

**Week 13 Day 2 | Names for You: Citizen**

For our honeymoon, my wife and I were blessed to go to Aruba. If you are unfamiliar, it’s a very small island in the Caribbean Sea, just north of Venezuela.

This was my first trip out of the country and I wasn’t exactly sure what to expect. Of course, the brochures made it look amazing and the reviews sounded wonderful. Still, it was far from home and from anything familiar. To get there, we needed plane tickets, reservations, proof of identification, and a passport. In order to get the passport, I needed my birth certificate. I also needed my driver’s license, which originally required my Social Security card. Those credentials not only proved that I was who I said I was, they guaranteed various rights and privileges I had as an American.

Well, Aruba was fantastic. The water was crystal clear. The trade winds provided a welcome relief from the hot sun. The people were warm and accommodating . . . true to the claim of being “One Happy Island.” We had a great time and didn’t want it to end.

The strange thing is that it was hard to feel like we belonged there. I’m not sure if it was because it didn’t seem real . . . or whether it was too good to be true. It didn’t seem we really had the right to be there in the first place. Aruba certainly wasn’t our island. We could claim none of the rights and privileges afforded to the natives. Yes, we were taken care of, but we were taken care of as guests. That’s just a nicer way for the resort to describe an outsider. The inherent sense of home, familiarity, and nationality would not be restored until we stepped foot back on American soil.

For Christians, the Bible paints a very different picture of heaven than how I felt in Aruba:

*“Now you are no longer strangers to God and foreigners to heaven, but you are members of God’s very own family, citizens of God’s country, and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.”—Ephesians 2:19 (TLB)*

Wow! Don’t gloss over the power and comfort Paul is giving us here.

The Bible says we are no longer strangers to God, or as The Message puts it, “wandering exiles.” We once were alienated because of our sin, but no more. Instead of being strangers to God, as we were in the past, we have a relationship with God now, one that will make us residents of heaven in the future.

We have a new citizenship, a citizenship in God’s country. The Message says it like this:

“This kingdom of faith is now your home country.” In a sense, we have been given a new nationality based on faith and our eternal identification with Christ. No Social Security card, birth certificate, passport, or driver’s license required.

What does this mean for our fitness? We have the *right* to come to God with our struggles and lay them before Him. We have the *honor* of approaching our fitness as another means to bring our King glory. We have the *freedom* to enjoy using our earthly bodies and the *privilege* of getting new, perfect bodies in heaven.

You’re a citizen with all the rights, honors, freedoms, and privileges that come with belonging in God’s household.

We were not made for this world. Our heavenly citizenship gives us hope for our future, while empowering us to live a victorious life on earth.

The perfect citizenship in a perfect Heaven with a perfect God for a perfect eternity—what could be better?

**Prayer**

*Father, thank You for making me a citizen. Forgive me when I set my mind on an earthly citizenship rather than one with You. Please help me to always remember that my home is in Heaven. Because of that, I have the freedom to approach You with anything while here on earth. Amen.*

**Meditation**

My citizenship is in heaven.

**Daily Spiritual Exercise**

Ephesians 2:19 reminds us of our heavenly heritage. Get out a sheet of paper and write down, “Because of Christ, I am a citizen of heaven.” Next to it, write down the implications this has in your life —what it will enable you to accomplish, how it affects your struggles, how it equips you for victory.

Then, post it somewhere you can see it regularly. Every time you do, ask the Lord to help you believe it. Pray that He will help you to see yourself the way He does. Give Him praise when He does.