

Philippians 3:20-21, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

My prayer this morning is for every child of God to understand that even though they live in this world, their citizenship is in heaven above. In the verses previously cited, the word "conversation", which is derived from the Greek politeuma, means citizenship. I pray that every child of God would enjoy the assurance and hope of their name being "written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:23), and by that assurance will be able to rejoice in the Lord while living in this world (Luke 10:20).

As most of you already know, my wife was born and raised in the Washington D. C. area. Every Thanksgiving, and other times of the year, we travel back there to visit family. In the times that I've visited that area, I've learned that people from all over the world either live there, or come there for work on a daily basis. The folks that are not from that area, having their citizenship of another nation, are usually easy to pick out. They will talk different, dress different, and even live different than the citizens of Washington D. C.. And so it should be with us as children of God. Even though we live here in this world, with our citizenship being of another country, we should live, look and talk different than others. The Scripture and Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ instructs us to do so. We should:

(1) Talk different than those of this world. In Ephesians 4:31, the Apostle instructs us to "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speakings, be put away from you, with all malice." As citizens of heaven, our lips should not speak those things that are evil in the sight of God. We should always "speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1), and use "Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:8). The child of grace should be one who speaks to others, not in a way acceptable with this world, but in a way acceptable in the sight of God. In Matthew 5:37 Jesus Christ says to "let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay;..." According to the Lord, we should never have to swear we are telling the truth, but always speak truth with our lips having a honest report in this world.

(2) Look different than those of this world. Whether it be our dress or the decorations of our homes, it should be dictated by the Word of God, and not just the fashions of this world. Today it seems more and more acceptable to wear less and less. My daddy used to say 'I don't know how much less people can wear.' We should be a people which adorn ourselves in "modest apparel" (1 Tim 2:9). A person who's citizenship is in heaven should dress as such. Our homes should be decorated in such a way to see that we have a greater interest in another land. The Bible should not be cast into the corners of our homes and covered with dust, but should be displayed and used on a regular basis. It should be easily known that our "treasures" are in heaven (Matt 6:19-21).

(3) We should live and act differently than the people of this world. Even though the world would say it's ok to be intoxicated on the weekend to forget your work week, we should always remember that Ephesians 5:18 teaches us to "not be drunk with wine, wherein is excess;..." Even though this world instructs us to conform to a dog eat dog environment, we should be "kind one to another, tenderhearted,..." (Ephesians 4:32). Even though this world says it's ok to hold a grudge, we should be forgiving "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32). Children of God, who have their citizenship in another country (heaven) should be easily spotted and noticed by others, and when you are, don't think it strange, but rejoice that your Lord is being magnified by your Godly speech, appearance and actions. Amen!

Elder Ronnie B. Loudermilk

