

Philippians (6 of 8)
Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the [recent sermons page](#) at our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the sermon slides and small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

Sunday, September 15th, 2024



Series Focus: In his final days on earth, the Apostle Paul wrote a heartfelt letter to the church in Philippi from a prison cell in Rome. What does it look like to be faithful to Jesus in a world of competing allegiances? Is it possible for the church to remain calm, be at peace, and live with joy in a society that is seriously lacking it? And how do we live as “citizens of heaven” in a world seemingly going to hell? In this series, we will be encouraged to view all of life through the lens of the cross and to live out our faith together in humility, service, and love—all the while anticipating the Lord’s return.

Sermon Title: Our Heavenly Citizenship

Scripture Reading: Philippians 3:1-4:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; Hebrews 11:13-16

Sermon Focus: Paul has no problem telling the Philippian believers to follow his example because he renounced all his privileges and pride of the flesh to adopt the mindset of Christ. In the sixth message of our series, Pastor David invites us to live as “citizens of heaven” on the earth as we run the race and look forward to the return of Christ, who will someday transform this broken world with his resurrection power.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Begin by reading Philippians 3:1-4:1 together. Choose one or two people to read. It might seem inappropriate and/or arrogant for Paul to tell the Philippian believers to follow his example. But notice Paul's posture and the sort of attitude and behavior he is commanding them to follow (i.e., verses 7-11). How is God speaking to you through Paul's words? What is your initial response?
2. Take a moment of silence to consider the following question: "Are there privileges, accomplishments, and other works of "human effort" that I need to "count as loss" and "garbage" compared to knowing Christ?" After a minute to reflect, share with your group what the Spirit is saying to you?
3. Who are those within my own city, culture, and context whose "god is their stomach" (who follow their feelings and sinful desires) that I shouldn't imitate or follow? Take a few minutes to kindly share who comes to mind. Also, Paul encourages us to have a posture of grief ("tears") over these "enemies of the cross of Christ" (v.18). Why is this the best response to these enemies?
4. Read Philippians 3:20-21 again. Recall Pastor David's exposition and comments on this passage, as it bookends with Philippians 1:27. Since our citizenship is in heaven and we're called to be aliens and exiles on this earth, how is the Spirit inviting you to reassess the way you view your earthly citizenship and engage in American politics? How should our true identity and citizenship impact the way we navigate the current political landscape in the United States?
5. Notice Paul's repeated mention of Christ's return. Pastor David talked about the mixed metaphors that Paul used to describe the Lord's return in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. He shared how the first century audience would have understood Paul's description of Christ's return. And then Pastor David said, "Our belief in where things are going should impact our present faith and living."

How does this knowledge of Christ's return challenge or inspire you in your current challenges? And how ought this future promise and reality impact our attitude and feelings about our current political situation in America?
6. How else did God speak to you through this message? What questions might you have in "crossing the bridge" and applying it? After your sharing, close in prayer for each other, our church, our community, and our country.