



DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

SERIES: 1 PETER • LIVING GOD'S GRACE •

1 PETER 1:1-12 • 2/11/2024

MAIN POINT

By God's design, we are strangers in this world. When we embrace what it means to live out of place, we live according to the life God has called us to.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever traveled to a place where you did not speak the native language? If so, where?

What was your experience like as you tried to do basic things, such as order food or find a desired destination?

As we'll see in our passage, the Bible speaks of Christians as strangers or foreigners in this world. What is one tension you have experienced lately living as a Christian in this world?

Traveling abroad has a way of upsetting our sense of equilibrium. Time zones change. The language is different. Currency must be exchanged. Basic tasks we do every day at home are foreign and more complicated. We lose our sense of what it means to be at home.

As Christians, we should feel this way all the time. Our true citizenship is in heaven. We are strangers in a strange land. Peter called us strangers and temporary residents (1 Pet. 2:11). John warned about love of the world (1 John 2:15). Paul was deserted by Demas who “loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:9). The teaching of the New Testament is clear—we must be careful to see the world as a place we are traveling through, not one we are at home in. Our true citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20).

UNDERSTANDING

READ 1 PETER 1:1–2.

What do you know about Peter from the Gospels and the Book of Acts? What was Peter like? What made him worthy to be an apostle?

Peter’s unique experiences, failures, triumphs, and suffering as a follower of Christ equipped him to speak timely words of encouragement to Christians in Asia Minor who were living under the threat of increased persecution. More important than his past experiences, Peter had been chosen by God to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, which gave him authority to deliver God’s truth.

How did Peter describe the members of the churches from various communities in Asia Minor in verse 1? Why do you think he described them this way?

Do you think of yourself as a “temporary resident” (v. 1)? Why or why not? How might your perspective and priorities need to change for you to begin seeing yourself this way?

Christians in this world are strangers in a strange land. We have been chosen by God to live as foreigners in this life. We are not our own—He has picked us and set us apart for His holy purposes. We are exiles—we do not ultimately belong to this world, nor do we “fit” in it. We live in a world that is corrupted by sin, a world that increasingly does not understand us, yet God has appointed us to live in this world as strangers for His glory.

READ 1 PETER 1:3–9.

What does it mean to have received a living hope, and how did Jesus’ resurrection deliver it to us? How should we live now in light of this hope?

Everyone who believes in Jesus as the resurrected Lord and Savior is born again. This faith secures for us an eternal and unshakable future hope and confirms our purpose in the present. Because of what Christ has done for us, we are free from living for the pleasures of the moment and can focus our lives on glorifying God by advancing Christ’s kingdom. Unlike those around us, our lives are now dependent upon what we receive from Christ rather than on what we receive from the world.

How does our new birth enable to us to live in any circumstance with joy and hope?

How can we rejoice in the midst of various trials? What would Peter have us focus on in the midst of suffering?

Peter referred to his readers as “temporary residents” and “strangers” (1:1; 2:11). They were looked down upon by others in society and were constantly pressured to compromise their faith. In the midst of difficulties, Peter called upon his readers to

rejoice in the salvation that was theirs in Christ, a salvation that entailed an “imperishable” and “undefiled” inheritance. Suffering would produce two results. First, it would demonstrate the genuineness of these believers’ faith. Secondly, persecution would result in praise, glory, and honor. God will crown His people who are faithful through persecution with all the honor heaven can bestow.

READ 1 PETER 1:10-12.

What do we know about the salvation Peter spoke of in verse 10 (see vv. 3-9)?

What did Peter say these prophets searched and inquired carefully for? Why do you think Christians in Asia Minor needed this reminder? Why do we need this reminder?

How does our devotion to God’s Word make us seem strange to the culture we live in?

Living as a stranger is rooted in a trust in God’s Word, which perhaps is the quality that makes us the most strange. The focus of the prophecies of the Old Testament was the “grace” that is ours in Christ. The fact that the prophets were indwelt with the Spirit of Christ as they foretold the coming, suffering, and glory of Christ tells us something very important about the Old Testament and the Bible as a whole: All of Scripture tells one unified story of salvation by grace through faith in Christ. The Old Testament constantly points us forward to the coming Messiah who would forgive, cleanse, and restore sinners to a right relationship with God. The New Testament demonstrates how Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of these promises.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Do you live as a stranger in this world, or as someone who is far too comfortable? How should your relationship with the world change if it truly isn't your home?

How can we keep one another focused on what is most important in this regard?

How does feeling strange and out of place drive us to our mission?

PRAYER

Praise God for redeeming you through His Son. Pray that we would be faithful to God's calling as we live as strangers in a strange land. Ask that God would protect you from being too comfortable in this world through your increasing dependence on His Word.

COMMENTARY

1 PETER 1:1-12

1:1-2 Peter identified himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. The apostles were Christ's divinely ordained, directly commissioned, authoritative representatives in the early church. The recipients to whom Peter wrote were the temporary residents dispersed. The term "temporary residents" (v. 1; 2:11) refers to people living in a region that is

not their permanent place of residence—in this case, the five Roman provinces located in what is now modern Turkey. Heaven is the true home of believers. The “Dispersion” means a “scattering” and usually refers to God’s people scattered outside of their homeland. Divine foreknowledge is the basis on which a believer is chosen (i.e., “elect”). It is more than just God’s prior knowledge of everything; it also includes His predetermination. Set apart by the Spirit is the means by which being “chosen” is made a reality. The phrase for obedience and for sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ describes the aim and purpose of election (Ex 24:3-8). Christians were chosen by God to have a covenant relationship with Him that is characterized by obedience; Christ’s blood brings believers into this relationship.

1:3-12 This section begins with praise to God for the privileges He has bestowed on believers. Peter encouraged his readers by reminding them that through the resurrection of Christ, God had caused them to be born again. The result of this new birth is that they have acquired an eternal inheritance reserved in heaven. Believers will be delivered to heaven, their eternal home, through their faith in the gospel.

1:3-5 Peter informed his readers that God rebirthed them to an inheritance that will never perish, be defiled, or fade—indeed a sure salvation.

1:6-9 Peter further encouraged his readers with the fact that Christians can rejoice in this imperishable inheritance and sure salvation, though they are tested by persecution and suffering while in this world.

1:10-12 The OT people of God did not specifically know Christ or the gospel, but they did believe the promises of God that pointed to Christ (Heb 11:13). Peter conveyed to his readers that the good news of salvation that the prophets sought and looked forward to had now been revealed. Salvation in Christ is so great and the blessings so tremendous that angels desire to look into these things. The gospel excites their interest so much that they want to study it intently.