

KINGDOM CITIZENSHIP

What does EARTHLY CITIZENSHIP look like?

Webster's Dictionary defines a Citizen as:

An inhabitant of a city or town; especially: one entitled to the rights and privileges of a free man. A member of a state: a native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it. State Soldiers were sent to protect the citizens. Citizenship means membership in a community. (SUMMARY)

When do we transition from EARTHLY CITIZENS to KINGDOM CITIZENS?

➤ **IT STARTS WITH JESUS**

Ephesians 2:12-13

Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now **in Christ Jesus** you who once were far away have been brought near **through the blood of Christ**.

As KINGDOM CITIZENS we owe our allegiance to Jesus Christ because without His sacrifice on the cross the divide between ourselves and God would still exist today. He is THE DOOR. He is the WAY MAKER. He is the TRUTH and the LIFE. He gives us permanent access to the Kingdom, for those who choose to repent, believe and follow Him. I am always amazed that Christ chose to die for us while we were still completely lost and completely a far off. Once completely alienated and now we are brought into son-ship, we are made co-heirs with Him. The scripture says that we were without hope and without God and in the world. We cannot choose the world that we live in but we can choose Christ and by choosing Christ we can be filled with hope that does not disappoint.

Ephesians 2:19

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens [outsiders without rights of citizenship], but you are fellow citizens with the saints (God's people), and are [members] of God's household.

It's a transition from OUTSIDERS WITHOUT RIGHTS to INSIDERS & MEMBERS OF GOD'S HOUSEHOD, ENGRAFTED INTO A FAMILY OF BELIEVERS.

Philippians 3:20 NIV

But [we are different, because] our citizenship is in heaven.

John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

➤ **Jesus makes the difference.**

What makes us different is the fact that the OLD THINGS have passed away and behold we have been made a NEW / different creation in Christ Jesus.

We are not perfect, in fact we are far from it, but we are being transformed daily, we are being renewed daily by the washing of our minds with His holy Word. We are drawing strength from the Master daily. We are crucifying the flesh daily. We are not perfect but we know that God is working on us bit by bit every single day. We can look back and we can see the difference. The songwriter says: the things I used to do I do them no more.

Being Kingdom Citizens, how should we conduct ourselves?

2 Corinthians 1:12

Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that **we have conducted ourselves in the world**, and especially **in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity**. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God's grace.

We conduct ourselves on a daily basis at our places of Employment, at our various institutions of Higher Learning and Education, in our circles of friends, in church settings, at youth meetings, in worship and prayer sessions, in Go group meetings, in brothers and sisters meetings. Every time we strike up a conversation or entertain someone else's conversation, we are busy conducting ourselves in a certain manner that is either befitting the vocation by which we have been called or it is not. More and more in government and in business alike, INTEGRITY is becoming one of the rarest commodities to come by. It is a characteristic so hard to find amongst men and women alike, young and old, rich and poor, and dare I say it Saved and unsaved alike. It's what we do and who we are when we think absolutely no-one is looking.

There ought to be a difference in the way that we conduct ourselves here on earth with others and more especially with other believers.

1 Corinthians 15:48

As is the earthly man [the man of dust], so are those who are of earth; and as is the heavenly [Man], so are those who are of heaven.

We conduct ourselves on earth in a **Christ-like** manner.

Philippians 1:27

Nevertheless, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending side by side for the faith of the gospel.

Acts 2:42 They were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:44 All who believed were together and held everything in common, 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and distributing the proceeds to everyone, as anyone had need. 46 Every day they continued to gather together by common consent in the temple courts, breaking bread from house to house, sharing their food with glad and humble hearts, 47 praising God and having the good will of all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number every day those who were being saved.

DO's

Do conduct yourself with integrity and godly sincerity.

Do conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ

Do stand firm in one spirit, contending side by side for the faith of the gospel.

Do devote yourself to teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Do gather together and hold everything in common.

Do meet one another's needs through acts of selflessness.

Do convey attitudes of gladness, humility and good will to all.

Do come together to praise your King.

Do act in accordance with the will of the Father.

As Kingdom Citizens we don't just do the right things; it is more a matter of having the right attitudes – having the right heart – and maintaining right relationships.

We know that our attitude determines our altitude.

David prays to God and says search my heart oh God and remove any wickedness or wrong motives within me.

As the body of Christ we know that relationships are key. The hand cannot say to the foot I do not need you.

21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven—only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. 22 On that day, many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons and do many powerful deeds?’ 23 Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!’ (Matthew 7:21-23) DONT's

Matthew 6:19-21 ¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves [material] treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal; ²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart [your wishes, your desires; that on which your life centres] will be also. DONT's

Luke 12:32 Do not be afraid *and* anxious, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. DONT's

DON'Ts

DO NOT ACT OUTSIDE OF GOD'S WILL

DO NOT NEGLECT RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

DO NOT WAIVER IN KEEPING HIS COMMANDS

DO NOT CREATE TREASURE TROVES IN THE WRONG PLACE

DO NOT BE FEARFUL OR ANXIOUS

A SHIFT IN FOCUS

One of the Major Benefits of becoming a Kingdom Citizen is we experience a SHIFT IN FOCUS!! OUR NEW DIRECTION IS UP AND OUR FOCUL POINT IS CHRIST.

Colossians 3:1-3

Therefore if you have been raised with Christ [to a new life, sharing in His resurrection from the dead], **keep seeking the things that are above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² **Set your mind *and* keep focused *habitually* on the things above** [the heavenly things], not on things that are on the earth [which have only temporal value]. ³ For you died [to this world], and your [new, real] life is hidden with Christ in God.

Ephesians 2:6 And He raised us **up** together with Him [when we believed], and seated us with Him in the **heavenly places**, [because we are] in Christ Jesus,

2 Corinthians 4:18 So we look **not at the things which are seen**, but at the things which are **unseen**; for the things which are visible are temporal [just brief and fleeting], but **the things which are invisible are everlasting and imperishable**.

WHAT ARE YOU FOCUSING ON? WHAT AND WHO ARE YOU LOOKING TO? ARE THE THINGS YOU LOOK TO, BUILT TO LAST A MOMENT OR AN ETERNITY? WILL THEY PERISH IN THE HERE AND NOW OR WILL THEY LAST LONG AFTER HEAVEN AND EARTH HAVE PASSED AWAY?

Philippians 3:20 NIV

But [we are different, because] our citizenship is **in heaven**. And **from there** we eagerly await [the coming of] the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are enjoying heaven here on earth. While we eagerly await the second coming of the Messiah we get to enjoy the Kingdom Citizenship Privileges associated with being part of this family.

ONE OF THE MOST WONDERFUL BENEFITS OF KINGDOM CITIZENSHIP IS THAT WE SERVE A SAVIOUR WHO IS ALIVE: HE LIVES, HE RULES, HE REIGNS & HE IS COMING BACK.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the archangel and with the [blast of the] trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Revelation 1:7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him ...

1 Corinthians 1:7 so that you are not lacking in any *spiritual* gift [which comes from the Holy Spirit], as you eagerly wait [with confident trust] for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ [when He returns].

Titus 2:13 awaiting *and* confidently expecting the [fulfilment of our] blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus.

We do not wait as those without a hope waiting in vain. We wait with confident expectation because we know that our Commander in Chief is alive and well and He is coming back.

God's Word defines a Kingdom Citizen as:

A sinner saved by grace; one entitled to fully rely on all the promises of God (Psalm 89:34. My covenant I will not violate, Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. 2 Corinthians 1:20. "For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.") One who has been set free from the curse of sin and death, from hell and from the grave. One who has a revelation of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. (John 8:32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.) A member of God's Kingdom, the bride of Christ. One who owes allegiance to The Messiah and receives Divine Protection from Jehovah Elgibor. A Soldier clothed with the whole armor of God who knows that his fight is not against flesh and blood. Citizenship means membership in the body of believers/the church/the bride of Christ.

It is important for you to know who you are and whose you are. That you belong to the King of Kings. It is important for you to know your people. Like me or lump me, I am your people and you are responsible for me just like I am responsible for you. I am my brothers' keeper.

Citizenship in the Kingdom of God is different from Earthly Citizenship in a number of ways:

Instead of becoming part of a Community - You become part of a Family, You become engrafted into a diverse, often hard to get along with, most times great to have a laugh with and always there to do life with FAMILY. (The early church in Acts, how they each brought what they had, so that no-one was without)

Kingdom Citizenship takes you from an indigent pauper - To a Co-Heir with the wealthiest Prince in all of creation. In earthly governments very few citizens ever get presidential pardons for the crimes they have committed. In the Heavenly Kingdom your crimes and sins, no matter how heinous, are deleted from all known records as if you never ever committed them.

Earthly Citizenship only means that the armed forces of the state can be called on to protect you in times of war, but neither your victory nor your safety are guaranteed.

Kingdom Citizenship means you are on the winning side, it means you are saved from hell and the grave because your saviour was victorious in your place more than 2000 years ago.

In earthly citizenship you have a President you never get to meet let alone talk to. An aloof leader.

In the Heavenly Kingdom you communicate with your commander in chief on a daily basis and as often as you desire.

As citizens of the Kingdom we get to exercise the authority of heaven here on earth. We get to trample on snakes and scorpions. We get to experience favour in the sight of God and of man. We get promotion from our heavenly Father. We get to ask for anything in the name of our commander in chief and we know that we will receive it if we believe. We get to experience our Lord in every aspect of who He is: Healer, Provider, Banner, Saviour, Redeemer, Restorer, Master, Friend, Confidant, mighty Warrior.