

right where He wants us

The People of God in Times Like These

Living as exiles

... you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as **sojourners and exiles** to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

¹³ Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

1 Peter 2:9-17

God's people have always been — and are now — living in a permanent state of "in between." The prophet Jeremiah gives us the essence of living faithfully in this state: "To seek the shalom of the city where I have sent you into exile" (Jer. 29:4-7). In City of God, Augustine builds on this exilic theology. His metaphor of the city of God and the city of man with their different loves and orientations is the archetypal expression of the tension and anxiety that characterizes our "in between" existence...

Being in "exile" means that God's people live somewhere other than their true home. For example, God's people were in "exile" when they were banished from the Garden, lived as slaves in Egypt, and were carted off to Babylon. Similarly, after the resurrection of Christ, God's people were scattered throughout the world to live as "sojourners and exiles" (1 Pet. 2:11). So, too, for Christians today.

- Stephen Grabill

The Scriptures call on all Christians everywhere to be "strangers and exiles" in whatever culture we inhabit. This doesn't mean a lack of engagement. Exile didn't mean that for Old Testament Israel (see Joseph in Egypt or Daniel in Babylon, for parts of their sojourns there). And it certainly doesn't mean that for the church. Right after speaking of the church as exiles, Peter instructs the church on how to act among the Gentiles, how to respond to human institutions, including political institutions (1 Pet. 2:12-17).

The kind of exiles we are to be is not a bitter, resentful people, harkening back to better days, when we had more power and influence. We are to be instead those who know that the culture around us, whatever culture that is, is temporary. We are to pattern our lives not after nostalgia for the past but hope for the future. This means a discontent. We pray for the kingdom to come (Matt. 6:10). We groan with the creation around us for the end of the wreckage of the curse (Rom. 8:23).

- Russell Moore

Exile noun

1: the state or a period of forced absence from one's country or home ...

2: a person who is in exile

We are not in exile because we moved to a different country – or even because our country moved underneath us.

We are exiles because we were moved out of _____ into _____ (Colossians 1:13, 1 John 3:14).

To **live as exiles** means (at least):

We know and embrace our _____.

This identity transcends _____, _____, _____.

This identity grants _____, _____, _____.

The Bible calls us " _____ " and " _____ ".

As "sojourners" ...

We know and engage in our _____:

To proclaim his " _____ "

To _____ with _____

We live with _____:

Fight _____

Do _____

Serve _____

Respect _____

Agape' _____

Revere _____

Respect _____

9 practical, real-life implications for modern-day exiles:

- 1) Be _____ that we have a sure and certain _____ to come. (Philippians 3:20, Hebrews 13:14)
- 2) Be _____ that the _____ is _____ and will _____, even in a _____ . (Luke 12:32, Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 3:1-13)
- 3) Exert whatever _____ we can for the _____ . (Jeremiah 29:4-7)
- 4) Expect to be in the _____ and _____ . (1 John 5:19)
- 5) Knowing the _____ condition of culture and the _____ cause of our cultural decline, _____ . (1 Tim 1:15)
- 6) Be _____ to be _____ for _____ to _____ (and _____). (Matthew 5:11-12)
- 7) Set our minds and hearts to _____ to the end. (Mark 13:13)
- 8) Submit to _____ (until you _____). (Romans 13:1-7, Acts 5:29)
- 9) Be _____ far over every other loyalty. (Revelation 19:13, 16)

Next messages:

*right where He wants us – **Standing and Suffering***