

YOU ARE A CITIZEN



A citizen is a person who is a member of a particular country and who has rights because of being born there or because of being given rights, or a person who lives in a particular town or city.

1. a native registered or naturalized member of a state, nation, or other political community Compare alien
2. an inhabitant of a city or town
3. a native or inhabitant of any place
4. a civilian, as opposed to a soldier, public official, etc

Act 16:16-24 KJV 16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are

the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. 19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, 20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: 24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

Paul and Silas went to Macedonia by divine mandate. On one of the days they were going to the place of prayer when as usual a slave girl cried after them

The girl was proclaiming that these people were servant of god who came to show them the way of salvation

Nothing seems to be wrong with what she was saying but a closer look will show what the devil was trying to do. If they

accept the testimony of the girl, it will show that Paul and the slave girl derived their power from the same source.

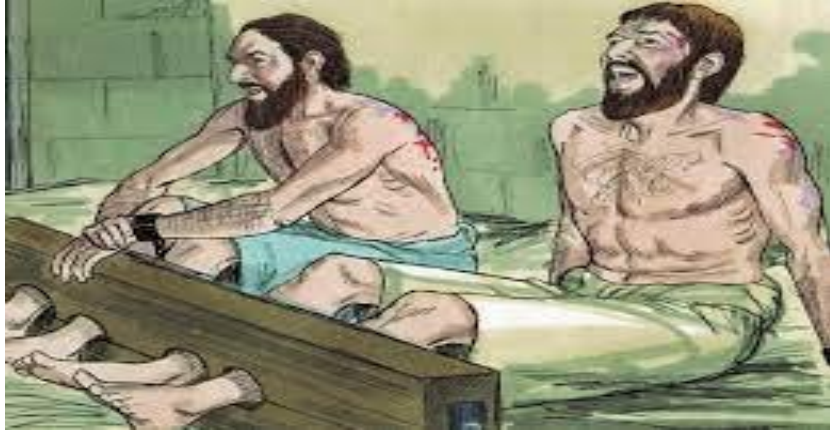
The Bible says she did many days until one day when Paul could no longer take it and he commanded the devil to leave the girl. The devil departed.

But the owner of the girl, when they saw their hope of business and making money was gone, arrested Paul and Silas and dragged them before the magistrates.



There was uproar too. the magistrates asked them to be strip naked and beaten with rods and thereafter threw them into the prison

While in the prison there was a miracle that happened and their bonds were broken and became freed. The jailer was also baptized after he became born again.



Now in the morning time the magistrate asked the sergeants to tell the jailers to allow them to go but Paul refused. He said they beat them publicly and wanted to release them secretly. Paul complained that they were not tried and heard out but beaten and thrown into prison yet they were Roman citizens.

Act 16:37-39 KJV 37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. 38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. 39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

The Bible says when the magistrates heard that they were Roman citizens that they became greatly afraid and came to beg them to depart.

Another case study

I will give you another instance where they wanted to flog Paul again.

This account actually started in Act chapter 21. Paul had come to Jerusalem and the elders told him that some people were accusing him of telling people not to follow the law of Moses. Paul denied it.

They told him in order to assure the people that it wasn't true, he should perform the ritual of vow with some people who had taken oath of Nazarene which Paul agreed to

On the day of their consecration, he went into the temple and in the course of the ritual, some fellow saw him and raised an alarm which attracted a crowd and a riot broke out.



They were beating Paul when the captain heard it and rushed there to rescue Paul. Paul asked the captain to enable him talk to the people and while talking there was more uproar

The captain was confused and wanted to really interrogate Paul to really know what he had done that made people hate him so much.

So they took Paul into the castle.

Act 22:25-29 KJV 25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? 26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. 27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. 28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. 29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

Here they were tying Paul to beat or scourge him, he spoke to the centurion standing by and said, is it lawful for you to beat a Roman citizen who has not been condemned through trial in a court of law?



The man was shocked so he went to the captain and told the captain called Paul and asked him if truly he was a Roman citizen. Paul answered in affirmative.

Here is the shocker the bible says the people that were to scourge on hearing that he was a roman citizen departed from him



What is it about Roman citizenship that Paul was talking about here and of what importance is it? What would that have done in this matter?

According to the law of Rome, a suspect must be heard out with his accuser. St. Paul knew the Roman laws; and on their violation by the magistrates he pleaded. The Valerian law forbade any Roman citizen to be bound. The Porcian law forbade any to be beaten with rods. “*Poreia lex virgas ab omnium civium Romanorum corpore amovit.*” And by the same law the liberty of a Roman citizen was never put in the power of the lictor. A Roman citizen can not be scourged. These were privileges of being a Roman citizen and Paul being a roman citizen, his right had been violated.

This is my question, why was it that Paul did not make this known before being beaten? Because if he had told them that he was a roman citizen they would not have molested him

They said a closed mouth is a closed destiny.

Many things that we Christian suffer are not as a result of the power of the devil but lack of understanding of who we were.

Paul had double citizenship. He was a Jew and at the same time a Roman born person. Even though he was born in Tarsus and of the tribe of Benjamin, he got his citizenship as an inheritance

from his ancestors who were born in Tarsus and that automatically makes him a roman citizen.

His identity as a Jew did not protect him, in fact one of the accusations in Act 16 was that he was a Jew that had brought a strange doctrine and custom strange to Romans.

When he declared his identity as a Roman citizen this time saved him from being scourged. Why did he not talk in Act 16? Could it be because of the crowd and the bias of the magistrates? But here, he spoke and his citizenship delivered him.

We are citizens of heaven

It is a fact that we christians have dual citizenship. You are a citizen of the nation where you are born but that citizenship will not protect you from the harassment of the devil, it won't deliver you from sickness and disease and poverty even though you are a Christian born again and Holy Ghost filled.

You could be a christians and if you are aware of who you are and your citizenship and declare it you will suffer like Paul and Silas.

Eph 2:19 KJV Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Phi 3:20 KJV For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

The word "conversation " is the same word for "citizen" We are citizens of heaven. Therefore we have double citizenship.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN?

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

By being born again. Being born into the family of God puts you into a heavenly family and makes you an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

Rom 2:11 KJV For there is no respect of persons with God.

Joh 1:12-13 KJV 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Just like being a roman citizen gives certain privileges and rights so also being a citizen of heaven has so many privileges and rights.

You see Paul is acquainted and familiar with his rights and privileges and when it was violated he protested. Many Christians don't even know that they are citizens of heaven

where God is the ruler and has given us many privileges and rights that we are entitled to by being born into the family of God. We don't know our rights and privileges. Yet, by being born God's family has made us an heir of God and a joint heir with His Son.

Today we are poor like our neighbour, we suffer the same affliction with unbelievers, they are sick, and we are sick too, they are poor and Christians are poor. They are fearful and we too are.

Someone says if they arrested many of us for being Christians there won't be any charges to convict us. This is pathetic.

If you don't know your rights and privileges as a Christian then Satan will take advantage of your lack of knowledge and you will be like many Christians that say and believe that whatever happens to us is because God caused it or allowed it or permitted the devil to do it, or possibly maybe God is testing you or he put sickness on you in order to make you better.

All these are lies of the devil and borne out of lack of knowledge

How do you know who you are?

1. It stems from knowing who God is. This is eternal life. ***John 17:3 KJV And this is life eternal, that they might know***

thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

2. We are the offspring of God and created in His image.
3. Study the word for yourself with the help of the Holy Spirit who wrote the letter. The bible is written to your heart and not to our head. ***2Ti 2:15 KJV Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.***

WHAT KNOWLEDGE WILL DO FOR YOU

1. It will deliver you: ***Pro 11:9 KJV An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.***
2. Peace and grace will be multiplied unto you.: ***2Pe 1:2 KJV Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,***
3. You will not be destroyed by what destroys others. ***Hos 4:6 KJV My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.***
4. Right to zeal to serve God right. ***Rom 10:2 KJV For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.***

5. Right behaviour and attitude: ***1Co 8:7 KJV Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.***
6. You will know His will for your life: ***Col 1:9 KJV For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;***

Your redemption rights give you an advantage in this life. Read my book, "Unveiling the new creation's inheritance" It will shed more light on your inheritance in Christ Jesus as a New Creation.