

The Power of Promises

- *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. Heb 11:13-15*

Are We Like Them?

- *having seen them afar off*
- First time we hear God's amazing promises it seems so far away: "*too good to be true*"
- *were assured of them,*
- Over time, our faith grows into assurance:
- There is a God - heavens declare & things made
- Scriptures are Inspired – accuracy, prophesy consistency
- Jesus is God's Son – Miracles, Prophecy, Eye witness testimony.
- As our convictions grow so does assurance!

Are We Like Them?

- **embraced them** *welcomed, greeted, (embrace, kiss, offer the hand, wish well)*
- These “*strange*” promises were joyfully brought near as friends and guests.
- **confessed** *(to speak the same as ...)* God said it... Now I say it too!
- ***I am a stranger and pilgrim (exile on earth)***
- When God’s promises reach their strongest power in our hearts and over our lives, this is what we will confess too!

Strangers, Sojourners & Pilgrims

- *This world is not my home*
 - *I'm just 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 (#230)*

Do We Feel like a Stranger & Pilgrim?

- This is the dividing line between those who see God's promises as "afar off" and those who have become assured of and embraced.
- Those who confess they are strangers and pilgrims are making a declaration!
- ***For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.** Heb 11:14-15*
- I don't belong here. I want to be with God in the wonderful place He has promised.

The Tension of Extremes

- The country (nation) we left and the country we entered when we obeyed the gospel.
- *15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. Heb 11:*
- We are pulled in both directions. The flesh wants to go back and the spirit wants to press on for the upward call.
- Where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

Shame in the Opportunity to Return

- *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. Heb 10:35-39*

God's Shame and Pleasure

- Those who are strangers and pilgrims have reached the pinnacle of where faith should carry us. WE WILL NEVER GO BACK!!!
- *But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.* Heb 11:16
- If we confess we are strangers and Pilgrims:
- God is not ashamed to be called our God
- God has prepared a city for us.

Are We Strangers & Pilgrims

- *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion 1Pet 1:1*
- *And if you call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judges according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear: 1 Pet 1:17*
- *By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a (land) not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heb 11:9-10*

Are We Strangers and Pilgrims?

- But you are a **chosen generation**, a **royal priesthood**, a **holy nation**, **His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who **called you out of darkness** into His marvelous light; 10 who once were **not a people** but are **now the people of God**, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 11 **Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, 1 Peter 2:9-12

This World — Our Home

● Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh — who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands — 12 that at that time you were without Christ, being **ALIENS from the commonwealth of Israel** and **STRANGERS from 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. Eph 2:11-13

This World – NOT Our Home

- Now, therefore, you are *no longer STRANGERS and FOREIGNERS*, but *fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God*, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Eph 2:19-22

No Longer Citizens of this World.

- “He has **delivered** us from the power of darkness and **transferred** us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” Col. 1:12
- “For our **citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also **eagerly wait** for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body” Phil. 3:20-21
- Eagerly wait is the standard set forth by our forefathers in Heb 11:13-18.

Moses Exchanged his Citizenship

- *By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; **for he looked to the reward.** Heb 11:24-26*
- Saying exactly the same thing. The country they came out of ... the opportunity to return... Strangers, Sojourners Pilgrims ...

Looking Forward to ... Hastening

- Therefore, since ***all these things will be dissolved***, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ***12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God***, because of which the ***heavens will be dissolved***, being on fire, and the ***elements will melt with fervent heat?*** ***13*** Nevertheless we, ***according to His promise***, ***look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*** ***2 Peter 3:11-13***

When All is Working Properly

- *As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." 17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 'I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.'" 7 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Cor 6:16-7:1*

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