

CITIZENSHIP IN THE *EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS*

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Translation by Clayton N. Jefford, *The Epistle to Diognetus (with the Fragment of Quadratus): Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 145:

1. For Christians are not distinguishable from other people either by country (γῆ), language (φωνή), or customs (ἔθος). 2. For nowhere do they live in their own cities (πόλις), speak some unusual dialect (διάλεκτος), or practice an uncommon lifestyle. 3. This teaching of theirs has not been discovered by the consideration or reflection of inventive people, nor like some people do they endorse a human doctrine. 4. Yet while living in both Greek and barbarian cities according to each one's lot and following local customs with respect to clothing and food and the rest of life, they illustrate the admirable and admittedly unusual character of their citizenship (πολιτεία).
5. They live in their native countries (πατρίς), but only as outsiders (πάροικος). They participate in everything like citizens (πολίτης) and tolerate all things as foreigners (ξένος). Every foreign place is their homeland (πατρίς), and every homeland is foreign.
6. Like other people, they marry and have children. But they do not expose their young.
7. They provide a common meal, but not a common bed.
8. They happen to be in the flesh, but do not live according to the flesh.
9. They spend time on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven (ἀλλ' ἐν οὐρανῷ πολιτεύονται).
10. They obey the fixed laws, and their lifestyle rises above the laws.
11. They love everyone, and are persecuted by all.
12. They are misunderstood, and are condemned; they are put to death, and are made alive.
13. They are poor, and enrich many; they lack all things, and prosper in everything.
14. They are dishonoured, and are glorified in their dishonors; they are slandered, and they are acquitted.

15. They are disparaged and they bless; they are insulted, and they offer respect.
16. When doing good, they are punished as evil; when being punished, they rejoice as people being brought to life.
17. They are attacked as foreigners by Jews, and they are persecuted by Greeks. And those who hate them cannot explain the reason for their hostility.

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