

Invitation song: 230

## **This World Is Not My Home**

Heb. 11:13-16

Introduction:

1. Many people see the Bible as predicting future events.
2. It is not uncommon to hear someone making observations about current world events and associating them with what they consider the coming of the end of the world. I do not agree with most of these perspectives.
3. But the Bible does relate to real life and it is designed to give us a unique perspective on life.
4. It is about that unique perspective that I want us to think for a few moments. What is this unique perspective and what effect should it have on me?

Discussion:

- I. **Our fathers** had a unique perspective as evidenced in Heb. 11:13-16.
  - A. They recognized that God had predicted future events that went far beyond their own lifespan.
  - B. Abraham and Sarah were promised numerous descendants and those descendants were promised a land (Gen. 12:1).
    1. So Abraham left Ur of the Chaldeans and journeyed to the land of Canaan.
    2. God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants (Gen. 28:13).
    3. And He did. Joshua distributed the land to them and said, "You know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the Lord your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled, not one of them has failed" (23:14).
  - C. Yet this passage in Heb. 11 says that they confessed they were strangers and exiles on the earth.
    1. "But I thought God had promised them the land of Canaan and they have received it. How can they be expecting more?"
    2. "What does it mean they died without receiving the promises?"
    3. They had been promised more than the land of Canaan and they trusted God not only to give them the land of Canaan, but a better country, a heavenly one.
    4. Now that is a unique perspective. Not only are they trusting in the promises of God relative to the land of Canaan, but they are trusting in the promise of God to grant them a heavenly country.
    5. There are many people that are expecting a massive return to Canaan by the people of God some day. But our forefathers were looking past the things of this life and so considered themselves mere strangers and exiles on the earth.
- II. Those who do not have a perspective enlightened by the revelation of God focus on the things of this life alone. They cannot see what God has promised.
  - A. Peter described their pursuit (1 Pet. 4:1-4). So their lack of perspective affects their lives

in a radical way.

- B. Paul described them as in darkness (1 Thess. 5:1-5).
- C. Jesus indicated that those in His kingdom look beyond the things of this life (Matt. 6:19-33).
- D. Without the enlightenment of God our perspective is limited by the experiences of this life.

III. Those enlightened by the revelation of God have a more extensive view and thus see things differently.

- A. The Bible reveals an extensive past and future.
- B. It places our existence within an extensive historical, meaningful and purposeful context.
  - 1. When I referred to Abraham and his descendants as “**our fathers**” I meant to imply by that that we are part of an extensive heritage.
  - 2. We cannot know that heritage without the revelation of God. We are so distant from the past that our knowledge is very limited, except through what God tells us.
  - 3. He shows us things about our lineage that we could not know otherwise.
  - 4. He shows us the connections that we have with past generations and connects history together in one grand story moving toward a purposeful end.

IV. Those enlightened by the revelation of God see themselves as strangers and exiles on the earth (Heb. 11:13).

- A. The O.T. uses the word “sojourner” (Gen. 26:3) to describe them. “Alien” is a similar term. The idea is that they are not permanent residents, but just those passing through.
- B. As a result these live their lives on this earth with a view to “a better country,” a final destination.
  - 1. They have never been to the destination before.
  - 2. But they have heard about it and God has promised it. They are waiting for His return to take them there.
- C. Therefore their focus is not on the things of this life, but on the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:25-33).
  - 1. They do not pursue a course of sensuality (1 Pet. 4:1-4).
  - 2. They pursue a course of life characterized by soberness, faith and hope of living together with the Lord (1 Thess. 5:8-10).
  - 3. They endure what they must in this life in order to receive the rewards promised by God (Heb. 11:24-26). This is the faith of Heb. 10:32-12:13. It is a faith of endurance. These people do not let the tragedies and traumatic events of this life become their life. Yes, they are tragic, but these see these tragedies in light of a bigger picture. Illustration of runner whose heel was clipped by the steel cleats of a competitor during the race. His heel was barely hanging on his foot, but he continued to run. “Let us lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with enduring the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1). Jesus endured the cross! The reward of finishing this race must be

worth whatever effort we have to put forth.

D. Those enlightened by the revelation of God live recognizing that “the present form of this world is passing away” (1 Cor. 7:29-31).

1. Everyone seems to be concerned about how much time we have left before the end of the world.
2. Paul is not concerned about the duration of the time . . . but the character of the time. He is talking not about how little time is left but about how Christians should look at the time that is left.
3. Yes, there are questions about marriage and the Corinthians had a few of them. Paul tried to answer their questions, but called to their realization that there is a bigger picture.
4. It is easy for us to get caught up in the affairs of this life—making a living, family life, physical health, death, tragic events that happen to us, but Scripture reminds us—there is more than this life. Don’t let the events of this life distract you from what is really important. And I do not mean to say that what we experience in this life is nothing. Tragedies, suffering, death are traumatic. BUT the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory to follow (Rom. 8:18).

Conclusion:

1. Albert E. Brumley wrote, “This world is not my home, I’m just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue; the angels beckon me from heaven’s open door, and I can’t feel at home in this world anymore.”
2. Is this your sentiment? Is it where you stand?