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The Qualities of Good Citizens

BY BISHOP PHILLIPS BROOKS

I PLEAD with you for all that makes strong citizens. First, clear convictions; deep, careful, patient study of the government under which we live until you not merely believe it to be the best in all the world, but know why you believe.

And then a clear conscience—as clear as in private interests; as much ashamed of public as of private sin; as ready to hate, rebuke, and vote down corruption in the state, in your own party, as you would be in your own store or church; as ready to bring the one as the other to the judgment of the living God.

And then unselfishness—an earnest and exalted sense that you are for the land, and not alone the land for you.

And then activity—the readiness to wake and watch and do a citizen's work untiringly, counting it as base not to vote at an election, not to work against a bad official, or not to work for a good one, as it would have been to shirk a battle in war. Such strong citizenship let there be among us, such knightly doing of our duties on the field of peace.