



Future Class "Will"

Our final verse for this project, verse 21 is going to take us right through the door of a special class. I can about guarantee you have never been to this class before. You see most of us are very familiar with a history class, we all took it in school; in fact most of us probably took several history classes because they were a very normal part of the rigor of schooling. But have you ever been to a "Future Class"? Probably not... You know what, I haven't either, but as we think of this passage in terms of Faith Living 101, our last stop is going to be to take a seat in the desk of a class called just that, "Future".

Philippians 3:21 says,

"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".

You see it is easy to look back and see what happened and analyze why it happened and how it happened etc. That's history... But this verse challenges us to look forward, forward to the future in faith! Only God can tell us what will happen. Only God can point forward and state His plan that will take place. Only God can plant His purposes of all that He will do in the hearts and lives of those who love Him and follow Him in faith. The most amazing word in this passage is will. God is telling us what He will do. Now the question for us is will we stretch out our faith and believe Him?

Before we look at verse 21, it is important to look at how Paul concluded verse 19. He did so with a sad statement describing people who don't live by faith. He said,

"their mind is on earthly things"

But then his tone changes and he begins to describe life for the person of faith. He says in verse 20,

"but our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ"

And then we arrive at verse 21 where Paul goes on to say what Jesus will do. So let's take a seat in our desk and look at 2 things Jesus will do for the people of faith who have embraced Him as their Savior. Paul says...

1. Jesus will bring everything under His control.

He has the power to do it and He will do it. Boy that is an encouraging word for us in uncertain times isn't it? Many times we can feel like everything is spinning out of control or we can feel like people who have no business being in control have taken control. This world can be a chaotic place.

I don't know about you but knowing that Jesus will take control, gives me great confidence. Ultimately He is in control even now, but the Word teaches that God has allowed Satan, the prince of the air, to rule this world for a time. (Some scriptures to survey about Satan and his work in the earth are II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2; and John 14:30)

In reality, since Satan had to be granted permission by God for possession of this authority, God is still in control. But...there will come a day, when Jesus will take back that authority and bring everything under His direct control once more. I love the exactness and the totality of this statement. He will bring everything under His control; nothing will be left outside of His authority. (Some scriptures to

survey about the authority of Jesus are Colossians 1:15-19, Hebrews 1:1-8, Colossians 2:9-10 and Philippians 2:1-11.)

What else does verse 21 tell us Jesus will do?

2. Jesus will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.

I don't know about you but the older I get, this brings great anticipation. Just a quick note before we get into this statement - even though our bodies are described here as lowly, we do know they are a wonder to behold because the Bible tells us we were created in the image of God. The Bible also tells us our bodies are fearfully and wonderfully made. Isn't it interesting to know that as incredible as these bodies are, in comparison to what we will receive, they are considered as lowly? That is the difference between our perspective and God's. So... let's look at some other verses in God's Word to get His perspective about why our bodies are called "lowly". The Bible tells us:

- Our bodies are subject to decay... II Corinthians 4:16 tells us that our outer man (our body) is decaying day by day.
- Our bodies are temporal... Romans 5:12 tells us our bodies are subject to physical death because of sin
- Our bodies can easily ruled by our fleshly nature...Romans 1:24-32 tells us of what the body is capable of if allowed to be ruled by its sinful nature
- Our bodies limit us in many ways... In II Corinthians 12:1-6 Paul talks about a man being caught up in the heavens but he is not sure whether it was in the body or not. There are many things our bodies cannot do that we will be able to do as spirit beings.

So you see, as wonderful as our bodies are, they are also limited and lowly compared to how we will be transformed. This verse tells us that Jesus will transform our bodies so that they will be like His glorious body. I know all that means, but it gives great hope because it is something He will do!

So what does this "Future" class mean to us? Have you ever heard a student say, "I don't know why I have to take this class, I will never use this information in my life for what I want to do." You see, it is one thing to have knowledge of something, it is another to give it a place in the way we think and live and act. Every good teacher knows that just learning about something isn't really learning it, but applying that knowledge is the point where real learning has taken place. So, what about these two things we have "learned" in this verse?

What difference does it make to you that one day Jesus will bring everything under His control? For me it gives me peace, but it also directs the way that I live right now. I love Psalm 2; someone once described this to me as a four act play. Take a moment to read Psalm 2 with this thought pattern:

1. Verses 1-3 - the curtain opens and all the rulers of the earth are discussing things, they appear to know so much and they appear as if they don't need God
2. Verses 4-6 - the curtain opens again and we see God in the heavens, making it clear that He is not impressed or dismayed by their thinking, He has already installed Christ as the True Ruler of the world who has control and authority over all
3. Verses 7-9 - the curtain opens and Jesus speaks, making clear His call and His purpose in the earth
4. Verses 10-12 - the curtain opens with a narrator commenting on the three prior scenes, encouraging the world to take warning and pay homage to the Son because He is the Ruler Forever! How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

You see it is easy to get swayed by the world's systems and ways, but this Psalm calls me to direct my life differently. It calls me to pay homage to the Son, remembering and being ever aware that in the end, Jesus will have the final say, Jesus will be the one in control and I want to be on His side, I want to be in His family, even now, already submitting myself to His authority. You see if I have truly learned

the lesson in this "Future" class, I will even now, everyday, even when I don't feel like it or want to in my flesh, submit to His Lordship because I know He will bring everything under His control and I want to be ready for that day!

In the same way, what difference does it make to you that one day Jesus will transform your lowly body so that it can be like His glorious body? For me, this also gives me great peace and great hope too!

For those of you who have entered the world of the forties and beyond I know you know what I mean. We are a body image focused society aren't we? Everything is about the "package" and the older this body gets; we can become very dismayed as our body begins to show its wear and tear. I don't have to go into detail of all that means, most of you can relate I am sure.

But, as I allow this Truth of my future scheduled transformation to take root in my heart, it causes me to think with balance about this physical body. Yes I need to take care of it, yes I need to be a good steward of it, but I also need to be aware this isn't all there is. That can make a great difference in how I live right now and how I view my body right now. What about you?

You know if we had a semester full of time in this class called "Future", we could cover many things. There are so many wonders that God has said He will do on our behalf. These two things in verse 21 are just a sampling of them all.

But... we have had a "semester" full of times together to discuss faith in this Faith Living 101 class. Oh what we have learned about our faith in Him can be lived out in the day to day! As we end this Faith Living 101 class, let's consider a verse Paul also wrote in Hebrews. It is the definition of faith. Hebrews 11:1 says,

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

My prayer is that now having memorized Philippians 3:7-21 with a focus on faith, we will stretch out our faith to be sure and certain of these two things in verse 21 and also all of the other things highlighted in this great passage. I pray we are all walking deeper, stronger through our days with great Faith!

Many blessings to you,

Sharon Thomas

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