness is manifested in and enclosed by our physical bodies. Our physical bodies really are the embodiment of all of our fallenness. And our fallenness hinders our fellowship with Christ. And so we long for the day that we get new bodies.

The Resurrection Body

1 Corinthians 15:42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

Right now my physical condition is declining. I recently got hearing aids which sit right on top of my ears. On top of those I set my glasses because my eyesight is going. And on top of all that I have this earpiece microphone that I need because my voice is so weak that even in a room this size I need amplified sound. Honestly, I'm running out of space on my ears for all the assistance I need just to be able to interact with the world around me. My new body won't be like that. My new body won't fall asleep while I'm trying to study and learn new things about Christ. My new back won't get so sore that I can't concentrate on what I'm reading.

There are athletes who can perform unbelievable feats of strength. But even that is classified as weakness compared to what my new body will be capable of.

Our current bodies experience pain. Spurgeon: "Does it not sometimes appear to the children of sickness as if this body were fashioned with a view to suffering; as if all its nerves, sinews, veins, pulses, vessels, and valves, were parts of a curious instrument upon which every note of the entire gamut of pain might be produced?" Our new bodies won't be like that – no more pain, ever.

And best of all, my new body will be a spiritual body – a physical, tangible, flesh and bone body that is suited for spiritual things. When I come here to worship God with all of you, and I try to stand up during a song and I get shooting pain in my back, that doesn't help. It's a distraction. I get caught up in awe of God and lift my hands to heaven, and that's great for a few minutes, but then my arms start getting tired and I'm thinking more about my arms than I am about the glory of God. That doesn't help. Impulses toward sin don't help. Ungodly cravings don't help. Inability to focus my mind during prayer doesn't help. My body is supposed to be a temple of the Holy Spirit, but it's so prone to become defiled and turn into a den of thieves. The parts of my body can become instruments of wickedness. Jesus asked the disciples to watch and pray with him on the worst night of his life, but their weak bodies got the better of them and they fell asleep. These fallen bodies aren't very well suited for spiritual things. And so we long for the day when we will receive spiritual bodies – bodies that are suited for spiritual things.

Supremacy

And how will all this happen?

Philippians 4:20 ... Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies

When Jesus returns he will **bring everything under his control**. Literally, he will make everything subject to him. Right now there is such a thing as disobedience to Christ. But the Day is coming when there will be no such thing. Someday he is going to put an end to all traces of rebellion against his will.

And that includes the creation. Everything in the new heavens and the new earth will conform to his perfect goodness. The parts of the creation that went haywire at the fall in Genesis 3 will no longer be allowed to go haywire. Mosquitoes will no longer be allowed to bite you or buzz in your face. (In fact, they probably won't even be allowed to exist at all.) You will no longer get weeds in your garden, no thorns and thistles, it won't be 120 degrees in Arizona. Christ is going to arrive and unleash power the likes of which has never been seen before – not even when the universe was created. He will make everything *beautiful* – no more deformity or ugliness. He will make everything *useful* – forcing everything from atomic particles to clusters of galaxies – every single thing he will make to fulfill its intended purpose perfectly. He will make everything *perfect* – no more evil, no more sin. He will make everything *thrive* – no more sickness, no more decline, no more death. He is going to bring every atom,

every person, every heart, every mind – everything into full subjection to all the aspects of his perfect will.

God's Power

And he is capable of doing that in an instant – in the blink of an eye. It's not going to be hard for him. That's the part Paul emphasizes here in verse 21 – the power involved. It's important to understand the power of God. If you don't understand his power, you'll start doubting the supernatural. You'll doubt what you read in the Bible, you'll doubt the miracles, and you will end up doubting the whole promise of the resurrection. That's how people become liberals. It's exactly what happened to the liberals back in Jesus' day. The Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection because they doubted the supernatural. And so when they came to Jesus with a mocking question about the resurrection, here's what he said:

Matthew 22:29 Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

We need to understand the power of Christ so that we don't fall into error.

Ephesians 1:18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, 20 which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

One day there is going to be a loud trumpet blast, and he will appear in power and great glory. Every eye will see him, and he will be marveled at by the saints. He will destroy Satan and all the demons, he will destroy this world with fire, judge the wicked, and create a new heavens and a new earth by the awesome power of his mighty right hand, and he will do it all without breaking a sweat. All the forces of Satan, all demons, and all human beings could combine forces to resist and it wouldn't delay the accomplishment of it even one microsecond if he doesn't want it to. The power that Jesus Christ is going to unleash at that time is beyond imagination or comprehension.

But that's not the point Paul is making. He refers to that power, but his point isn't just that Christ will exert that power. His point is that Christ is going to come, and he is going to let lose all that power *on you*. The thing that Christ is going to do to your body will require *that much* power.

The Whole Person

And again, it goes beyond just the physical body. Paul uses the resurrection of the body in this section as shorthand to describe all the final, ultimate benefits of salvation, including moral perfection. It is not uncommon for Paul to use the word body to refer to the whole person - including the spiritual part of you.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you ... to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Romans 8:23 ... we groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

So when Paul talks about the transformation of our bodies here, that will include the glorification of every part of your being. Murray Harris: "Once he experiences a resurrection transformation, man will

know perennial rejuvenation, since he will have a perfect vehicle for God's deathless spirit, a body that is invariably responsive to his transformed personality."²

Conclusion

Where can we find examples of people who live this way? A whole bunch of them are described in Hebrews 11. He describes their lives and then says this:

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith without receiving the things promised, but they saw them in the distance and welcomed them and acknowledged that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth. **14** For those who speak in such a way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. **15** In fact, if they had been thinking of the land that they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. **16** But as it is, they aspire to a better land, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Benediction: 1 Peter 5:10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. **11** To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Application Questions (James 1:25)

- 1) What things in this world threaten the most to cause you to become engrossed in them?
- 2) Name four or five things about you or this messed up world that you are most excited to see Christ come and make beautiful and perfect.
- 3) What category of your life or your thinking most needs to be more directed toward the "punchline" of our future hope? Why did you pick that area?

² Harris, *Raised Immortal*, 121.