

Chicago: Landed at airport...took a local road N. toward the Church we were meeting at. Different Nationalities! Amazing...As we drove the surroundings changed! Very clear! (Signs, Languages, Clothing, Coloring) Come to an intersection and everything would change!

Irish, German, Italian, Mexican, Assyrian, Arab, Jews, English, Bosnian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Czech, Greek, Black, Korean, Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Albanian, Pakistani, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Swedish, Ukrainian, Dutch, Belgian, Cuban

There were all different kinds of people...but they were LIVING side by side. Sometimes literally across the street, or beside!

They were all part of the City of Chicago!

That is what Peter is talking about in the passage we look at this morning. He is saying: You (Christians) are in and from all different kinds of place. Yet, there are some very special things that make you ONE! You share some things that unite you!

4 Spiritual Elements That Unite All Christians

1. We Are All Part Of The Same Family.

We talked about most of this last week, but review what we said with me.

Illus: "Jesus loves the little children...ALL the children of the world!" Red and yellow, black and white...

- We share the same Father
Vs 1:17 "Since you call on a Father..." We all call on YAWHEW, Jehovah, "Our Father, who art"
- We share the same spiritual birth
Vs 1:23 "For you have been born again...through the word of God." All came same way: GOSPEL
- We are all called to be obedient children:
Vs 1:14 "As obedient children, do not conform" We are all called to live as part of the family!
- We are all spiritual brother and sisters:
Vs 1:22 "Love your brothers" Family are the people that have to take you in when no one...
- We all have the same nourishment:
Vs 2:2 "Crave pure spiritual milk" Bible, Prayer, Fellowship Help us grow!!!

2 Truths to Live By

1. Are you part of the family spiritually? Have you "Called on God as YOUR spiritual Father?"
2. Are you part of the family physically? Have you joined a church family? Connected, Growing, Loving

2. We Are All Being Built Into The Same Spiritual House.

- **Living Stones:** We are the raw material that God uses to make the church. Takes people from the world, And He SAVES them, And He SHAPES them, and He PLACES them: To make a spiritual house!
- **Being Built:** Lit = Someone (God) is putting the "living stones" (people) into a specific formation (spiritual house) Mt 16:18 Jesus said, I will "build" It is the EXACT same word! We are being put together for His purposes
- **Share common materials!** Living stones, being built, Foundation Stone...Capstone!
~God is the Architect ~Holy Spirit is the "mortar"
~Jesus is the builder ~Jesus is the (Cornerstone) Foundation stone Vs 6
~We are the "stones" ~Jesus is the Capstone Vs 7
- **We share a common purpose:** We are a holy priesthood, Vs 9 "THAT you may declare!"
~We are the priesthood! Vs 5, 9
~We offer spiritual sacrifices as priests of God, scattered throughout our world!
>Bodies as living sacrifices Rom 12:1-2 >Sacrifice of Praise of our lips Heb 13:15
>Good works we do for others Heb 13:16 >Money and Material things: 4:10-20
>People we lead to Jesus Rom 15:16

Every single one of those things are sacrifices that we, as Priests of God, Offer to HIM

Illus: Here is the Image Peter is painting for us!

God is building a place of Worship for Himself. But, NOT a building!

Ac 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by...

You and I are the temple that HE dwells in. And You and I are the GO-BETWEENS (Priests) to OUR world!

We are offering spiritual sacrifices...We are "standing in the gap" We are being shaped and prepared and used for His glory!

Truths To Live By

1. Are you "being built?" Is there spiritual growth taking place in your life...or is your building falling down?
2. Are you offering "sacrifices to God?" We can't do ALL of them ALL the time...but we should have SOME!!!

3. We Are All Citizens Of One Country Living In Another!

- **Chosen People:** Just like Israel was chosen by God to be His representatives to the nations
So WE are chosen to be God's representatives today!
They were chosen by God to be a light to the Gentile nations (Ch 42, Ch 49)
Difference: We are Ex-Pats! Ch 1:1-2 Citizens of Heaven...Living in all those places!

An *expatriate* (often shortened to *expat*) is a person temporarily or permanently *residing*, as an *immigrant*, in a country other than that of their citizenship. The word comes from the *Latin* terms *ex* ("out of") and *patria* ("country, fatherland")

Exactly what God told the Israelites in the OT: Ex 19:6 "...you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

- **Royal Priesthood:** We are RELATED to the King! We serve Him. Not some random, ragtag group of people
But rather we belong to Him. He called us to be His people...for His purposes
- **Holy Nation:** We are set apart for Him. That's what Holy means. Put apart for special purposes

Illus: In the OT God called the Nation of Israel TOGETHER, so everyone could look and see what it was to belong to HIM!
But, that didn't work, because the Israelites turned inward, arrogant, prideful, Forgot who they belonged to
Instead of being a LIGHT to the Gentiles...they became a stumbling block

Now, in the NT, God is not calling us together as a nation in one place, but rather He is SENDING us out!

Now, we are expats, the light is all over the place!

Wherever we go...AS we go...we are His people...bringing light to the darkness

The "Temple" is right here! In our hearts!

The Sacrifices are not made in a house of worship on a hill..but rather in the workplace...school...neighborhood
They are made on sports teams and in hospitals and everywhere we Go in HIS name!

Look at Vs 11, and when you do...it ALL makes sense!

Because we are:

- Part of the Same Family
- Being Built into the Same Spiritual House (the church)
- Citizens of a different nation, expats in this place

What are we to do?

- Abstain (last week)
- Live good lives! This week and following weeks

So THAT we will shine like lights in the darkness!!!

CONCL:

Driving through Chicago that day it was VERY clear when I went from one "country" to another

Everything changed...Clothing...Signs...People: It was obvious

Here is the real question: As an expat...Is it obvious that you belong to another country?

1. Are you part of the Spiritual family? DO you belong to Him? If not...time for you to receive Him as your Father!
2. Are you part of a physical family? Do you belong somewhere? Membership class (connection card)
3. Are you being spiritually built up...growing stronger every day?
4. Are you offering sacrifices to God...whatever it is that He calls you to offer
5. Are you fulfilling your PURPOSE? Are you shining?
(Don't have to be a spotlight...World so dark...little bit of light good!