

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: FOUR GREAT CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES

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Key Verses: Isaiah 33:15-17

These verses begin by presenting us with what we might describe as God's Portrait of a Christian, a New Testament believer. It is a full length portrait in black and white! Indeed, there are six different views of the same person. Take a good look at God's picture of one of His children. He is one who:

- (1) "walketh righteously"
- (2) "speaketh uprightly"
- (3) "despiseth the gain of oppressions"
- (4) "shaketh his hands from holding of bribes"
- (5) "stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood"
- (6) "shutteth his eyes from seeing evil"

How do we fit into this picture? Do we walk in righteousness, speak honestly, despise anything that is underhand or dishonest, refuse to be corrupted by worldly gain? Are we slow to hear evil and careful about what we see? Being a Christian, a true believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, touches the whole life, feet, mouth, heart, hands, ears and eyes, look up Romans 6:13, and compare Romans 12:1-2. Now notice that in verses 16 and 17 we are told about the Christian's privileges; the privileges we enjoy or are to enjoy as believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. They are four in number, and they refer, not to a few Christians, but to all Christians.

### 1. OUR POSITION IN CHRIST.

Verse 16 tells us that the man described in verse 15 "shall dwell on high". Does this mean that we shall go to Heaven when we die? No, it means, in New Testament language, Ephesians 2:6. The moment we were born again we were placed in a new and a wonderful position, "in Christ". Once we were "in Adam", but now, look up 1 Corinthians 15:22 and 2 Corinthians 5:17, and compare Ephesians 1:3. We are a "heavenly" people, citizens of Heaven, look up Philippians 3:20; and right here and now God wants us, and has made provision for us, to "dwell on high". Yet, how many of us are living very much on earth's level and are failing to rise up into the enjoyment of that fullness of life and blessing that is ours in Christ Jesus? Many Christians are living like spiritual paupers, when God wants them to live like "sons of God", "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ", look up and compare 1 John 3:1 and Romans 8:17. How are you traveling to the palace of the King? By what class are you traveling to Glory, second or first? God wants you to travel first class all the way, and in His Son He has made every provision for you to do so!

### 2. OUR PROTECTION IN CHRIST.

Verse 16 tells us that for the Christian, "his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks." Here is our protection, look up Colossians 3:3, and compare Psalm 91:1. Every real Christian lives a protected life. Physically? Yes, for nothing can happen to the Christian's body apart from God's permission. This does not mean freedom from trouble, trial, accident and death itself, but it does mean that nothing just "happens" to the believer, for, look up Romans 8:28. But after all, the body is the least important part of the Christian. Our body is only our earthly house, carefully read 2 Corinthians 5:1-8. For the Christian, to die is to be with Christ, "which is far better", look up Philippians 1:23. What a wonderful protection we have, and how true is the old hymn!

Under the shadow of Thy throne  
Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,  
And our defense is sure.

### 3. OUR PROVISION IN CHRIST.

Verse 16 tells us about this. "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." For the sustenance of the new life God

gives us bread and water. Will God always supply the material needs, the need of food, for instance, of His children? Look up Psalm 23:1, and compare Psalm 34:10 and Philippians 4:19. Now look up Psalm 37:25! And compare 1 Kings 17:2-7. The meaning of verse 16, however, is that there is absolutely everything we need in the Lord Jesus Christ, look up Ephesians 1:3 again, and compare Colossians 2:9-10. Now look up John 6:35. Do you realize how much is yours "in Christ"? In Him we have:

- (1) A life that can never be forfeited, look up John 10:28.
- (2) A relationship which can never be broken, look up Galatians 3:26.
- (3) A righteousness which can never be tarnished, look up 2 Corinthians 5:21.
- (4) A peace which can never be destroyed, look up Ephesians 2:14.
- (5) An acceptance which can never be questioned, look up Ephesians 1:6.
- (6) An inheritance which can never fade, look up 1 Peter 1:4.
- (7) A title which can never be disputed, look up Revelation 1:6.

If you want a really exciting study, go through Ephesians, and other New Testament epistles, and underline the words "in Christ" or "in Him". All that is "in Christ" is yours, if you really are "in Christ"! How rich you are! You can sing with the hymn writer: "Thou, O Christ, art all I want, more than all in Thee I find". But notice the word "given" in verse 16. The Lord has "given" the provision we need, but we must take, appropriate, "possess our possessions", look up Obadiah 17. Is Isaiah 55:2 God's word to you?

#### 4. OUR PROSPECT IN CHRIST.

Verse 17 tells us this, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." What a glorious prospect! Look up and compare Job 19:25-27. Notice that our prospect is two fold; we shall see the place, but best of all, we shall see the Person. It is great to know that Heaven is our Home, and to know that we shall go to live there forever, but the glory and the wonder of our Heavenly Home centers in the Saviour Himself, and when we see Him, "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is", look up 1 John 3:2.

When in His beauty my Saviour I see,  
When I shall look on His face,  
Tongue cannot tell of the joy it will be,  
Saved by His wonderful grace!

F. W. Dixon