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CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN.\*

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Phil. III, 19-20. "Who mind earthly things . . . Our citizenship is in Heaven."

IN these words Paul contrasts two classes of persons and two ways of living. 'Imitate me,' he says, 'and those who live as I live.' He does not write thus in a spirit of egotism, or presumption, or self-righteousness; but in downright, intense earnestness. Paul has himself become the possessor of a new life and he would have other men share the inspiration of that life. Every preacher of the Gospel ought to be able to make this appeal; and any minister whose life is in manifest contradiction to his preaching is foredoomed to failure, however brilliant or scholarly he may be.

With great intensity—with tears—Paul warns his Philippian friends against the influence of the sensual, self-indulgent, earthly-minded men who professed to be Christians, but were "enemies of the Cross of Christ." The Cross meant the taking away of sin; they clung to sin. The

Cross meant self-sacrifice; their lives were self-indulgent in the grossest forms—forms which even decent Pagans would have condemned. The Cross meant unworldliness; they "minded earthly things."

Paul draws a contrast between the principle that animated the lives of these sensual worldlings and the principle that animated his own life and the lives of his fellow-Christians. *They* "mind earthly things." "*Our* citizenship is in heaven." They have their view bounded by the earthly horizon; they believe in and live for what they can see and touch and taste—for what St. John so significantly describes as "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the vain glory of life." The controlling influences which mould our lives are heavenly. The country of our allegiance is above. We draw our inspiration from the recollection of it.

Wherein, then, lies the radical difference between the one way of living and the other? What is exactly meant by "minding earthly things?" It does not mean being interested in our daily work and doing it diligently and successfully. "In dili-

\*Substance of a sermon preached by the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, B.D.