

Pilgrims or Citizens

by Derek Melton

The sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining a pilgrim identity and separating oneself from the world, rather than embracing dual citizenship and worldly practices.

Scripture: Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 6:17, Hebrews 11:13, Hebrews 11:16, James 4:4

Topics: "Heavenly Citizenship", "Worldly Compromise"

Description

Derek Melton delivers a powerful sermon on the unwavering faith and distinct separation of the patriarchs of the faith, who identified as strangers and pilgrims on earth, refusing to settle for earthly citizenship and embracing their heavenly birthright. These courageous saints endured persecution and suffering, yet their divine strength and supernatural abilities were directly linked to their heavenly citizenship. In contrast, modern Christianity has lost its pilgrim identity by embracing worldly practices, resulting in a lack of divine influence and a compromised witness to the world.

Transcript

Hebrews 11:13 (KJV)

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

One of the distinctions that marked the patriarchs of the faith was their unwillingness to settle down and accept the status of a citizen of this earth. Their identification was with that which was seen afar off; not that which enveloped them. Not only was their inward identification other worldly, their generation perceived them thus as well. These heroic men and women of God had inherited citizenship from heaven; for them to settle down and accept earthy citizenship would be a forfeiture of their birth right.

The source of their divine strength and supernatural abilities were directly linked to the citizenship they held. Separating the patriarch from his citizenship would render all divine ability and function inert. Another creed held by our forefathers was the ancient spiritual law forbidding dual citizenship. They correctly understood that to attempt dual citizenship would corrupt the purity of their heavenly citizenship rendering it void and null.

These valorous saints were quickly identified as pilgrims. Nothing about them emanated a chameleon character. Not only were they not of this world, they were despised and rejected by it. These priestly covenanters were considered the refuse of this world; it's offscouring. The writer of Hebrews gives a prolific account of the abuses they suffered: they were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword, wandering about in goat skins being destitute, afflicted, and tormented. (Of whom the world was not worthy)

Nonetheless, they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, received their dead back to life again and more. They were spat upon by this world but kissed by God; alienated from this world but kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

One of the greatest tragedies in modern Christianity is the lack of thus minded saints. Today's Christendom is tragically fragile simply because its professors have settled down and made this earth their home. We have acclimated to the frigid conditions within the church by embracing the practices of this degenerate world. The church's adulterous affair with the world has wrought a corrupt conception, birthing a bastard Ishmaelite generation. Rarely do you hear of scathing persecution in American Christianity. It is gravely evident that our modern Christianity has become palatable in the mouths of this world. No longer can we boast of pilgrim identification or strangers of society. We have become so affiliated with the world throughout the generations we have lost the staunch separateness that was once marked our distinction.

Our early church fathers believed that separation was necessary before impartation but now our emphatic unification has resulted in divine sterilization. The world has allowed the church to unite with itself because it has adopted its practices and thereby inherited its nature and appearance. The world has found no unacceptable differences between itself and the church.

This was not so once upon a time!

Once upon a time the church was a fire-brand emanating the presence of God towards degenerate humanity. Their practices were vastly consecrated, their lifestyles absolutely separate, and their presence entirely repulsive in the minds and hearts of the people of this world. These hallowed men and women wandered in the deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth because their majestic presence was as smoking flax in the nostrils of the sons of Adam.

Brethren, where have we gone wrong? Why have we been accepted by the world? Being friends of this world, are we not enemies of God? Our dual citizenship has forfeited our heavenly ambassadorship. The only hope American Christianity has is a radical reformation of principle and conduct. Insomuch it spawns a violent exodus from the worldly rudiments we have subtly embraced and shamefully practiced to the reintegration of absolute truths and separate standards.

Only then will our pilgrim identity be reinstated and our divine influence be reestablished. Are we on a pilgrimage or have we established citizenship upon this earth?

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