

Philippians 3 – The Change We Look Forward To 11/15/17

Hardly anyone I know likes change. I'm a creature of habit, and when I fall into a routine, I really don't want anything disturbing it. If I'm in a job I like, or living in a place I like, change is unwelcome. As a Christian, however, the only thing constant is change. We are called to change our lives from a sinful one to one dedicated to the service of God. It is difficult, because we become comfortable living a life of self-gratification. Paul tells the Romans in **Romans 12:1-2**:

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Give yourselves to God, change your mindset, live for Him. You, as a child of God, are a spiritual being housed in a body of flesh. Paul says in **2 Corinthians 3:18** that we are being “transformed into his image” daily. Later, in **2 Corinthians 4:16**, Paul tells us: “outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” We’re changing, or rather should be changing, to be more Christ-like.

In **Philippians 3:20-21**, Paul tells his readers the OTHER change that will be the end result of our changing to be the person God wants us to be:

“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 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.”

In order to live with God in the “*new heaven and new earth*” that Peter talks about in **2 Peter 3:13**, we must be changed again. Our earthly bodies cannot dwell in the heavenly realm. Paul talks at great lengths about this in **1 Corinthians 15**. In **verses 50-53**, he says:

“I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.”

As citizens of heaven, we will be immortal, raised from the dead never to die again. The only thing that is difficult is the wait. We look forward to it eagerly, Paul says, because the immortal life is far greater than the mortal one. He had already told the Philippians in **Philippians 1** about the struggle he had on the inside, knowing he had more work to do, but wanting to “*depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.*” (**Philippians 1:23**)

Endurance is the key. While we wait **“eagerly”** to be with Christ, we live for God and endure the hardships that this life places on our **“mortal”** bodies. Paul says Jesus Christ has **“the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, (and) will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”** Truly something to look forward to.

---Johnny Stephens