

The Kingdom: God's Top Priority

Session 4 Sons and Citizens

Ephesians 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...

We are Sons not subjects - God's Kingdom is different from earthly kingdoms in that it has no subjects.

- 1) Subjects are people who are "subject" to the king's rule and are never considered in the same class or status as royalty.
- 2) In the Kingdom of God, we are not subjects but members of the royal family.

If you don't understand this listen Romans 8:15 NIV The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "*Abba, Father.*"

We cannot live effectively for the Lord until we learn to think like Jesus. He knew who He was!

That's why the Apostle Paul wrote:

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...

Ephesians 4:22,23 "...put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life... **23** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds..."

Philippians 2:5 KJV Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...

James said don't be double-minded! James 1:8. Double minded people are unstable and they will not receive anything from the Lord.

We are Sons but we are also Citizens

Ephesians 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...

Phil 3:20 NLT But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives..

CITIZENS OF A NEW COUNTRY Once we become believers and enter the Kingdom of God, we "change countries." We surrender our citizenship in the world to become naturalized citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.

- 1) Our Entrance into Citizenship is Righteousness.

a) Our citizenship is based on our “righteousness”

i) The word “Righteous” means to position one’s self rightly.

When Adam sinned, his sin made him Un-Righteous.

This means Adam’s sin removed him from being in right position with the government of God’s Kingdom. And as a result, All the rights of his citizenship was stripped from him.

ii) Convicted felons often lose vital rights of their citizenship.

(1) In some cases, the most serious consequence of a conviction is the loss of a Passport.

(a) A passport is a convenient way for a government to verify that the person carrying it is a citizen of the country from which it was issued.

(b) To lose one’s passport... no longer in right-standing with the government.

(c) Because you are “un-right” in your citizenship you lose many rights.

1. The right to travel
2. The right to vote
3. The right to own a gun and protect your property
4. In some case you will lose the right to be a parent of your children.

(d) If you are in prison it’s worse: you can’t drive when you feel like it, you can’t work where you want to. You can’t even buy the food you desire to eat. When you are in prison you are under the control of judgment!

(2) This is what happened to Adam when his full right of citizenship was revoked because he did not obey the government of God.

(3) The bible says we are slaves to sin... we are unrighteous.

To be unrighteous is to Exist Without Rights

b) Jesus came to restore our right positioning with God so we can claim our citizen promises.

2 Corinthians 5:21, For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...”

2) Our Obligations to Citizenship is Faith and Conduct.

Phillipians 1:27 NLT “Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ...”

Note: Philippi was not in Italy in fact it was located far away in North East territory of Greece. But it was major strategic Roman outpost the government of Rome granted the citizens of Philippi full rights to their citizenship of Rome. Paul is giving them context here!

In the Old Testament God established temporary governments called The Covenant. There was a covenant with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.

a) Faith

Abraham: God told Abraham if you believe me and keep my covenant you will be put in a right position with me.

- i) So Abraham believed God’s word and God’s promise of provision and it made him righteous.
- ii) Because of Abraham’s faith in God He became a qualified citizen again.

b) Conduct

- i) They were slaves in Egypt because they didn’t know the God of the Covenant (government) and consequently they did not know who they were themselves.
- ii) They asked Moses, who is this God you are talking about? Moses had to reintroduce the nation to the God of Abraham and the promise given to Abraham before he could set them free.
- iii) The Covenant of Moses had a list of laws... and it was not just Ten. Abraham’s Covenant consisted of only a promise. And faith in that promise made him righteous.

Paul says conduct yourself like citizens of heaven!

3) Our Rights as Citizens is Secure.

- a) A Pardon is a Serious Thing. When a person receives a full pardon but a King, Ruler, or President it means something:
 - i) A pardon gives a prisoner a new life.
 - ii) A pardon gives a prisoner back his rights of citizenship

They were un-right but now they are back in right position with the government.

When a person is pardoned, they get their passport back, they can buy and sell... they can travel and buy a gun!

The reason why there was such an outcry last week about Pres Obama's pardons was because many of the crimes committed were so terrible many in the nation were saying, there is NO WAY WE CAN LET THESE PEOPLE GO!

- b) Have you figured out what Jesus did on the cross for you?!
 - i) He paid your penalty, He erased your debt, He forgave your crimes and He restored your life! Now you are no long Un-right you are the Righteousness of God!
 - ii) I love Micah 7:18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?

We are Sons and Citizens!

4) Conclusion:

- a) (Luke 13:12-16 ESV) "...he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." **13** And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ." **v. 14** But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day. **v. 15** Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? **v. 16** And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"
- b) Jesus had to repair their theology! Remember we said We cannot live effectively for the Lord until we learn to think like Him.
 - i) He says, isn't this woman a daughter of Abraham?
 - ii) Jesus points out that her citizenship is in order!
 - iii) She has a right to the resources of Heaven!
- c) You are a citizen of heaven!
 - i) Your papers are in order!
 - ii) Your sins are forgiven!
 - iii) Your citizenship in God's Government has been reinstated!
- d) A new Executive Order Has Come.

The Door is Open for the Kingdom.

i) A Pardon awaits you.

ii) You can have a second chance at life. You can be Born Again.

iii) John 3:3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."