

# Living As Resident Aliens

1 Peter 2:9-12

- I. Ways that the church is viewed (and has behaved!)
  - a. Activists- Those who seek only to bring political change through vigorous campaigning (no love, only a seemingly political agenda)
  - b. Escapists- Those who don't engage at all (head in the sand)
  - c. Spiritual Immigrants
    - i. Or Resident Aliens
    - ii. Those who are totally committed to love and serve the people around them while acknowledging that their true home lies beyond this world

## The Calling

- iii. We are defined by God Himself
- iv. **verse 9** Peter picks up what has been said of Israel in the book of Exodus chapter 19 and here and applies it to the church
  1. God told Israel that they would be a kingdom of Priests
- v. Peter is referring not just to the specific role that Aaron and his sons would fill as the official priests of Israel, but to Israel's life as a whole as a representation of God to the nations.
- vi. By keeping the covenant Israel would do two things
  1. Keep themselves set apart
  2. AND convey the presence and blessing of God to the nations around them
- vii. Now, Peter applies this to the church!
  1. What God had pointed toward in the OT is fulfilled because Jesus broke down the wall of separation, He fulfilled the Law on behalf of Jew and Gentile and has now brought us together into a family
  2. This is what makes Jesus the cornerstone!
    - a. This family is built upon Christ
    - b. When you are born again, you join the church!
- viii. The church, a mix of Jew and Gentile is called to represent God among the nations and to mediate the presence and blessings of God!
  1. Natural enemies- "The Church is made up of natural enemies. What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort. Christians come together because they have all been saved by Jesus Christ... They are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus' sake." Love in hard places pg. 61
  2. Now they see koinenia (greek idea for utopia)

- ix. That you may #1 proclaim praises to Him!
  - 1. He called us out of darkness into light!
  - 2. Before we think about the ministry let us give Him praise!
    - a. The purpose of the church is to:
      - i. Glorify God
      - ii. Equip the saints
      - iii. Evangelize the lost
- x. **Verse 10** alludes to what has been said in the book of Hosea

### **The Characteristics**

- 1. What is distinct about us to the world? How do we live out this callin?
  - a. Verse 11
- 2. “Precisley because they were an international people and race and nation who were without the kind of territory that was part of being a nation in the eyes of the Romans, Christians found themselves in an eschatological tension that has been both an unavoidable challenge and a glorious privilige throughout 2,000 years of church history” D.A. Carson and G.K. Beale  
Commentary of the New Testament’s use of the Old Testament  
pg. 1,033
- 3. Sojourners/Pilgrims (this says you don’t have citizenship here)**
- 4. Pariokos- Thos who live in a place without official citizenship.  
Strangers, foreigners (dwelling near)
- 5. Aliens/ But we are called to reside here (this one signifies that you have citizenship elsewhere but you are residing here nonetheless**
- xi. Sojourners (exiles)- Those who come from a foreign country to reside by the natives
  - 1. We are “exiles” awaiting our inheritance  
Heb. 13:13-14 **13** *Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. 14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.*  
Our citizenship is in heaven  
We are in the world but not of the world!  
Our hope is not ultimately here
  - 2. So our native land really becomes heaven and yet we are residing here
- xii. not transient nor hostile, nor totally enveloped into it, not tourists
- xiii. They are positive and loving toward their culture and yet know that they are different
  - 1. The Gospel exposes the evil and idols within the world and yet we do not withdraw. We are supposed to incarnate our Christianity within the culture
    - a. Some of you love the first part, and hate the second (heaven! But not here)

2. We are to be radical as an alternate society!
  - a. A city within a city!
    - i. Embracing common grace
    - ii. Rejecting what is antithetical to the gospel
    - iii. Redeeming that which can be redeemed!
3. We are radically committed to serve, love and have compassion on our communities
  - a. And thus, by the grace of God, we fulfill His calling for us to be His representatives!
4. And yet all the while we are always looking to the final consummation
 

We are not looking for utopias on earth! Nor are we building one! We live here for the sake of the Gospel
- d. Having said that we are ignorant if we are not aware of the challenges that go with this calling
  1. There is both great power and great difficulty in living as resident aliens!
  - ii. The temptations and pleasures offered by the world will be enticing to us in this process!
  - iii. There will always be a great struggle between proclaiming God's excellencies and obey our sinful passions
  - iv. They wage war against your soul!
    1. The answer is not to flee from our communities! It is to be satisfied in Jesus! Lead by His Spirit!
      - a. Some of you are allowing sin in your life
      - b. Jesus asks you for the sake of the gospel, for the sake of the christian community, for the sake of the lost and dying world around you who have no hope, and for the sake of your own soul... STOP
  - v. We will be the most successful in the world when we are most satisfied in God!!!

### **The Consequences**

- e. Godly lives will bring *criticism* and *conversions*
  - i. Verse 12
  - ii. There will be criticisms
    1. There will be hatred!!
    2. But we must remember, we live for God!
      - a. This is why we must make it crystal clear what we are all about!
  - iii. But there will also be conversions
    1. Matt. 5:16 "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven"
    2. People will hate us, but on the other hand our works should cause them to not want us to leave

### **Preaching to the community (evangelism)**

- f. We are to be radical in telling the truth. preaching!
- g. Why is the gospel so important?
  - i. Because it deals with the most radical and fundamental problem of the world: Sin
  - ii. Social action is not the gospel:
- h. It is to mix what Scripture keeps distinct!
- i. (John Stott) Through evangelism we are brought from judgment into sonship, freedom from self to service, from decay to glory
- j. Evangelism is best done through the context of community
  - i. The church! Your whole life is to be representative!
  - ii. The local church empowered by the Holy Spirit is, in my humble opinion, the best outreach to the world
    - 1. If you want to reach san Francisco go live there!
    - 2. We are here and yet we are different!
      - a. We deal with our lives differently
      - b. We handle jobs with a different perspective
      - c. We do sex differently etc.
      - d. We handle suffering and sorrow differently

### **Providing for the community (service)**

- k. We are to be radical in our providing for the community
- l. Why serve? Because humans are
  - i. Soul- spiritual (Temple) Eph. 2
  - ii. Body- materal (family, genetic ties, provision)
  - iii. Community- social development (citizens)
- a. Object of mercy: people!!
  - i. Even our natural enemies
- b. Characteristics of mercy (How) vs. 34-35
  - i. The Good Samaritan
    - 1. A Natural enemy, motivated by compassion, met felt needs with his resources without return payment required
      - a. Unconditional
      - b. Sacrificial
      - c. Comprehensive (he even acted as a friend!)
- c. Motivation of mercy (the “Why”? GRACE) vs. 33
- iv. Rom. 13:8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.
- v. **2 Cor. 8:1-5** We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, **2** for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. **3** For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, **4** begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in I the relief of the saints

- 5 and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.
- vi. **2 Cor. 8:9** For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

*B.B. Warfield 1950 "The Person and Work of Christ" pg 574*

*Now dear Christians, some of you pray night and day to be branches of the true Vine; you pray to be made all over in the image of Christ. If so, you must be like him in giving ... 'though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor' ...*

**Objection 1.** 'My money is my own.' **Answer:** Christ might have said, 'My blood is my own, my life is my own' ... then where should we have been?

**Objection 2.** 'The poor are undeserving.' **Answer:** Christ might have said, 'They are wicked rebels ... shall I lay down my life for these? I will give to the good angels.' But no, he left the ninety-nine, and came after the lost. He gave his blood for the undeserving.

**Objection 3.** 'The poor may abuse it.' **Answer:** Christ might have said the same; yea, with far greater truth. Christ knew that thousands would trample his blood under their feet; that most would despise it; that many would make it an excuse for sinning more; yet he gave his own blood.

*Oh, my dear Christians! If you would be like Christ, give much, give often, give freely, to the vile and poor, the thankless and the undeserving. Christ is glorious and happy and so will you be. It is not your money I want, but your happiness. Remember his own word, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'*

### **Praying for the community (intercession)**

- m. We are to be radical in praying for the city
- n. The concept of substitute is huge
- o. Moses
  - i. Desiring to take the burden of the people upon Himself
  - ii. Exodus 32:30-32 **30** The next day Moses said to the people, **f** "You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the Lord; **g** perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." **31** So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Alas, **f** this people has sinned a great sin. They have **h** made for themselves gods of gold. **32** But now, if **i** you will forgive their sin—but if not, please **j** blot me out of **k** your book that you have written." **33** But the Lord said to Moses, **l** "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book.
- p. Daniel
  - i. Taking an ownership

- ii. Daniel 9 **5 k** we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly **l** and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules...

q. Paul

- i. Desiring himself accursed for his own countrymen!
- ii. Rom. 9:1-3 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— **2** that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. **3** For **b** I could wish that I myself were **c** accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, [**1**] my kinsmen **d** according to the flesh.

r. Jesus

- i. Was cursed for us, He was the perfect substitute!

s. Our prayers for our communities

- i. We stand in the place of the sinners of our communities as though their sins were our own!

May this gospel-centered mindset renew or even ignite passion in our your providing, preaching, and praying for your community and the world