

# ***Teaching Sound Doctrine***

## ***Lord Teach Us Pt.6***

### ***Privileges / Obligations Christian Citizenship Pt.2***

Last week we went over some of the privileges and obligations of citizenship in the kingdom. We looked at the differences between being a citizen of our country and that of the kingdom. We saw how the kingdom laws of Christ are permanent while the laws of man are subject to change. We went over how Christians are members of the most highly favored kingdom on earth and how Christians are members of the purest kingdom on earth. Christians are members of the most enlightened kingdom on earth. This week we are going to continue our study starting with.....

#### **Most Profitable Kingdom**

4. Christians are members of the most profitable kingdom on earth. This is true in two senses. First, the Christian life is the happiest, the freest, the most wholesome and the healthiest life there is. (I Timothy 4:8.) Those who are loyal to Christ are promised a hundredfold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life. (Mark 10:29, 30.) Second, Christian citizenship is the most profitable in that it is through Christians that God brings blessings to the people of the world. God opens the hearts of his people to minister to the needs of the world.

#### **Most Exalted Kingdom**

5. Christians are members of the most exalted society on earth. "And hath raised us up together, and made us to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6, 7.) This is one of the most expressive statements in the Bible with respect to the glory and grandeur of the church. God's church is the reign of Jehovah on earth. Christians are those who have been saved from sins and exalted to places of preeminent privilege by virtue of the simple fact that they are royal citizens of divine government. (Revelation 1 :5, 6.) God has exalted us to membership in the church that he may prepare us for the rich blessings that will be the legacy of the faithful in the world to come. Christians are not often among the "four hundred" of society or the aristocracy of this world, but God has exalted them to places of eminence in the kingdom of

Christ - the kingdom that Christ will one day deliver up to the Father. ( I Corinthians 15:24.)

### Only Permanent Kingdom

6. Christians are members of the only permanent kingdom. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28; cf. Daniel 2:44.) The kingdom of heaven is the only society that will endure permanently. Christ will deliver it up to God. ( I Corinthians 15:24.)

### Obligations of Christian Citizenship

Now let us consider some of the duties and obligations of, Christian citizenship. In the realm of divine government and elsewhere privileges are always accompanied by an equal amount of responsibility. Jesus recognized this principle when he instructed his apostles, "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8.) The duties of Christian citizenship may be summarized under one general heading - obey the king. Since we are the subjects of Christ, it behooves us to be loyal to him. He has all authority in heaven and earth, has every right to expect us to honor his authority. He is "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8, 9.) To obey Christ is to obey the law of Christ and his apostles as given in the New Testament. "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15; cf. John 15:14.) It is our duty as Christians to exercise the privileges of Christian citizenship to enjoy to the fullest all the blessings that are rightfully ours as children of God. It is our responsibility to support wholeheartedly the program of the congregation of which we are members. Some of the duties of Christian citizenship are:

1. Prayer. "Be instant in prayer," our Lord instructs. "Pray without ceasing," is the admonition of the Holy Spirit.

There are some things that many members feel they cannot do, but surely all can see to it that the program of the church is supported by their prayers. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of . . ." (Tennyson.)

2. Attendance of the services of the church. (Hebrews 10:25.) This is absolutely indispensable to fruitful labor, fervent service and faithful discipleship. The services of the church are ordained, not for God's benefit, but for the welfare and prosperity of our souls. It is utterly impossible for able-bodied church members to habitually absent themselves from the services of the church and maintain their loyalty to Christ. Those who think they can do so are self-deceived. They do not understand the nature and purpose of Christianity, and unless they repent of their lukewarmness, indifference and indolence they will be eternally lost.

### Righteous Conduct

3. Righteous living. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared

to all men teaching us that, deriving ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Titus 2:11, 12.) The sinless Christ is our example and when we become his disciples we pledge ourselves to walk in his steps. (I Peter 2:21-25.) Christians are the light of the world, the salt of the earth, living and walking Bibles that are read of all men. (Matthew 5:13, 14; 2 Corinthians 3:2, 3.) If we live in flagrant violation of the great moral principles of the gospel we not only destroy our own influence and condemn our own souls, but we give thoughtless men an excuse to attack the religion of Christ. Let your light shine, Do not reflect on your Savior by sordid living, but live in harmony with the doctrine of Christ that you may be a reflection and radiation of the light of the cross.

### Personal Evangelism

4. Personal evangelism. "Go, ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature . . ." (Mark 16:15.) It is the duty of every Christian to preach the gospel to the very best of his ability - and every Christian has some ability to teach. If one cannot speak publically, he can teach privately. If one cannot speak at all, he can write. If one can neither speak nor write, he can preach an eloquent and effective sermon by living the gospel. It is fine for a congregation to have one or more full time evangelists - men supported by the congregation because they devote all their time to preaching. But remember that no one can be hired to do your work. Regardless of how many preachers a congregation may have you are not relieved of your responsibility to preach and teach. It is the obligation of every Christian to visit the sick, call on negligent members, help the weak, comfort the sorrowful, and help restore the fallen. (Galatians 6:1.) What Christian cannot distribute tracts and literature, write letters, send postal cards, make telephone calls? (Galatians 6:9, 10.)

5. Faith, consecration, devotion, sacrifice. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (I Corinthians 15:58.) Let us give sacrificially of our time, talents and material resources to, the advancement of the Lord's cause. Cast your bread upon the waters and it will return with interest.

We will have no trouble in fulfilling our obligations as Christians if we will obey the admonition of our Savior in Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."