

Message Notes

Heavenly Citizenship

Heaven Series, part 5

Philippians 3:20-4:1

April 24, 2005

*For our citizenship is in heaven,
from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
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.
Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see,
my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.
Philippians 3:20-4:1*

We rejoice with these being baptized this morning. . .

1st Service:

Matthew DeVore
Kaitlyn Keil
Bobby Cleath
Nicole Vogelpohl
Lynne Heil
Ann Stuebner
Mark Nygaard
Jeanette Gibson

2nd Service

Kristen Gardenhire
Cynde Spence
Ariel Spence-Pisetti
Scarlett Spence-Gravelle
Meghan Smith
Shelby Patty
Kenzie Hassey
Elle Nolan
Starlene Marshall

grace
San Luis Obispo

Message Outline

Heavenly Citizenship

Heaven Series, part 5

Philippians 3:20-4:1

April 24, 2005

What is Baptism all about?

1. Baptism is an outward SIGNIFICATION of an inward spiritual reality. . . union with and transformation by Jesus Christ. (Ti. 3:5)
2. Baptism is a personal IDENTIFICATION with Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection. (Col 2:12)
3. Baptism is a public PROCLAMATION of faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Baptism is a joyous CELEBRATION of new life in Jesus Christ.

Does Baptism save a person?

No, salvation is by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone. (Eph. 2:1-10) Baptism symbolizes outwardly what has already happened inwardly by faith.

Who should be Baptized?

All those who have repented of their sins and come to personal faith in Jesus Christ. Those who have come to believe that they are weaker and more sinful than they dared imagine, but at the same time, more loved and accepted in Jesus, than they dared hope. Those who realize that Jesus Christ lived the life that they should have lived and died the death that they deserve.

Why should a person be Baptized?

1. A person should be baptized because Jesus commanded us to be baptized. (Matthew 28:19)
2. A person should be baptized to publicly proclaim their faith in Jesus Christ, so that the church can celebrate together with them and so that the world will know of our identification with Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:38)

How can a person be saved and come into a life-changing relationship with God through Jesus Christ?

Turn away from your sins and your self-reliance (repentance) and turn toward and trust Jesus Christ for salvation (faith)! (Acts 16:31) Repentance and faith must happen inwardly, but they can be expressed outwardly through a prayer something like this:

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

Growth Group Understanding Questions

Heavenly Citizenship

Heaven Series, part 5

Philippians 3:20-4:1

April 24, 2005

1. Read Matthew 28:18-20. Why do we baptize believers here at Grace Church? Is baptism optional for believers of Jesus Christ?
2. Read Galatians 3:26-29. How does water baptism picture our spiritual identification with Jesus Christ? In other words, how is water baptism "an outward sign of inward reality?" What is the significance of being "in Christ" by faith?
3. Read Acts 8:26-40. What was necessary in order for the Ethiopian Eunuch to be baptized? What did he confess with his mouth and believe with his heart?
4. Read Romans 6:1-7. In verse 4, what does baptism signify? How should this reality affect the way we live/walk?
5. How is baptism a SIGNIFICATION? An IDENTIFICATION? A PROCLAMATION? A CELEBRATION? Did you see/experience all these four in our Baptismal service together?

Growth Group Application Questions

Heavenly Citizenship

Heaven Series, part 5

Philippians 3:20-4:1

April 24, 2005

1. What were your impressions of our baptism service this last Sunday?
2. Why is it valuable for us to commit a Sunday worship service to the celebration of baptism, rather than relegating baptism to an evening or midweek service? How does baptism encourage the faith of others in the church?
3. Why should those who have put their faith in Christ, be baptized?
4. If you have been baptized, describe your baptism. When were you baptized? What was it like for you? How did you feel? Did you understand what you were doing?
5. Why do some Christians neglect the important biblical command to be baptized? Is it fear or negligence or something else that holds folks back? If you have not been baptized, discuss what is holding you back from this important piece of Christian obedience?
6. Discuss this statement: "Following Jesus begins with a point in time commitment and continues as a lifelong relationship." How has that been true for you? How is a relationship with Jesus like and unlike other relationships. How is it unlike other religions?