

## 1 Leaving Your Country

- How to live as strangers in this world . . .

## 2 Scriptural Introduction

## 3 Introduction

- What do the following people have in common?
  - Ruth Anne Adam
  - Thomas Wayne Becker
  - Karin Ann Moon Vader
  - Jennifer Sabine Rubens
  - Michael Mason
  - Peter Laurie Krause
- They are all people who used to be citizens of the United States.

## 4 Introduction

- More and more people are renouncing their U.S. citizenship than ever before.
- In the second quarter of last year, hundreds of people, turned in their passports.
- Each quarter, the government issues another list of more people giving up their citizenship than the previous quarter.
- Last year, more people had renounced their U.S. citizenship in the first three quarters of the year than in all of 2011, which was the previous record-holder for expatriations.

## 5 The Numbers

## 6 Why Leave Your Country?

- So, how or why would you break up with your country?
- Why would anyone want to leave the land of the free and the home of the brave?
- What would cause someone to swap citizenship in one country for that in another?

## 7 Gérard Depardieu

- For French actor Gérard Depardieu, it was simply a matter of taxes.
- Since he's popular in Russia, he decided to leave France, and become a Russian.
- And he did it because he wasn't happy with a proposed tax on the super-rich, a tax which was later declared unconstitutional.

## 8 Gérard Depardieu

- Depardieu, calling himself a "citizen of the world," has since collected up to seven other passports, given to him by other governments.

- Belgium, for example, made him an honorary citizen.
- "We are glad you made your nest in Nechin," said Estaimpuis's municipal mayor, Daniel Senesael, at Depardieu's Belgian investiture, prior to a post-ceremony barbecue at the actor's five-bedroom chateau with 200 fellow citizens of the town.
- "Gérard, Estaimpuis loves you."

## 9 Finding a New Country

- Breaking up with one's country is not what most of us would think it's all about—a gut wrenching, emotional experience.
- It's not like breaking up with your boyfriend, girlfriend or getting a divorce.
- There's not a lot of hugging, tears, weeping, or wailing.
- Instead, many do so because they're looking for greener pastures.
- Or in other words, it's all about the dollar. The tax dollar to be more precise.

## 10 Finding a New Country

- For most of these individuals who are looking for a new country or new identity all they have to do is move to a new country and take up their customs and way of life.
- But what happens to those whose new country is not of this world?
- Those whose current country is no longer respecting their values, morals, and ethics.
- Where are these people suppose to find refuge when there is no place that respects them or appreciates their values and principles.

## 11 Strangers

- According to Jesus, we are in the world, but not of the world?
- In other words, Jesus is telling us that we are not citizens of this world, but instead citizens of another world.
- Because of this the people of this world look at us as foreigners and people who may be a threat to their country's way of life.
- So then, how do we survive as foreigners in a world that really hates us?

## 12 God's Protection

- Understand that God knows our situation.
  - While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. (John 17:12 NIV)
  - I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name. (John 17:11 NIV)

- I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. (John 17:14–15 NIV)

### 13 **God's Protection**

- While it is definitely encouraging to know that Jesus has prayed for our protection, but we have a responsibility to pray for ourselves and our families.
- We see this from the following verses.
  - ““And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (Matt 6:13 NIV)
  - On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” (Luke 22:40 NIV)
- Interesting enough, God’s protection is not necessarily physically, but spiritually, so that we will not be led astray into sin.

### 14 **God's Protection**

- By the way, how much power does the Evil One have over Christians?
  - We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. (1 John 5:18, NIV).
  - When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 5:4,5, NIV).
  - Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. (1 Timothy 1:20, NIV).

### 15 **God's Power**

- So then the devil cannot touch a Christian, unless the Church Elders have handed that individual over to Satan.
- But does this mean that the devil can do no harm?
  - The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." (Matthew 4:3, NIV).
  - Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

### 16 **The Devil's Strategy**

- So then the number one strategy of the devil is to tempt Christians to compromise and give in to temptation.
- Since sin separates us from God, the devil takes great pleasure in weakening our witness.

- And who does he use to do his bidding?
- As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. (Eph 2:1–2 NIV)
- The devil uses people around us who have hardened their hearts against God’s Holy Spirit to frustrate, anger, and tempt us to harden our hearts as well and do evil.
- In fact, the whole world for the most part values not the things of God and prefers a compromised religion as a substitute for true righteousness and godliness and wants us to do that the same as well.

## 17 **Our Strategy**

- Go to any major cosmopolitan, international city in the world, and you'll discover that there's a strong German, Turkish, Italian, American, Lithuanian, Bulgarian or Swedish community there.
- In fact, if you're a Norwegian living in Singapore, you're going to look for other Norwegians in Singapore.
- In fact, there is a web site especially for Norwegians who live in Singapore.
- You can find it at [www.norway.org/sg](http://www.norway.org/sg).

## 18

## 19 **Separation**

- For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? (2 Cor 6:14 NIV)
- What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? (2 Cor 6:15 NIV)
- What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. (2 Cor 6:16 NIV)
- As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” (2 Cor 6:16 NIV)

## 20 **Separation**

- Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor 6:17–18 NIV)
- The devil loves to isolate Christians and then go in for the kill.
- However, there is strength in the community of believers.
- When we surround ourselves with people who speak the language of our native land and honor its customs and values, we are strengthened in our faith.
- Therefore, we ought to separate ourselves from those who don’t value the things we value.

- If we don't, we may be like the Israelites who failed to get rid of the Canaanites—who were a source of temptation and trouble for the people of God.

## 21 **The Snare of the Canaanites**

- “But if you turn away and ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you and if you intermarry with them and associate with them, then you may be sure that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. (Josh 23:12–13 NIV)
- Instead, they will become snares and traps for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land, which the LORD your God has given you. (Josh 23:13 NIV)
- Do not let them live in your land, or they will cause you to sin against me. (Ex 23:33 NIV)
- So then, we are to keep at arms length anyone who doesn't value the values of our spiritual country, or just like the Israelites, the Canaanites will be a source of temptation and a snare for us.
- Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” (1 Cor 15:33 NIV)

## 22 **Canaanites**

- Who are our potential Canaanites?
  - Unsaved and/or Rebellious Family Members.
  - Ungodly Work Associates or Friends.
  - The Secular School System.
  - The Entertainment Industry.
  - The Internet.
  - Backslidden & Worldly Christians.

## 23 **Consider Abraham**

- By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. (Heb 11:8 NIV)
- By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. (Heb 11:9 NIV)
- For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Heb 11:10 NIV)

## 24 **Marching to Zion**

- According to the book of Hebrews, we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. (Heb 13:14 NIV)
- This city is called Mount Zion—the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God where thousands of thousands of angels gather in joyful assembly. (Heb 12:22)

- However, before we get there, we're going to have to live as aliens and strangers in this world and by faith separate ourselves from all the worldliness around us.
- While we are in this world to be a witness, we must not associate so closely that we lose our saltiness.
- We must choose to be a citizen of heaven first and leave our worldly allegiances behind.

## 25 Conclusion

- Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, . . . (Phil 3:20 NIV)
- So let us surrender our passports to this world and fully embrace the promise of another country—God's country.
- As the hymn writer Isaac Watts has written,
  - We're marching to Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion; we're marching upward Zion, the beautiful city of God.
  - Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry; we're marching through Emmanuel's ground, to fairer worlds on high.

## 26 Conclusion

- Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor 6:17–18 NIV)
- Since we have such a wonderful promise, let us as good pilgrims leave Vanity Fair and make our way to the Celestial City of blessings, honor, and eternal glory. Amen (See 2 Cor. 7:1-2)