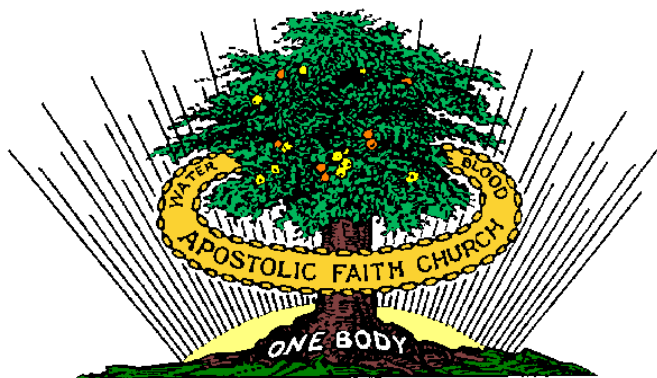


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Understanding the Mysteries of the Body of Christ: Citizenship of the Kingdom of God

The Body of Christ, the Church represents and gives visibility to the Kingdom of God in the earth through the operations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom. In the third chapter of the book of Philippians in verse 20, the Bible says our citizenship is in heaven with our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures further declare in Ephesians 2:4-6 that God has raised us up together with Christ Jesus and made us sit together in the heavenly places.

In this world, earthly citizenship is tied to conditions such as birth, naturalization, or legal residence. However, citizenship in the Kingdom of God is entirely different - it doesn't depend on human merit but on divine grace. The Apostle Paul, in Ephesians 2:1-8, reveals that we were entirely unqualified to belong to this Kingdom, but God, in His infinite grace, made us qualified. Today, we will explore this divine transformation and how it calls us to live as citizens of God's Kingdom.

I The State of Complete Depravity in Sinful Nature (Disqualification) – (Ephesians 2:1-3)

“You were dead in your trespasses and sins...”

1. Spiritually Dead:

- Spiritual death is the starting condition of every human being without Christ. It is not just weakness or deficiency but *death*.
- Spiritual death means complete incapacity to please God or willingly seek a relationship with Him.

2. Slavery to the Influence of the World and Satan:

- Paul describes our former life as one lived according to “the course of this world” and under the dominion of “the prince of the power of the air” (Satan).
- This includes being led by worldly ideologies, carnal desires, and a spirit of rebellion against God.

3. By Nature, Children of Wrath:

- Without Christ, we are under the just condemnation of God, deserving His wrath because of our transgressions.
- This is a grim yet truthful depiction of the human condition without salvation through Christ.

Reflection: We often underestimate the gravity of sin. However, sin not only separates us from God but places us in a position of total alienation and condemnation.

II The Grace That Qualifies Us (Ephesians 2:4-7)

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us...”

1. God's Intervention:

- The turning point in Ephesians 2 is one of the most powerful phrases in Scripture: “But God.”
- We did not seek God; it was He who, in His love and mercy, took the initiative to save us.

2. Made Alive with Christ:

- God brought us from spiritual death to life through Jesus.

- This life is not just existence; it is abundant, full life marked by fellowship with God.

3. **Raised to Heavenly Glory:**

- Paul declares that we have been “raised up together” and “seated in heavenly places” with Christ.
- This means our citizenship is not of this world. We are already participating in spiritual royalty with Christ.

4. **To Demonstrate the Richness of God’s Grace:**

- Our salvation is not only for our benefit but for God’s glory.
- We are living proof of His unparalleled grace and transformative love.

Impact: The transition from “children of wrath” to “children of God” is only possible through divine intervention. This reminds us that our salvation is a miracle of grace!

III **The Path to Citizenship: Grace and Faith (Ephesians 2:8)**

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God...”

1. **Salvation by Grace:**

- Grace is God’s unmerited favor. There is nothing we can do to earn our citizenship in His Kingdom.
- It is entirely dependent on the finished work of Christ on the cross.

2. **Faith as the Response:**

- Faith is not about works but the response to God’s grace.
- It connects us to the gift of salvation, acknowledging that Christ alone is sufficient to redeem us.

3. **The Exclusivity of Grace:**

- Paul makes it clear that salvation is “not by works,” so no one can boast.
- In God’s Kingdom, there is no room for human merit—everything is a result of divine grace.

IV **Living as Citizens of the Kingdom**

1. **A Life of Gratitude:**

- Our new position in Christ should fill us with gratitude. We live as those who have received an immeasurable gift.
- This leads us to praise God in all circumstances.

2. **Alignment with Kingdom Values:**

- As citizens of God’s Kingdom, we are called to live in holiness, love, and obedience to God’s will.
- Matthew 6:33 reminds us: *“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.”*

3. **A Witness to the World:**

- Our lives should reflect God’s grace. We are ambassadors for Christ, proclaiming reconciliation to the world (2 Corinthians 5:20).

4. **Trusting the King:**

- The Kingdom of God is eternal. Thus, we live not only for this life but with our eyes fixed on the future glory promised in Christ.

Ephesians 2:1-8 invites us to reflect on the greatness of God’s grace. We were dead, enslaved, and deserving of wrath, but God, in His infinite love, transformed us into citizens of His Kingdom. This citizenship is not an empty title but a call to a life of worship, obedience, and proclamation of His glory.

Final Question: Have you surrendered your life to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ? If so, does your life reflect the honor of being a citizen of God’s Kingdom? If not, today is the day to let God’s grace transform your life by accepting the Lordship and rulership of Christ and live life as a worthy citizen of His Heavenly Kingdom, for His eternal glory!