

**The New Testament Church**  
**BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW TEACHINGS**

**13 – A Biblical View of Citizenship**

Paul Jehle – September 18, 2024

I Our dual Identities and Citizenship – PP slides 1-5

A. Creation – Genesis 2:7

1. Our spirit and soul comes from heaven, and our bodies from the earth – Genesis 2:7
2. **We are a living soul – spanning two realms of heaven and earth**

B. Believers are Priests (heavenly citizens) and Kings (earthly citizens) in the Bible

1. The **Kingdom** includes individuals, homes, churches and states (see chart)
2. The **Kingdom** of God comprises two jurisdictions spanning heaven and earth  
“...you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Exodus 19:5-6)
  - a. The Law (first four commands) – first table – walk with God – as a **priest (church)**
  - b. The Law (last six commandments) – second table – walk as a **king (state)**
  - c. Leaders in church and state govern “by consent” since each individual was already a priest and a king (self-government) – see Numbers 8:9-11 and Acts 7:38
3. Jesus chose “**ekklesia**” to describe His people; a **kingdom citizen** (see Ecclesia chart)
  - a. Mt. 16:18 – *I will build my church* - a priestly legislation – a heavenly revelation (See Mt. 22:37-38 – first commandment – *love God with all your heart*)
  - b. Mt. 16:18 / 18:17 – *gates of hell shall not prevail... tell it to the church...* - a kingly declaration of victory over culture *and* a resolution to resolve conflicts (See Mt. 22:39 – second commandment – *love your neighbor as yourself*)
4. 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:9 – *a royal priesthood, a holy nation* – we have two citizenships
5. Rev. 1:5-6 – *to Him who... has made us kings and priests* (dual citizenship)

C. Believers are both a **bride** and a **city** – Revelation 21:22 – a full manifestation

1. The focus of the bride is on the Bridegroom – Jesus – to be like Him
  - a. We must avoid being **zealots** who see all solutions as political through power
  - b. Remember that *solutions of the heart* precede *solutions in the culture*
2. The focus of the city is to express the Kingdom – His decentralized rule by jurisdiction
  - a. We must avoid being **complicit** with the centralized power (Sanhedrin) - corrupt
  - b. Remember that *separation* precedes *influence* with a submissive attitude

II What are the responsibilities of Citizens? – PP slides 6-8

A. We are to be citizens of heaven and earth

- a. We are to be citizens of the heavenly kingdom
  1. Philippians 3:20 – *for our citizenship is in heaven...*
  2. Ephesians 2:19 – *you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God*
  3. Hebrews 12:23 – *to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven...*
- b. We are to be citizens on earth in the nation in which we live
  1. Ex. 12:48 – *when a stranger... be circumcised... as one born in the land (a citizen)*
  2. Lk. 15:15 – *he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country*
  3. Ex. Jer. 29:4-7 (Babylon); Mt. 17:27; Acts 16:38 (Rome); 1<sup>st</sup> Pt. 2:13-14 (nation)

## B. The Meaning of Citizenship

1. Hebrew (citizen) – *stranger (temporary inhabitant); native (one rising from the soil)*
2. Greek – (citizen) - *one joined to a state or commonwealth*
3. Webster’s 1828 definition of citizen as a native (see quotes)

## C. The responsibilities of Citizenship (see article on biblical immigration)

1. Home – children are naturally citizens of the home (fulfill duties, manage stewardship)
2. Church – church membership clearly distinct from visitors or “temporary inhabitants”
  - a. Eph. 2:19 members of household of God – “intimate, like a family”
  - b. Mt. 18:15-20 – individual churches were a court of reconciliation (in covenant)
  - c. New Testament Letters of Commendation assume the need for “membership”
3. State – the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in Israel is our model
  - a. Citizenship in Israel – *submission to laws, learn national language, private funding*
  - b. See the author’s immigration position paper on Israel and today’s challenges
  - c. Example of citizenship in the U.S. required in the 1960’s (see quotes)

## III The right and responsibility of suffrage - PP slides 9-

### A. Suffrage - an expression of Conscience – (only citizens could vote)

1. Conscience as the root of suffrage (expression of choice) - (see quotes)
2. Definition of Suffrage from Webster’s 1828 (see quotes)
3. We vote before God – Acts 24:16 – a conscience “void of offense” (quotes)

### B. In the Old Testament – a priesthood and civil “republic” in Israel – model for nations

1. Though not elected, Priesthood an offering of the people to God (Numbers 8:5-15)
2. A unique feature in Israel – the people “elected” God voluntarily! (Ex. 19:7-8)
3. Rule by “consent” – Dt. 1:13 – *you take (select) them, and I (Moses) will commission*

### C. In the New Testament – a church and state that is to “rule by consent”

1. Acts 6:3 – “select” deacons to help the elders to help those in need
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 8:19; Titus 1:1 – role of churches in selecting ministers and receiving apostles
3. Acts 14:23 – the people select, leaders confirm and ordain elders in all the churches

### D. Biblical Qualifications for Leaders – (see article on Selecting those to Represent)

1. OT qualifications (Ex. 18:21; Dt. 1:13; 16:18 – ability, integrity, fidelity, piety, known (Local, personal knowledge is more trustworthy than public rhetoric)
2. NT character qualities for deacons / elders in the church – 1<sup>st</sup> Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9
  - a. Private character will be seen in public (see Mattera article on voting by God’s law)
  - b. Vote “for the best of the ideal” rather than the “lesser of two evils” (Beliles articles)

### E. Christianity’s form of government is self-government by consent

1. The early church was self-governing, but by degrees became centralized by 300 AD
2. Constantine copied the church government as the model for civil government
3. Only remnant churches maintained self-governing local congregations...
4. The recovery of Biblical self-governing congregations stem from the Reformation

### D. America’s Election Day history...

1. Election Day – nearly 100% participation (see article on Election Day)
2. How do you corrupt a self-governing Republic? (see Noah Webster’s warning quote)
  - a. Corruption of the electorate – omission, and commission
  - b. Corruption of those who govern – a reflection of the electorate
  - c. Corruption of standards for citizenship, legal immigration, and now illegal
  - d. Corruption of election integrity – manipulation and control by government