

## The Citizen, His Privileges, and Duties Under the Constitution

There is something in the very soul of citizens which demands privileges. When man was given life by the Creator he was also given liberties. There was something in the germ of Divine Life which required privileges for its full development. That freedom of choice may lead to mistakes but it will also lead to strength.

Every citizen has the right to enjoy life, health and a good reputation, and no one by any unjust act may deprive him of them. If this is attempted he may ask the state to protect him. Even the government may not take the citizens life, liberty, or property without a due process of law. His home may not be searched ~~without~~ unless a warrant has been issued for that purpose.

A citizen may go wherever he wishes and do whatever he desires, so long as he breaks no law of the state and does not interfere with the equal rights of others. No man may be held as slave. Every citizen has the right to worship as he pleases. He has the freedom of speech, a free press, and freedom to meet other citizens and petition the government to relieve injustice.

II

a citizen is free to acquire, make use of, and dispose of, possessions of any kind, in a lawful, honorable way, without interference from any one. This right is fundamental, for upon it rests the entire foundation of modern business and trade. The government itself is forbidden to take private property, even for public use, without fair payment.

In order for us to have these privileges and maintain them we have duties to perform.

When a citizen has voted for officials and on constitutional amendments, he may be called by his fellow-citizens to hold public office himself. Some offices do not require much attention, because they are simply honorary without salary. In most cases, public office involves labor and time. It is, therefore, just that the public should pay its officers.

When called, citizen should serve on juries in the trial of civil and criminal cases. There is no duty of the citizen which makes higher demand upon his character.

If our country should be attacked, the citizen must be ready to come to its aid. at such a time he is merely standing up for the defense of his home, his family, and all that is dear to him.

It is the duty of the citizen to ready and willing at all times to contribute from his own property

to the support of the government. When we consider all the benefits which come to us through the government we should be willing to pay for our share of its expenses. Unfortunately, some people, in one way or another, avoid to payment of their just part of the burden of taxation. In defrauding the state the citizen defrauds himself, because if he does not want to carry the burdens, he cannot expect to share the privileges of good government.

The government is simply ourselves, the people acting for our benefit. When the government has made laws, after carefully considering the needs and welfare of all the people, it is our duty to obey those laws, not from fear of punishment, if we break the laws, but because by our observance, our very freedom is based upon our responsibility to ourselves to keep our country free from disorder not only by seeing that others obey the laws but by obeying them ourselves.

It is because America has on the whole succeeded better than other nations in preserving the rights of freemen that it has come to be known as the Land of the Free. But in order that these rights may be maintained it <sup>must</sup> also continue to be the Home of the Brave and it must also continue to be the land where each citizen respects the rights of others.

The citizen, his privileges, and  
duties under the constitution"

George G. Gidd