

# Rights and Privileges of Citizenship

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## Explanation

Paul spoke of his converts as being “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the Saints” (Eph 2:19). No status was more powerful in Paul’s day than that of Roman citizenship. Chart 4-6 lists nine rights and privileges enjoyed by Roman citizens. Within the kingdom of God, parallel rights and privileges were enjoyed by members of the Church. While this arrangement would bolster the esteem and confidence of Christians, it might have been unsettling to people in the Roman Empire who questioned Christian loyalty to Rome.

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## References

Peter Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).  
A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973).

# Rights and Privileges of Citizenship

ROMAN CITIZENSHIP	KINGDOM OF GOD "CITIZENSHIP"
Right to the triple name	Right to the name of God and a new name written in stone (Eph 3:15; Rev 2:17)
Right to wear the toga	Right to wear the garment (Rev 16:15)
Right to marry a Roman citizen	Right, or duty, to marry within the faith or a fellow citizen of the kingdom (2Cor 6:14; 1Pt 3:7)
Citizen passes to children patrilineally	Right to inherit "all that the Father hath" (Rom 8:17; Gal 4:7; Jms 2:5)
Exemption from tribute	Absolved from payment for sins (Eph 1:7; Jms 5:15)
Right to appointment to government offices	Right, or duty, to serve in the Church (2Tm 1:19; 2Cor 10:8)
Exemption from punishment without trial and appeal	All will be judged by God in perfect justice; none will be punished unjustly; Jesus will act as advocate and mediator for "citizens" of the kingdom (Acts 17:31; Rom 14:10; 1Tm 2:5)
Right to appeal a legal judgment to the emperor	Final judgment rendered by God himself (Jn 5:22; Acts 14:10)
Exempt from authority of non-Roman local officials and protected from accusation by non-Romans	Satan has no power to accuse Christians, nor does he have any authority over them (Lk 9:1; Acts 26:18; Rom 16:20)