

Philippians 3:17-21

¹⁷ Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are enemies of the cross of Christ*, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Citizens of Heaven

Have you ever thought about what being a *citizen* means? If you're a citizen, you are a member of a community that has rights, privileges and responsibilities. Let's take a look at Paul's letter to the Philippians to see what he says about the citizenship of believers, along with its benefits.

1. Read Philippians 3:17-21 and draw a circle around any mention of the **BRETHREN** (including the pronouns *you, your, our, we*).

Reflect: What do you learn from marking the brethren?

2. Read back through the passage and underline all references to the **ENEMIES** (including the pronouns *their, they*).

Reflect: What do you learn about the enemies and how do they compare with what you learned about the brethren?

Earlier in Philippians, Paul affirmed that, "for me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (1:20-21). He was able to say this because of his knowledge that heaven, and not this world, was his home. Take some time today to examine whether you are living out your identity in Christ as a citizen of heaven. If you are, be encouraged! You have a glorious hope to look forward to. If you're not, then pray for God to renew your mind!