

SOJOURNERS & EXILES ...

KNOW WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD

BE THE PEOPLE OF GOD



THE CONTEXT FOR AND COORDINATES OF THE SOJOURNERS & EXILES OF GOD ...

- (1 Peter 1:13 ESV) Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, **SET** your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- (Colossians 3:1-2 ESV) If then you have been raised with Christ, **SEEK** the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **SET** your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

THREE MAIN THINGS THIS MORNING:

1) We are passing through ...

2) We are at war ...

3) We are looking to glory ...

1. WE ARE PASSING THROUGH: As sojourners and exiles in this world we are taught to set our coordinates on the things that are above, 2:11, 1:1-2, 1:17, cr. 2 Peter 3:1-13.

- (1 Peter 2:11 ESV) Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and **exiles** to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.
- (1 Peter 1:1-2a ESV) Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are **elect exiles** of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.
- (1 Peter 1:17 ESV) And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your **exile**.

Coordinates... In mathematics coordinates are any of the magnitudes that serve to *define the position* of a point, line, or the like, by reference to a fixed figure, system of lines, etc.

We ask "what are we going to do now" ... well we find our place ... we define our position in God's universe by living our lives by the biblical coordinates that our God gives us in his word.

A. The first coordinate that I would like for us to take note of this morning is ... our "hope" coordinate ...

We are to set our hope fully on grace at the return of Jesus Christ.

- (1 Peter 1:13 ESV) Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, **set your hope fully** on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

B. The second coordinate that I would like us to take note of this morning is ... our "above" coordinate ...

According to the Bible we find and define our position in the universe by what we pursue ... we are to seek the things above.

- (Colossians 3:1-2 ESV) If then you have

been raised with Christ, **seek the things that are above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your minds on things that are above**, not on things that are on earth.

- (Matthew 6:33 ESV) But **seek first** the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- (2 Peter 3:13 NLT) But we are **looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised**, a world filled with God's righteousness.
- (Matthew 6:21 ESV) **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

To live honorably as sojourners and exiles of God, we need to know who we are ... our identity and 2) we need to know where we belong ... our ultimate destination. Setting our coordinates on things above corrects the course of our lives and helps us to learn and to remember **who** we are and **where** we are going.

2. WE ARE AT WAR: As sojourners and exiles we must realize that the way of this world wages war against our soul, 2:11.

- (1 Peter 2:11 ESV) Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

A. We are in a spiritual battle.

To have a biblical view of the reality of the recent, unprecedented events we must set these events in the context of war ... the war between righteousness and evil ... good versus bad ... and God versus the devil ...

To have anything truthful or truly helpful to say to the world around us, we absolutely must acknowledge the reality of the spiritual war ... and we must acknowledge the reality of the spiritual war within ... we must consciously abstain from the sins of the old life ... in a sense we are to practice social distancing from ourselves ... as new creations in Christ we are to distance ourselves from the old person before Christ ... we are to be done with that life ...

FIVE BIBLICAL INSIGHTS FROM EPHESIANS 6:10-14 THAT WILL HELP US WAGE WAR IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD ...

Insight #1: Be strong in the Lord and only in the Lord. Don't try to add strength and wisdom from

outside sources to the strength and wisdom of God. Don't corrupt the infinite wisdom of God by adding worldly wisdom. Don't undermine the power of God with human effort.

- (Ephesians 6:10 ESV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Insight #2: We need all the armor to stand against the devil. A partially equipped warrior is a defeated, foolish warrior. Not arming ourselves completely reveals our pride and our ignorance.

- (Ephesians 6:11 ESV) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

Insight #3: Know with whom we are wrestling. Make sure we know who the enemy is. If you do not acknowledge the extent of the spiritual war, you will make grave tactical errors and fight the wrong enemy ... often fighting your brother or sister in Christ because our navigation system has been corrupted by our refusal to hear God.

- (Ephesians 6:12 ESV) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Insight #4: We need all the armor to stand in the evil day. Don't lay down the weapons of God and fight like a mere human.

- (Ephesians 6:13 ESV) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.
- (2 Corinthians 10:3–6 ESV) For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

Insight #5: We need to clean up our thinking ... firm up our shaky positions ... and deal with the loose ends of lower earth reasoning. Everyone says they want the truth ... but we know that's a lie, don't we? So let's make sure that we are not the ones lying. That we do want the truth ... that we will pursue the truth in every area of our lives no matter where that truth leads. The best, first line of defense to protect our hearts and

minds is to put on truth ... to fully embrace the truth of God and his word.

- (Ephesians 6:14 ESV) Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness.

CONCLUSION ... Are we ... Are we looking to glory? ... Do we see the road ahead?

- (1 Peter 2:12 ESV) Keep 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.

Two more truth coordinates for God's sojourners and exiles: 1) We are all going to die ... 2) but before we die ... in between our birth day and our death day ... we can bring him glory if we live with glory in view.

Live with these truths in mind, and we will see our world more clearly ... and we will see our world more and more as God sees it.

But if we are trying to interpret the recent events that have so quickly unfolded without this perspective, then our thinking will crash to earth ... and we will not be able to process the information ... and the way of this world will overrun us ... instead of distancing ourselves from our old self ... we will run back into the arms of and embrace the old ways of the old man or the old woman ...

Our hope will become a mixture of trusting God and trusting the ways of this world ... our treasure will have us bound to this earth ... and our eyes and hearts will be blinded to the glory to come ...

We are living in unprecedented times with the unprecedented opportunity to bring glory to our God.

I will close with God's blessing to his sheep from the writer of Hebrews ...

- (Hebrews 13:20–21 ESV) Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, 21 equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

CHECKLIST: WE MUST KNOW WHO WE ARE!

1. We are elect exiles born again to a living hope.
2. We have an imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance.
3. We are guarded by God's power.
4. We have genuine, fire-tested faith.
5. We are blessed with love for and belief in Jesus Christ.
6. We have ultimate, rock-solid hope and promise in Jesus Christ.
7. We are obedient, holy, reverent children of God.
8. We have purified souls from obedience to the truth.
9. We are born again by the living and abiding word of God.
10. We reject all the malice and deceit and hypocrisy and envy and slander of our earthly past.
11. We thirst for the pure spiritual milk of God's word.
12. We know that we are accepted in the sight of God.
13. We are living stones and a holy priesthood.
14. We are honored by God.
15. We are identified by God as his chosen race, his royal priesthood, his holy nation, his people and his own possession.
16. We declare the praises of our God who has called us out of the darkness into his marvelous light.
17. We have received the mercy of God.

