

Theme: The Church is God's Nation in the world today, comprised of believers from every earthly nation, scattered throughout every earthly nation, and with ultimate loyalty and affection reserved for God and His kingdom.

## I. Intro - Beginning, Middle, and End

- A. Sometimes it is hard to tell what a writing is really about
- B. Peter makes it easy - repeats same idea at key points
- C. This tells us how to read the whole letter
- D. Key theology for the Church in the world
- E. What is this key theological point? How does it apply for us today, especially in these contentious times?

## II. God's People Through Salvation

- A. We are God's people through salvation, not by birth  
Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance. 1 Pet 1:1-2

- 1. The Father chose, the Spirit sanctified, Jesus' blood
- 2. We are the people of God not by birth but by the saving work of the Trinity

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 1 Peter 2:9-10

- 3. Quoting from Ex. 19:5-6; Isaiah 43:21; Hosea 1&2
- 4. We are God's nation, priesthood, and people.
- 5. We were not God's people by birth, but have been made His people by mercy  
She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. <sup>14</sup>Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ. 1 Peter 5:13-14
- 6. Chosen together, in Christ - now the people of God
- 7. We are God's people, not by birth, but by rebirth through Jesus Christ.
- 8. God's covenant blessing of shalom (peace) is upon those in Christ - and only those in Christ by faith.
- 9. Anyone who is now in Christ by faith is part of the people of God, and anyone who is not in Christ by faith is NOT part of God's people.
- 10. God's nation, His Israel, finds its fulfillment in the Church - everyone who was chosen by the Father, sanctified by the Spirit and through faith is in Christ.

### B. The great divide - being 'in Christ'

- 1. Peter is writing to people of many different ethnicities, backgrounds, and social standings
- 2. The great divide is not about ethnicity, sex, wealth, or social status, but whether one is part of God's people through faith in Christ or not.
- 3. The most important thing about you is not your family background, your wealth, your sex, your ethnicity, your political party, or your social status, but whether or not you are in Christ by faith!

### III. God's Nation of Exiles

#### A. God's nation is scattered among all nations

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, **scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia...** 1 Peter 1:1

1. Scattered - literally 'the Diaspora'
2. The Diaspora of Jews outside Promised Land
3. These believers are mainly Gentiles, and they live in many lands, but they are now God's Nation, His chosen people.

But you are a **chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God**, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 1 Peter 2:9–10

- a. Quoting from Ex. 19:5-6; Isaiah 43:21; Hosea 1&2
- b. The Church, comprised of every ethnicity and spread in every nation, is now God's people, His nation!

#### 4. James uses the same language

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, **To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:** Greetings. James 1:1

- a. 'scattered among the nation' literally 'to the ones in the Diaspora'
- b. This is the same idea as Peter - the Church is now God's Diaspora, His people spread out among the nations

5. Originally God's people/nation was one nationality and lived in one land - Israel.
6. Because of the exile, God's people/nation was one nationality living in many lands.
7. In its New Covenant fulfillment, God's people/nation is composed of many nationalities, living in many lands - the Church.

#### B. God's people are now resident aliens in their own nations!

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, **strangers** in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, 1 Peter 1:1

Dear friends, I urge you, as **aliens** and **strangers** in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. 1 Peter 2:11

1. παρεπίδημος - resident alien; pilgrim; sojourner in a temporary land
2. When we became citizens of God's nation by rebirth, we became resident aliens, immigrants in our country of birth!
3. Peter also uses the word **πάροικος (paroikos) - aliens**. This is another word with basically the same meaning - resident alien, sojourner, one living in a country that is not their own.
4. The word **ξένος (xenos)** is also used for this same idea in texts like Ephesians 2:12, 19; Hebrews 11:13
5. The clear implication is that we can either be exiles and aliens from God's people, or we can be exiles and aliens from our own earthly country, but we can not really be at home in both!

### C. God's people live as exiles in Babylon

She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. <sup>1</sup> Peter 5:13

1. Peter is almost certainly using Babylon as a metaphor
  - a. Babylon had been destroyed, and Peter was never in that area
  - b. <sup>1</sup> Peter was probably written from Rome
2. She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you = church in Rome
3. This fits with the theme of being resident aliens, strangers, foreigners
4. The Church is God's Nation, living in exile in the Babylon of this world
5. Our relationship to our culture and government is NOT Israel in the promised land under her kings, but rather Israel in exile under the kings of Babylon.
6. This has huge implications on how we are to conduct ourselves in relation to our culture, including our governing authorities

## IV. Living As Exiles in Babylon

### A. We must not follow the cultures lead on morality

Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. <sup>1</sup> Peter 2:11–12

1. Sinful desires wage war against our soul - and they are aided by the culture of Babylon
2. We must not only resist the evil actions our culture promotes, but must also positively practice good actions, even serving our enemies
3. We should not be surprised that the culture around us will make false accusations about our beliefs, behavior, and motivations.
4. We live in a culture that murders unborn humans by the millions, promotes utter sexual confusion and depravity, and increasingly regards Christian beliefs and practices as hostile to humanity.
5. We should not be surprised by this - and we MUST not compromise, for the success of the Gospel depends on us living as God's exile people.

### B. We must live as faithful, good citizens of the nation of our exile

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. <sup>16</sup> Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. <sup>17</sup> Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. <sup>1</sup> Peter 2:13–17

1. We are called to live as exiles - not rebels!
2. We are to recognize and submit to our leaders
  - a. This was written while Nero was the king!
  - b. Whoever is elected Tuesday is your President, your speaker of the house, etc. - speak this and pray

c. Even if they order evil and we must not obey, our words and attitude must always be godly!

d. Think of Daniel and his friends in Babylon!

3. We are to pray respectfully for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-8) - early believers did this for Caesar's who were persecuting and killing them!

4. We are to be good neighbors and labor for the good of the land of our exile

Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.  
Jeremiah 29:7

a. Jeremiah told them to settle down and live out their faith in their families

b. They need to pray for Babylon - they will only experience shalom (prosper) if Babylon does.

c. In our context this includes praying, voting, and perhaps further political involvement for the good of the land of our exile.

5. Two kingdoms theology & a 'Christian Nation' (AfterHours)

C. We must remember our ultimate citizenship and loyalty are in heaven, not the USA

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ... Philipp. 3:20

1. The Philippians were very proud that they were a Roman colony and had Roman citizenship

2. Paul reminds them their ultimate citizenship is now heaven - because ultimately Rome is Babylon!

3. Our deepest concern in our prayers, actions, and interactions with others must always be that the Gospel would prosper.

4. Our identity is followers of Jesus Christ - not American or nationality, not Republican or Democrat, or anything else - Christian!

## V. Applying the Word

A. Prayer for our country

B. The Lord's Table - The Feast For God's Nation of Exiles

### The Church - God's Nation of Exiles

1 Peter 1:1-2; 2:9-12; 5:13-14

November 1, 2020

Communion

Genesis 12:2-3

Teaching keywords: Church; two kingdoms; citizenship; exile and return

I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. Gen 12:2-3

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance. <sup>1</sup>  
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