

Intro: I still remember one of the first mission trips I took to China. I was standing in line in the old Beijing airport waiting to go through immigration into the country. As I was waiting I read an old, hand lettered sign that was placed in a very prominent place. I don't remember ALL that it said, but one part stands out in my mind almost 20 years later. Basically the sign said, *"Please remember...you are entering the People's Republic of China. Regardless of what country you are a citizen of, THOSE rights are not valid while you are in our country. If you enter you WILL be subject to all of our laws, fines, penalties and legal processes. You are a stranger and a foreigner. NOT a citizen."*

That is EXACTLY what Peter, Paul, the author of Hebrews and all the rest of the NT authors are trying to tell us about living in our world. We are strangers and foreigners. We don't BELONG here. We are foreigners...our citizenship is somewhere else...and we are NEVER going to be home in this world!

That is a challenge for most of us to remember. You see, what we WANT to do is settle down...make ourselves at home...fit in...and enjoy where we are and what this world has to offer. But, the bible tells us...when we DO that...we open ourselves up to the rules, regulations, prices and penalties of living in a world that is not our own. Perhaps one of the hardest things to do as a follower of Christ is to remember...This World is NOT MY HOME!

Today I want to continue the series we started last week by looking at what it means to live in a place that is Not Our Home. If you have your bibles look with me at 4 passages that tell us:

1. This World Is Not Our Home!

To fully understand the disconnect we feel in our world as followers of Christ, look at how we are described in Bible

- 1Peter 2:11-12
Foreigners: *Stranger or foreigner; someone living alongside a citizen*
Exiles: *Someone not a home...but in a foreign land*
- Heb 11:13-16
Foreigners *Aliens from another country*
Strangers *Stranger living alongside citizen*
- Eph 2:19
No longer strangers and foreigners
Citizens of Heaven...NOW WE HAVE A HOME
- Phil 3:20
Now we are citizens of Heaven
Looking forward to the promise of God for us!

A couple of very important items to remember

- You SHOULDN'T feel at home! When we DO...probably indicates that something is not right
- We SHOULDN'T look, talk, dress, value or accept the things of this world.
We are called to be IN our world...but not OF our world John 17:14-16
That means that we live alongside...but we are never going to "fit in" completely. We are different
- It is ALWAYS going to be a battle for you to live alongside side citizens of this world...as citizen of heaven
We will continue to fight until Christ returns and takes you home.
Titus 2:13 *we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ*
So, how do we live in this world as citizens of another, and honor God along the way. You see, when we forget that this world is not our home and start to live like it is, that creates all different kinds of struggles.
When we try to "fit in" and make ourselves at home, we run the risk of compromising our spiritual integrity and losing our testimony.

One reason God leaves us here in our world, alongside those who are NOT citizens of heaven is so that we can be a witness and testimony to those we live beside. That's why Peter writes, *"Live such good lives among them that they will see your life and glorify God because of you!"* SO, WHAT DOES THAT KIND OF LIFE LOOK LIKE? Moses/Abram

2. Living On Earth As Citizens Of Heaven!

In Heb 11 we are given all kinds of examples of those who successfully navigated the challenge of living for God in the middle of our world. Moses and Abraham both lived as aliens and strangers in a foreign land, setting for us an example to follow. The author of Hebrews highlights for 5 principles to learn from as we follow their steps.

- **By Faith:** Heb 11:1 Faith: Lit = *Confidence and trust in God as the foundation of life (Here AND Eternity)*
The author of Heb is telling us that just alike all those that have gone before us, we trust the integrity and faithfulness of God as the foundation on which we stand. He is always true to His Word!
2 Cor 5:7 "We live by FAITH, not by SIGHT! We lived based on all God has said..., we haven't seen it: OK!
~*We haven't seen heaven, but we trust that He does have a place prepared for us!*
~*We can't even imagine what it will be like...but we trust His word that it is BETTER than anything here*
~*All we have to go on is His Word, His Promises, and the Testimony of His Son Jesus...but we believe!*
~Just like all of those that have gone before us...we trust in Him
- **On Promise:** Heb 11:13 Promised: *Divine assurance of good, every way God laid it out for us*
Heb 11: They died without ever seeing the fulfillment of the promises of God. Yet they remained faithful!
~They didn't receive it: *To hold in your hand*
~Saw/Welcome afar: *To embrace something you only see, but cannot hold!*
~Admitting: *Agree that they were not yet home! (Carried a stigma, embraced it!)*
~Listen...they never saw the Messiah, they never held in their hands everything God promised...but they remained faithful, never wavering, never surrendering, always pressing forward toward the promise! Never received the promise: Vs 39 Yet they were commended
~We have promises: ~*I go to prepare a place for you; Eye has not seen, Ear heard, mind imagined*
~*I WILL return*
~*We will be changed, we will see Him as He is, Know Him as we are known*
Just like all the men and women that have gone before us...we continue to live on the promise of God
2Co 1:20 *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.*
- **With Anticipation** Heb 11:14; 16 They had not received the promises...but they longed for them
~Looking: *To search, to seek, to crave, to desire: (Intensive) Turning over every rock to find!*
~Longing: *To stretch out, reach out, covet desire (Intensive) Straining with everything they have~*
Titus 2:13 *"we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ"*
There is a part of our heart that will never be satisfied until we receive all that is promised.
Quote: Chuck Swindoll:
- **In Obedience** 17-21 Abraham offering Isaac; blessing Jacob, They didn't want to; Great men and women of faith, all of Ch 11 highlighting the obedience of those living by faith! Every one of the struggling, sacrificing, living through some of the most difficult times...TRUSTING GOD every step of the way. Walking in obedience.
~We are called to the same: A life of obedience based on Faith and Promise...not on what we Hold, not on what we see, not on what we know...but built on what we BELIEVE about the promise and faithfulness of God
1 John 3:3 *"Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure."*
Every time in the NT we are reminded that we are Citizens of Heaven, called to obedience and purity!
- **Through Intentional Sacrifice:** Moses made a CHOICE to give up the things of this world for things to come!
~Chose: To choose for oneself: No one else can choose for you
~Mistreatment over Pleasure of Sin: He intentionally walked away from what COULD be...Promise
~Regarded: Lit He counted the cost ... made a decision
~Looking Ahead: To look away from everything else
How do you do that? Where do you find the strength and will and the power to choose less here, more there

Col 3:1: Set your heart on things above

Col 3:2 Set your mind on things above!

Just like all of those that have gone before us...We have to make a CHOICE. What is important? What do you value? What do you desire? Where is your heart and mind?

CONCL:

This world is NOT your home! Oh, we try to make it our home. We try to make it comfortable, we do everything we can to make it fit. Unlike Moses, all too often we choose the fleeting pleasure of sin in THIS world rather than the sacrifice need to prepare for the world to come.

- **Let me ask you some questions today**
- **Are you living on Faith...or Sight?**
- **Are you living on the Promise of God...what you can hold onto in this world?**
- **Are you anticipating the return of Jesus...or does that fill you with fear...know you aren't ready to give account?**
- **Are you living in obedience...Daily purifying yourself...Because you KNOW...Today might be the day!**
- **Are you living Sacrificially, Or are you choosing the pleasures of this world over the promise of world to come?**

Listen to me: This World is NOT YOUR HOME! Everything in your heart, everything in your life, everything you see, hear, you think...IS designed to convince you...This is where you belong...and you don't! As a disciple of Jesus you will never fit in...So you have to make a choice:

Am I living for this life...or the one to come?

Remember the conversation I overheard with the contractor?

What are we building here....A beachhouse...or a Home?

That's my question for you today....What are YOU building in this world?

A temporary dwelling...or a permanent home?

IF you have been investing in the wrong home...Today is the day to start making the changes you need to make.

When was the last time---on your own---you meditated on Christ's coming? If you're like most, it's been too long. People who are more practical than mystical, who are realistic rather than idealistic, tend to do that only at funerals and following near death experiences. Most of us are here and now thinkers much more than then and there people.