

# 21st CENTURY TRUTHS

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## CITIZENSHIP IN THE KINGDOM

Recently, a survey was given to a group of individuals asking if they believed in heaven. The results found that 80% of those which believed in heaven felt certain that they were going there upon their death. Did you know that to reach heaven, one must become a subject or citizen of Christ's kingdom? Are you a citizen of Christ's kingdom?

Christ said *"My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of the world, then would my servants fight..."* John 18:36 (KJV). Jesus states very clearly that His kingdom is not a physical kingdom but rather is a spiritual kingdom. Christ's spiritual kingdom, which is His Church, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). In Acts 2:47 we find that it is the Lord that adds "citizens" to His Church (kingdom) once one becomes saved.

One is a subject of the nation to which they are a citizen. Many fail to realize however that their citizenship is a choice. For one to become a citizen of our great nation, they must be born on U.S. soil or proceed through a series of tests to prove worthiness to become a citizen. Whether a native or naturalized citizen, a choice is made. As subjects of this country, we have the freedom of choice to 1) remain/become a citizen by obedience to the laws of this nation, OR 2) renounce our citizenship and surrender the blessings associated therewith. God has also given us the freedom of choice concerning our citizenship in the kingdom of Christ. ***We chose*** whether to a) accept and receive citizenship through obedience to His laws and requirements, OR b) reject/relinquish our citizenship through disobedience. Yet before we can choose to give up our citizenship, we must first possess it.

Certain rights are gained through our U.S. citizen-

ship. We have the freedom of speech, right to bear arms, etc. But with such rights also come responsibilities. We have the responsibility to pay taxes, obey the laws of the land, etc. The same is true with our spiritual citizenship. Through obedience to His commands and acceptance of our responsibilities, we will be granted admittance, including its "rights" and privileges, into Christ's kingdom.

We can deceive ourselves however about our spiritual citizenship. As seen in the survey, most people claim their citizenship is in heaven. However, we find in Matthew 7:13-14 *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ... narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."* (NKJV). Christ definitively states that few people will choose to become and remain loyal citizens of His kingdom and reach the heavenly reward. Are you one of those few which have chosen the "narrow gate"?

We find in II Corinthians 5:10 that we *"... must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."* (KJV). When you stand before the judgment seat on that final day, will you be called a faithful subject of Christ's kingdom? Is your citizenship based upon choosing obedience to the Word of God or based on just "a feeling"? The Bible states we are each responsible for our own choices (II Corinthians 5:10, Romans 2:6). Have you made the proper choice? To find His evaluation of your heavenly citizenship or to learn how to become a citizen of His kingdom, we invite you to study with us from God's holy Word.

*Randy M. Meyer*

1st Century Truths for the 21st Century

### THEOPHILUS



### Some Love Darkness



“For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” Matt. 7:8

AN APPETITE FOR TRUTH

Have you ever notice the number of news and information programs there are on the television. I recall a time when there was primarily only the nightly news. Then, shows such as “60 Minutes” and “20/20” appeared. Since that time, an explosion in the number of “news” programs has taken place. Currently there are several cable channels devoted entirely to providing news that “effects” our daily lives. We can not seem to get enough to satisfy our appetite for the worlds information.

We continually tune into such programs desiring to hear the truth about this medication’s side effect, that car’s safety record, this airline’s maintenance history, and that child’s misfortune. You get the idea. We have a craving to hear the truth on these subjects but, do we have the same hunger to find the truth that will make us pleasing to God? If we have hunger in our physical stomach, we will seek food so that it may be satisfied. We must do the same for our spiritual “stomach”.

Christ instructs us to “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...” (Matthew 6:33). Are we seeking after God’s truth in our spiritual lives? In Matthew 7:7, Jesus said to “Seek, and ye shall find.” Are you seeking?

Children often play the game hide-and-seek. These children understand what they must do to seek. They look earnestly for, go after, and search to find those that are hidden. However, adults tend to re-define the word “seek” in reference to their spiritual lives. Sometimes adults want spiritual truth to be given to them in a neat little package by someone else with no effort on their own part. Some will merely believe what the preacher/minister/“reverend”/priest says must be the truth. Others will simply accept what they were taught while growing-up which must be truth. Is that the definition

of seek that Christ spoke of? Paul instructed Timothy in how to fill an appetite for spiritual truth. In II Timothy 2:15, Paul’s instruction was to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Therefore, we find that truth will be found only through a sincere study of God’s Word.

To have an appetite for God’s truth is taught in the scriptures. In Acts 17:11, Christians were commended “in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” They were seeking daily to fill their spiritual appetite. The apostle Peter advised “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.” (I Peter 2:2)

Through exercise and the satisfying of our physical appetite, our physical bodies grow. Similarly, by exercise and filing our spiritual appetite for truth, will we find what we must do to grow spiritually and be a faithful member of Christ’s kingdom. By sincerely seeking after and obedience to God’s Word, we will show ourselves acceptable by God’s standard. It is only His standard of truth which will set us free from the bondage of sin (John 8:31-36).

Do you have an appetite for truth using only God’s inspired Word as the guide? Do you desire to fill your appetite as Timothy was instructed? We warmly invite you to attend one of our assemblies where the Bible is the only “Creed” that is used as we seek those thing to be pleasing to God.

Randy M. Meyer

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The church meets at its new location 1/2 mile east of intersection of Gordon Drive and Stone Avenue (across from Western Iowa Tech.) at 4800 Stone Avenue, Sioux City, Iowa. You are invited to visit any of our Bible Studies or worship assemblies. For information, you may write the address listed, email, or call (712) 274-1000.

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