

# Citizens of Heaven

## Baptized People

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### Introduction

- Why is it so important to know who you are?
- What does **Philippians 3:20-21** tell you about yourself? It says, “But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> 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.”

### Romans 6:1-14 – New Identity, New Allegiance

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? <sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. <sup>5</sup> If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. <sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. <sup>8</sup> Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. <sup>10</sup> The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup> Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

1. What idea is confronted, rebuffed, and trounced in this section of Romans?
2. Far from a symbol, what does **6:3-4** say to show what deep things are at work in baptism?
3. When the old self was crucified along with Christ as **v. 6** talks about, what died with it?
4. Who is told to count themselves dead to sin in **6:11**? How does being “alive to God in Christ Jesus” shape how we evaluate claims that demand our highest loyalties?

### Galatians 3:26-29 – In Christ, Other Identities Are Secondary

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you

are all one in Christ Jesus.<sup>29</sup> If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

5. Ontology is the philosophy of being, existence, how you see yourself and identify yourself. How does **3:26** help you in this lifelong quest? How does your garb also help?
6. In **3:28**, Paul lists distinctions that once divided people but do so no longer in Jesus. What does Paul say? Why would Paul make this claim after talking about baptism?
7. The idea that God's promises are inherited through ethnicity, culture, or national belonging is debunked in **3:29**. How?

## What lesser things compete for your loyalty?

8. Recall that Paul said our citizenship is in heaven. What earthly citizenships or affiliations feel most demanding?
9. Jesus says in **Matthew 6:21**, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." What do your emotional reactions reveal about competing loyalties?
10. Christ calls us to self-denial. What other influences are informing our sense of self there which make this so hard?

## Acts 2:38-47 – Baptismal Living

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."<sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."<sup>40</sup> With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."<sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.<sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.<sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common.<sup>45</sup> Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.<sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,<sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

11. What practices here show allegiance to Christ rather than cultural norms?
12. Luke says they had everything in common. Talk about the connection between shared life and allegiance. What would this look like for us?