

Section: Doctrine of Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Lesson 80 <> Q99

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q99. What are the main identities the Bible gives to the saved?**

Our main identities are adopted children, loved slaves, and citizens of the kingdom of God.

God moves the saved person from enemy to adopted child, from slave to sin to slave to God, and from alienated to citizen of the kingdom of God.

**Greeting:**

Intro to Midweek for New Folks joining us in the New Year..

Tonight we will study Question 99 in your WOTC but before we get to that let me set the table a little by asking you a few questions and sharing some observations.

**Intro:**

**What determines your identity?**

**Do you really know who you are?**

**What makes you who you are?**

**How important is your identity in the grand scheme of things?**

We live in a post-modern culture where many people seem to be suffering from some form of **Identity Crisis.**

**()**People who once felt a great sense of identity from their family legacy and traditions find those seldom exist today

**()** People who once felt a great sense of identity from their career seldom hold jobs for long seasons anymore and are constantly stressing on what downsizing or a bad economy might mean for their livelihood.

**()** More and more people are struggling in thinking sinfully in terms of sexual identity

**()** More and more people are able to buy their way into different social circles by the things they wear, the things they can do to their bodies, and the cars they drive and are losing themselves in the process.

**()** One could argue that the Church universal has never been so widely fractured with different doctrines and priorities being taught.

() Most importantly, what does the Bible say about our identity as Christians? This is the emphasis of tonight’s catechism question and as you can see it is an important topic so that we are rightly grounded in all that God says we are in Christ!!

To get us going tonight, I want to share a testimony that goes like this:

“I am a Christian.” The young man said nothing else as he stood before the Roman governor, his life hanging in the balance. His accusers pressed him again, hoping to trip him up or force him to recant. But once more he answered with the same short phrase: “I am a Christian.”

It was the middle of the second century, during the reign of emperor Marcus Aurelius. Christianity was illegal, and believers throughout the Roman Empire faced the threat of imprisonment, torture, or death. Persecution was especially intense in southern Europe, where Sanctus, a deacon from Vienna, had been arrested and brought to trial. The young man was repeatedly told to renounce the faith he professed. But his resolve was undeterred. “I am a Christian.”

No matter what question he was asked, he always gave the same unchanging answer. When at last it became obvious that he would say nothing else, he was condemned to severe torture and a public death in the amphitheater. On the day of his execution, he was forced to run the gauntlet, subjected to wild beasts, and fastened to a chair of burning iron. Throughout all of it, his accusers kept trying to break him, convinced that his resistance would crack under the pain of torment. Eusebius (the ancient church historian)] recounted, “Even thus they did not hear a word from Sanctus except the confession which he had uttered from the beginning.” His dying words told of an undying commitment. His rallying cry remained constant throughout his entire trial. “I am a Christian.”

For Sanctus, his whole identity – including his name, citizenship, and social status – was found in Jesus Christ. Hence, no better answer could have been given to the questions he was asked. He was a Christian, and that designation defined everything about him.

Church, we should have a strong understanding of who we are in Christ, and that understanding should shape our lives much more than anything else. I pray that tonight’s study is not a casual consideration but potentially a significant transformation that affects your entire life. What does it mean to be a Christian?

Let’s read tonight’s Q and A.

**Q99. What are the main identities the Bible gives to the saved?**

Our main identities are adopted children, loved slaves, and citizens of the kingdom of God.

God moves the saved person from enemy to adopted child, from slave to sin to slave to God, and from alienated to citizen of the kingdom of God.

Look with me at…

**Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death,

but the gift of God is eternal life inChrist Jesus our Lord.

There is a most significant identity shift happens to us when we are saved.

We go from death to life. From outcast to family.

**Colossians 1:13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

There is a transformation that Paul is talking about here -- a change in our core identity -- that Christ has come to rescue us from death and redeem us to life!

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**We must see rightly that it is not because of anything you and I have done. You cannot rescue yourself. Someone else has to do it—God has to do it. This is the good news. We have been rescued. We have been redeemed. We have been adopted.**

**1. Adopted Children:**

**We were members of one family and now we are members of a new family.**

Adoption is not just something some of our families are participating in with kids who needed help and love and a new home. Adoption is at the heart of the gospel!

Realize, God did not have to use the concept of adoption to explain how he saved us, or even how we become part of His family. He could have stayed with the language of new birth so that all His children were described as children by nature only.

**John 1:12-13** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were *born*, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

But He chose to speak of us as *adopted* as well as being children by new *birth*. This is the most essential foundation of the practice of adoption.

**Galatians 4:4-5** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

*To redeem* means to obtain or to set free by paying a price. What was the price that God paid for our liberation and adoption? In the previous chapter of Galatians, we hear the answer:

“Christ *redeemed* us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’” (Galatians 3:13).

People pay a lot of money and go through years of waiting and work to adopt a child today.

The price Jesus paid for us is greater than we imagine. I pray you see the depth of God’s love in your adoption in the price He paid!

If you ever felt unimportant, unloved, unwanted... You should never feel this way now that you are in Christ if you understand the specific choosing and extent of payment that was made to make you forever a part of His beloved family.

This also highlights the legal realities God had to deal with to adopt us. His own perfect justice and law demanded that we be punished and excluded from His presence for our sins. Righteousness was required and punishment demanded. God had to satisfy His justice and His law in order to adopt sinners into His family. This He did by the life, death, and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ.

Praise God.

**Ephesians 1:4-5** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will

Adoption in God’s mind was not Plan B. He predestined us for adoption before the creation of the world. Plan A was not lots of children who never sin and never need to be redeemed. Plan A was creation, fall, redemption, adoption so that the full range of God’s glory and mercy and power could be known by His adopted children. Adoption was not second best; it was God’s perfect plan from the beginning.

**Ephesians 2:19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and **members of the household of God,**

As wonderful and life changing as official citizenship is for a refugee, (which we will come back to this later in our lesson), see with me that what is more personal, is the relationship one has when an orphan is adopted into a family that they can call their own.

**- To be a member of a family you must be born into it or adopted into it.**

What is great for those whom God has chosen to save; Both apply to us.

Since we were all born into spiritual slavery, dead in sin and bond to serve our father the devil.. it is truly good news to be told that we have been reborn by the Holy Spirit AND adopted by our eternal love father at the high cost of the blood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

In our lives, there is something uniquely precious about having children by birth. That is a good plan. There is also something different, but also uniquely precious, about adopting children. Each has its own uniqueness. A parent’s choice to adopt children may be sequentially second in your hopes or plans. But it does not have to be *secondary*. It can be as precious and significant as having children by birth. The world wants to downgrade the importance or “family-ness” of an adopted child.

In the economy of God, this is not the case. We are 100% His. Nothing less important or secondary about us.

Church, these truths must transform our thinking and mood and motivation for the days God gives us here on earth. I don’t want you to miss the potency of this reality. See the set-apartness of God so that we can fully appreciate the fact that he has drawn us near to be his **kids of grace!**

**Paul quotes Isa. 43:6 when he reminds the church of God’s promise in..**

**2 Cor 6:18** “I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty” **Church: God is our good good father!**

The truth of God’s adoption is good news to us because we who were once separated from God in our sin were formerly “children of wrath” as Paul defines us in Ephesians chapter 2.

But we have been adopted and made forever a part of God’s eternal family.

We have become “Children of God”.

This is what Paul is saying again and again. He wants us to fully under and embrace who we are in Christ and that we have become Children of God.

**Romans 8:16** The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Understand this is a formal thing. It is not a slang thing. Like, *Timmy is “like a son” to me.*

No, it is a formal change in who our family is. In who our father is!

**Church: Rejoice that in Christ we get to be God’s children!!!**

**Next our answer says God moves the saved person “from slave to sin to slave to God.”**

**2. Loved Slaves**

In addition to the name Christian, the Bible uses a host of other terms to name the followers of Jesus: beloved, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, the chosen, the church, disciples, the elect, friends, heirs, household of God, saints, sheep, sons of God, and more. All of these descriptions -- each in its own unique way -- help us to understand what it means to be a Christian.

But the New Testament uses one metaphor and title more frequently than any of these above. It is one you might not expect, but it is absolutely critical for understanding what it means to follow Jesus. **It is the title of a slave**.

Time and time again throughout the pages of Scripture, believers are referred to as slaves of God and slaves of Christ. In fact, whereas the outside world called them Christians, the earliest of believers repeatedly referred to themselves in the New Testament as the Lord's slaves. For them, the two ideas were synonymous. To be a Christian was to be a slave of Christ.

The New Testament understanding of the believer's relationship to Christ is that He is the Master and Owner and we are His possession. He is the King, the Lord, and the Son of God. We are His subjects and His subordinates. In a word, we are His slaves.

The gospel is not simply an invitation to become Christ's benefactor; it is a mandate to become His slave.

Now when you hear that Christians are slaves of Christ, we need to break into how we think about what a slave is.

**Not all slavery is the same:**

First, we need to know that slavery to God is far better and beyond any human “slave” relationship. We’ll get into that in a moment. Before we do, it is also helpful for us to know that human slavery was very different in different eras and cultures.

To give us insight, I want to highlight a few:

**1. Hebrew servanthood**

Hebrew servanthood was basically a provision for the Israelites who were so poor they could sell themselves into servanthood to provide for their families. For example:

**Leviticus 25:39-40** "If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you, you shall not make him serve as a slave: **40** he shall be with you as a **hired servant** and as a sojourner. He shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee.”

What we have here is a selling of oneself to the authority of another for God-honoring labor in order to provide for oneself or one’s family.

**2. Greco-Roman slavery**

To see this, we look to the New Testament era to see an entirely different culture and practice of slavery. Some estimated that as much as 1/3 of this culture in New Testament times lived as slaves. What this means is the way people engaged in slavery was linked to their profession as teachers, craftsmen, tradesman, laborers, etc. Even those who were slaves might have owned or managed slaves themselves. This was a very common practice and way for people to gain Roman citizenship or a foothold in Roman society. Not only was this humane, but for many of these people it was greatly helpful.

To see the third example, we have to fast-forward to the 18th century and British and American Colonialism to see…

**3. Indentured servitude**

Which is essentially a voluntary labor system where by people paid for their passage to the New World by working for an employer for a certain number of years.

Many of our American migrants came to this country this way from a variety of countries and cultures.

The employer purchased the indenturee from the sea captain who brought the people over by ship because he needed labor. People would then work for a fixed number of years, then be free to work on their own. Some worked as farmers or helpers for farm wives; some were apprenticed to craftsmen. Both sides were legally obligated to meet the terms, which were enforced by local American courts.

Finally, we get to what most of us think of when we think of slavery, because it is most recent and most offensive which is….

**4. The African slave trade**

In the 17th, 18th and 19th century, millions of Africans were stolen or manipulated to be sold into slavery in British and American cultures through cruel, inhumane conditions that caused many to not even survive the trip. Upon being sold into slavery, they were subjected to harsh working and living conditions by which unspeakable atrocities meant death, rape, abuse, disfigurement, starvation, exhaustion and more. Sin in very strong form would cause stone-cold, ruthless hearts of men to prey on God’s created human race.

So, even in the many passages on human servanthood and human slavery that you read all throughout the Scriptures, you must remember the varying types and situations those masters and slaves are in. Which means the instruction to these different situations is varying and unique.

Now, as to the Bible identifying Christians as slaves, we need some facts.

The word for slave we see used throughout the English Bible text we read from is the Greek word “doulos.” This is a primary title the Bible gives to Christians: doulo= slaves. The word doulos is used 124 times in the original Bible text.

But often times it is unfortunately translated into English as the word “servant.” This shouldn’t be the case.

What is off is doulos is not a primary Greek word for servant; rather, there are many words in Greek more specific for the word servant.

While both servant and salve indicate service-hood, the difference between the two words is big in that servants are hired workers, but salves are owned by their master.

So we can see why God inspired the title of duolos/slave to be so common; we are servants, but we are more than that: we are slaves, His slaves. He owns us; our lives are for Him.

**We need to embrace that a life of submission is much of what a godly life and the Christian life is about at its core.**

*True Christianity is not about adding Jesus to my life. Instead, it is about devoting myself completely to Him — submitting wholly to His will and seeking to please Him above all else. It demands dying to self and following the Master, no matter what the cost. In other words, to be a Christian is to be Christ’s slave.* -*John MacArthur, Slave, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010) 22.*

**Philippians 2:6-8** (Jesus) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Again the word for servant here is *“doulos,”* which means a slave.

**Christ became our Savior by becoming a slave.**  Jesus said to His disciples in **Mark 10:45,** “*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* Jesus came to serve us and sacrifice Himself. To pay for our freedom, our ransom.

**I love how Pastor David Platt says this:** “He took on a robe of human flesh and took all of your sinful filth, guilt and shame upon Himself. He went to the cross, and He paid the price. He stood in your place as your servant, so that you could be redeemed. This word ‘redeemed’ is a picture of slavery. When we talk about redemption, redemption is to buy something, to pay a redemption price.”

The truth is: Before Christ as Savior and Lord, you and I were slaves to sin.

We were in *“the snare of the devil.”* **We were in his grasp, and Christ our God came, and He set us free from the bondage of sin. This is the good news; we are empowered to honor God in righteousness in the Holy Spirit.**

**Romans 6:17-18** But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

Before we are given saving faith, we are enslaved to sin and we will choose to sin, because it is all we know; it is all our nature is inclined to.

After we are given saving faith, we are enslaved to Christ, and we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to grow in obedience to God and fight sin. The key is: **We are no longer enslaved to sin in Christ. Look at Romans 6:18 again! We “have become SLAVES of righteousness!” Slaves of Jesus Christ, the righteous One!**

He paid the price with His life, with His death on the cross, with His resurrection from the grave, so that you could be set free from sin and become a son, a daughter of God—a LOVED slave. **That’s THE good news!** 🡪 **Our Master humbled Himself!**

Now watch this: Our Master humbled Himself, so in Christ, we ***gladly*** become His slave.

Paul got this, Peter got this, and so must we**! It is our utter joy to be mastered by Jesus our LORD.**

**Romans 1:6** says basically that: THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY is “to **BELONG** to Jesus!”

We belong to Him! For His Glory!

**1 Cor. 6:19-20** You do not **belong** to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your life. (NLT)

This means my money is Jesus’ money, my time is Jesus’ time, my days are Jesus’ days, my body is Jesus’ body! My whole life -- everything about me -- is owned by and under the Lordship of Jesus!

**Let me illustrate with this:**

If Noah decides to make me a card or buy me a gift, whose money does he spend?

Whose stationary and pen did he use? Whose paycheck did he cash to buy that thing?

His Mom and Dad’s!

**Do you see that all you are… all you have... is God’s?**

My kids are God’s kids; my House is God’s house; my days are God’s days.

**And when we really begin to get this, we begin to understand the amazing undeniable privilege it is to BE HIS and it changes how we manage our time, our talent and our treasures… everything. We begin to understand why it is a great thing to be slaves of Jesus.**

It helps me begin to realize I am not building my Kingdom; I am building His Kingdom for His GLORY!

Now, you will notice that our catechism answer says we are **loved** slaves.

This is where you have to unplug from your old ALL NEGATIVE view of what it means to belong to another and see that if the other is Christ, there is no greater position in life we could be in. We want to be His possession, His people, His slaves.

You must see that while He owns us and all of our lives are for Him and His glory, this is the opposite of being owned by sin and death and addiction and anything else.

We are loved. We have been fought for and bled for and the pages of history are about our rescue by God.

Listen to Peter’s words in 1 Peter 2:

**1 Peter 2:9-10** But 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. **10**Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

We are His people. A people of His own possession. As His slaves, we are forever in the loving care of the loving King.

Church! This is a greatest privilege in this life.

Now, one last emphasis on the life we are to live as slaves, and we find it in the next few verses.

Being a joyful slave is possible because God is the loving master! A slave lives his/her life for the master. The master’s purposes have become the slave’s purposes. The master’s desires have become the slave’s desires. The master’s plans have become the slave’s plans. This is a key part of our growth and maturity in Christ. Are you more and more in love with the ways and commands of God and less and less interested in driving your own life by your own desires? It becomes our joy to totally submit to God as Master! Is this your view of who He is and who we are in response? This submission spills over into the way He commands us to be submissive in our exile time on earth too. Look:

**I Peter 2:13-15** Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution**,** whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.

**We are to be submissive exiles in this time:**

Be subject = Submit yourself!

The simple call here is to submit ourselves to the governments and authorities above us, as they are ultimately all appointed and instituted by God for God’s purposes.

**The problem is today’s culture says, “Any form of submissiveness is a compromise of one’s self-worth.”**

**The belief is: if I submit to others, I will not be as happy, or I will be taken advantage of, or I will be of lesser value.**

Here is the problem with this ignorant point of view!

**In Jesus time on earth, we see time after time that He showed great deference and joyful submission to God the Father. John 6:38** For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

So, We are to be submissive exiles in this time...

We see this in Jesus also as he submits to his parents as a child in Luke 2:51.

We see that those who are ruled by their sin do not submit to God’s law in Romans 8:7.

We see that the church is to submit to Christ just as a bride is to submit to her husband Ephesians 5:24.

We see we are to submit ourselves to God in James 4:7.

We see the command to obey and submit to our pastoral elders in Hebrews 13:17.

And just like Peter teaching here, we see elsewhere a call to submit to our government’s authority.

**Romans 13:1** Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

**Titus 3:1** Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work

**The New Testament calls for submission to be a marker of our exile ministry.** There is a temperament in submission that is not sinful or prideful that stands out from the crowd of sin-shackled sinners. This is so that our exile ministry is purposeful.

**This is God’s will for our lives because He uses it to “put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.”**

**1 Peter 2:15** For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.

Look at how we are to live free within our slavery and service to Christ:

**1 Peter 2:16-20 Live as people who are free**, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but **living as servants of God.** 17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. 18 **Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect**, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. 19 For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a **gracious** thing in the sight of God.

It is the same for our submission to God.

Your humble submission is a major marker of your life with and devotion to God.

To claim that He is Lord of your life but to not see that in this you die to yourself and are not a slave of Christ is to miss out on what it really means to be a Christian. A Christ follower and slave of Christ.

Christian, this is a to be a sweet part of our salvation. That it is sweet to live for and honor and obey our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why the catechism answer is the way it is …

**Church, we are to be joyful slaves.**

**We are set free so that we can be slaves of God.**

Yes, you just heard me right. Peter says, “Live as free people, living as servants of God.”

**How is a slave free?**

We are free from the eternal bondage of our former slavery to sin and our sentence of death. And we are free from having to earn our right standing with God—as that’s not even possible.

But we are never free in an ultimate sense, meaning apart from rule and apart from rulers. God created man to be under rule and under certain kinds of leadership.

It is the sin of man to ever think that we are free from any kind of rule or authority.

**In these things, ultimatly, we are ruled by sin or we are ruled by God.**

The difference is: it is life to be a servant of God. It is joy to be a loved slave of God.

There is no higher or greater role we could ever play.

So **how does this look in our daily lives?**

**We are instructed by God to do everything unto Him.**

Let me ask you: **Do you truly wake up each day and do everything before you that day in alignment with the commands of and UNTO THE LORD?**

**Christians, we are to wake up every day and begin our duties properly and bring our very best, because we represent Jesus! This is not something we get to just shirk. This is His purpose for us in this time and place!**  Let me show why:

**1 Peter 2:21**b because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps

**What is the example Jesus has given us?** **To live honorable, submissive slave lives!**

The gospel is not just about setting you free; it is bigger than that. It is about empowering you to live your entire life for HIS GLORY forever. **To PROCLAIM THE EXCELLENCIES of GOD!**

When Paul was looking for a word to describe himself at the beginning of Romans 1, what does he say? ***“****Paul, a servant (Doulos, a SLAVE) of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God.”*

He proudly says, “I belong to another. I am under the authority of another. I work for another. I live for the glory of another.” This is what it means to be a Christian. Church, **we must get this!**

**Finally, our answer says that at salvation, Christians were moved “from alienated to citizen of the kingdom of God.” Let’s explore this briefly.**

**3. Citizens of the Kingdom of God**

A citizen is a person who legally belongs to a country or kingdom and has the rights and protection of that country/kingdom. Citizens adopt the culture and practices of the nation or kingdom to which they belong.

Because of the fall, every human being is born into the kingdom of this world, in which Satan rules in a sense (2 Corinthians 4:4). Consequently, we grow up adopting the culture, practices, and values that he instigates.

The sad reality is Satan’s kingdom enslaves its citizens (Romans 6:16) with darkened hearts and minds, and we blindly follow our leader into the very sins that pull us deeper into sinful slavery. We remain captives in this kingdom of sin, headed for destruction, unless Jesus frees us (Ephesians 2:1–4).

When we are born again by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:3), we are born into the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Matthew 3:2** “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

**Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Speaking of those who have had that spiritual rebirth, Philippians 3:20 says, “Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

We consider ourselves ambassadors to this earth until our Father sends for us and we go home

Look at:

**Ephesians 2:11-22** Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— **12**remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. **13**But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14**For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility **15**by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, **16**and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. **17**And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. **18**For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. **19So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,** **20**built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, **21**in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22**In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by***e*** the Spirit.

Paul makes it clear that those in Christ are no longer enemies of Christ but His own possession, bought with a high price and adopted into His family. This means we are now Kingdom citizens. Christ is our King. We are eternally secure in His family and within His courts forever.

This has been His plan from the beginning: **Matthew 25:34** "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, **the kingdom prepared for you *since the creation of the world*.’”**

But for a short while we are on assignment in this temporary kingdom.

I have found it helpful to think of it like this:

 **We are citizens of God’s eternal city while residents in the world’s temporal city.**

**So we are living in this temporary kingdom but also members of Christ’s kingdom.**

**Where is Christ’s kingdom?** Anywhere Christ is KING!

What this means for us is that we will never be satisfied in our temporary residence.

**Hebrews 13:14**For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

Any city -- no matter its location, political position, financial status, or weather patterns -- will never be satisfying to citizens of God’s city. **Why?** Because we know deep down our home is not here; we are sojourners.

Look at the previous verse:

**Hebrews 13:13** Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.

Let us, like Christ, go outside our camp and willingly ENDURE the apposition He faced.

In this we must understand that:

🡪**Kingdom Living** is not about streets of gold; it is all about a relationship with the KING. **When that is right, I am willing to do anything... go through anything! This is the heart of a slave for JESUS!**

The godliest **saints** of every era have discovered **no contradiction in saying**, on the one hand,

"We are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered" (**Romans 8:36**),

and on the other hand, the same people are singing,

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I will say, rejoice" (**Philippians 4:4).**

**1 Corinthians 7:29-31**

This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, **30**and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, **31**and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

We’re not here fully. We have a foot in heaven and a foot on the earth.

As Matt said in a past lesson, “What remains for the elect is entrance into the *consummated* covenant blessings—the full rewards of Christ’s kingdom.

That will not fully occur until every last person chosen for Christ has been gathered in by God through the means of the preaching of the gospel to all nations. In this, we get to relish in the proclaiming of the good news *and look forward to what is ahead.*

Amazing, beyond comprehension blessing is ahead for those in the New Covenant.

Christians, our King is coming back for us—to bring about the consummation, look:

**Hebrews 9:28** says:

**…Christ,** having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **will appear a second time**, not to deal with sin but **to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.**

Christ is returning one day. ”

Until then, we are citizens of two kingdoms. This is not our main home. This world is passing away; we know this system is disappearing. This means there is *a kind of engagement in this kingdom that is not all-consuming. There is a kind of engaging in the things of the temporary that is not investing our whole selves in it because we are not here fully. \*expand*

*I will close with this: We need to be oh so thankful for the fact that we are Kingdom citizens.*

*That Christ is our King. May it allow us to walk in confidence through all the hardship we face in the temporary. May it cause us to honor Him in all we do, knowing that we will one day enjoy Him forever free from any sin or suffering.*

**John 18:33-39** Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, **"Are you the king of the Jews?"**  **34**"Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" **35**"Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?" **36**Jesus said, **"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."** **37**"You are a king, then!" said Pilate.  Jesus answered, **"You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."**

Let’s Pray