

Summary of the Privileged Class; *Politeuma* Citizenship; the Battles at Philippi: Octavius & Antony v. Brutus & Cassius; Battle of Actium: Octavian v. Antony

4. Summary of the Privileged Class:

1. Church Age believers are members of an elite corps of royal aristocrats possessing all the assets necessary to achieve ultimate integrity in life.
2. By utilizing these assets they are eventually molded into vessels of honor in which the words honor, integrity, nobility, and probity describe his daily modus operandi.
3. Because of such a lifestyle they may be classified as **(1)** a gentleman: a man of noble birth who combines rank with chivalrous qualities and whose conduct conforms to a high standard of propriety and correct behavior, or **(2)** a lady: a woman of superior position. In modern use *lady* is the recognized feminine analogue of *gentleman*: a woman whose manners, habits, and sentiments have the refinements characteristic of the higher ranks of society.¹
4. These assets have unique prerogatives and advantages which enable and empower believers to fulfill their commissions in the plan of God.
5. These believers have boundless resources and endless opportunities to become the winners God intended them to be.
6. Their spiritual birthright has granted them superior entitlements in time and an indescribable inheritance for the eternal future.
7. They are aristocrats, they are nobility, they are royal family, all made possible through grace. Simply by having believed in Christ they became heirs to this fantastic heritage and became citizens of God's heavenly kingdom.
8. They are truly the elite of human history and the privileged class of all eternity.
9. It is to these that a great heritage belongs. *Heritage* is a condition or status into which one is born and which is passed on to one's heirs:

Romans 8:16 - The Holy Spirit Himself testifies with our human spirit that we are children of God,

v. 17 - and if children we also keep on being heirs, on the one hand, heirs of God and, on the other hand, fellow heirs with Christ

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¹ *Oxford English Dictionary*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1:1558.

10. If we are members of God's royal family then we must also be citizens of His heavenly community. A *citizen* is a member of a state, an enfranchised inhabitant of a country, as opposed to an alien, and possessing civic rights and privileges:

Philippians 3:20 - Our citizenship [πολίτευμα, *politeuma*] is in heaven, from which place we eagerly anticipate the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

11. A citizen may be referred to as a "subject." This implies allegiance to a personal sovereign which illustrates the believer's commission as a priest.
12. A citizen may also be called a "national" designating one who is the citizen of a state but who travels or lives outside that state, illustrating the believer's commission as an ambassador.
13. In the devil's world there are a select few who by the simple fact they were physically born into a certain family find themselves in a privileged class.
14. With this naturally comes great wealth, fame, fortune, financial security, social standing, approbation, and sometimes respect.
15. Such people may be classified as royalty, aristocrats, patricians, or nobles.
16. With this position of birth come exclusive prerogatives, privileges, advantages, assets, and resources not available to the lower classes.

5. *Politeuma* Citizenship:

1. Citizenship is defined as follows: The status of an individual who enjoys the freedoms and privileges of a socio-political entity of which he is an official resident. Citizenship implies allegiance to a government or its sovereign and the entitlement to protection from it. An enfranchised inhabitant of a country, as opposed to an alien. A person, native or naturalized, entitled to full protection in the exercise of private rights.
2. *Politeuma* (Gr. πολίτευμα) is a hapax legomenon found only in Philippians 3:20. "What we have here is a figurative use of the term in the sense of state or commonwealth and with a view to describing the fact that Christians are inwardly foreigners, not specifically in relation to the earthly state, which is not mentioned at all in the context, but very generally in relation to the earthly sphere. More positively, the word is used to describe their membership of the heavenly kingdom of Christ, to which they belong as it were by constitutional right."²

² Hermann Strathmann. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhardt Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), 6:535.

3. Paul uses this term at the first stop of his second missionary journey which is documented in:

Acts 16:8 - Passing Mysia \mish'-i-a\ [Μυσία, *Musia*] they [Paul, Silas, and Timothy along with Luke] came down to Troas \trō'-az\ [Τρώας, *Trōas*].

v. 9 - A vision appeared to Paul during the night: a Macedonian man was standing there and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

v. 10 - When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

v. 11 - So putting out to sea from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace \sam'-o-thrās\ [an island in the northern Aegean Sea], and on the day following to Neapolis [a Macedonian seaport nine miles from Philippi];

v. 12 - and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia [μερίδος, *meridos*: the Romans established four separate republics, or *meridos*, in Macedonia with capitals at Amphipolis, Thessalonica, Pella, and Heraclea Lyncestis \her-a-klē'-a lin-ses'-tis\, all along the Egnatian Way], a Roman colony [κολωνεία, *kolōneia*: colony]; and we were staying in this city for some days.

4. In 356 B.C., Philip II founded the city of Philippi, its gold mines being the source of his and his son, Alexander's, expeditions.
5. In 168 B.C., the Battle of Pydna \pid'-na\ ended the period of Macedonian independence started by Philip. The Romans under Aemilius Paulus \i-mil'-ē-as pawl'-as\ defeated the Macedonians led by their last king, Perseus \pers'-üs\, who was taken captive to Rome. Afterward, Macedonia was divided into four regions, Philippi in region one.
6. In Galatians 4:4, Paul uses the phrase "the fullness of time" to describe the First Advent of Christ. The word "fullness" is the noun **πλήρωμα**, *plērōma*, which in context refers to the perfect time for the appearance of Messiah.
7. There was no need for Him to enter history at the time of Israel's predominance as a client nation. But the Jews never made a substantial impact as far as missions are concerned beyond her own borders.
8. This failure was determined by the Lord to have reached its nadir in what we call the first century A.D. What was needed was an empire with borders that encompassed many peoples and nationalities.
9. The Roman Empire had such a far-reaching territory so that it was perfect for the introduction of Christology to its masses.

10. Divine omniscience knew in eternity past that the Jews would reject Messiah and necessitate Plan B which would introduce the Church Age. God was now ready to include the Gentiles in a worldwide missionary outreach compatible with the advent of Gentile client nations.
11. SPQR was so establishment oriented in its laws and government that it provided the necessary protection required for Christianity to flourish, especially during the second century when Rome was ruled by Caesars known as the “five good emperors”: Nerva (96-98), Trajan (98-117), Hadrian (117-138), Antoninus Pius (138-161), and Marcus Aurelius (161-180), an 84-year period of internal peace and prosperity.³
12. The major historical events that precipitated the beginning of the empire occurred in 43 B.C. with the First and Second Battles of Philippi.

6. The Battles at Philippi:

1. The Roman Republic had gone into political degeneracy which led to infighting among the military leaders of Rome, specifically Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great. Julius was the ultimate winner, defeating Pompey at the Battle of Pharsalus \fär'-sā-las\ on August 9, 48 B.C. and thus becoming the ruler of Rome.
2. Under Julius Caesar, republican ideals had given way to rule by one man. And even though Caesar spurned the title and trappings of a king, there were many who felt he was now the king of Rome in everything but name. And they were not happy about it.
3. A conspiracy developed to assassinate Caesar and one of its leaders was none other than Marcus Brutus, the alleged bastard son of Caesar's.
4. At the Battle of Pharsalus, Marcus Brutus had aligned himself with Pompey. Following the victory, Caesar gave orders to his men that Brutus was not to be killed.

³ *The Lives of the Later Caesars*, translated by Anthony Briley (New York: Penguin Books, 1976); *Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979), 1:430.

5. At age thirty-seven, Brutus was a handsome and erudite senator with much influence among his peers as the nephew of Cato the Younger and also because of his natural talents and winning personality. His mother was Servilia, Cato's sister. Years before, Servilia had fallen in love with Julius Caesar when both were teenagers, she being a young widow at the time. Their relationship ended when she remarried, but before long it was apparent she was pregnant. Many classical authors were to write that when Marcus was born Caesar felt sure the boy was his. While Caesar was only fifteen when Brutus was born it's not impossible that they were father and son.
6. Romans started their sex lives early – females could legally marry at twelve, while males officially came of age in their fifteenth year. Whatever the biological facts, for the rest of his days Caesar treated Brutus like a son.⁴
7. Cassius Longinus \kash'-ē-as län-jī'-nas\ headed the conspiracy to assassinate Caesar and was one of the actual assassins along with Brutus.
8. This conspiracy came to a head on the ides of March, 44 B.C. On this date Caesar had called a meeting of the Senate, the site the conspirators had chosen to assassinate the dictator. Before the proceedings began, Tillius Cimber reached forward and pulled Caesar's scarlet robe down over his arms while Publius Caska pulled a dagger from beneath his toga and inflicted the first wound. He was followed by around 60 other senators who during the scuffle struck Caesar 23 times.
9. At this point a struggle for power began and precipitated a civil war that would result in the creation of the Roman Empire.
10. Mark Antony assumed himself to be the legitimate successor to Caesar. He was prepared to assume the governorship of Macedonia, however, this post had been promised by Caesar to Brutus. Mark Antony convinced the Senate to withdraw the appointment.
11. This was the catalyst for the civil war. Marcus Brutus and Cassius Longinus became the leaders of the faction that supported the retention of the republic.
12. Mark Antony joined with Octavius, the adopted son of Julius Caesar (later known as Augustus, the first Roman emperor), and Counsel Marcus Lepidus \lep'-a-das\, forming what became known as the Second Triumvirate which means they were granted absolute authority that was dictatorial in scope. Their official title was Board of Three for the Ordering of State.

⁴ Steven Dando-Collins, *Caesar's Legion: The Epic Saga of Julius Caesar's Elite Tenth Legion and the Armies of Rome* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2002), 131.

13. The two armies met during the first week of October, 42 B.C. at the First Battle of Philippi, a contest that went decidedly to the Republicans. Brutus and Cassius suffered the loss of eight-thousand men while Antony and Octavius lost sixteen thousand.
14. However, Cassius's forces were decimated by Mark Antony's. Assuming Brutus's forces were also defeated, Cassius committed suicide. Three weeks later on October 23, Brutus engaged Mark Antony and Octavian's forces in the Second Battle of Philippi and was decisively defeated. Seeing his cause as lost, Brutus, too, committed suicide.
15. A rivalry later developed between Octavian and Mark Antony and the former defeated the latter at the Battle of Actium \ac'-shē-am\ on September 2, 31 B.C.
16. Although Antony and Cleopatra escaped by ship, about a year later Octavian's forces advanced on Egypt which prompted the rebellious couple to commit suicide. In 27 B.C., Octavian became the first Roman emperor at which time the Senate conferred him with the title of "Augustus" which means "exalted or sacred."