

Cornerstone Church

September 25, 2016

Sermon Series: Practicing Our Readiness Drills for Christ's Return - Seeking God's Guidance from 1st and 2nd Peter

Today's Sermon: Focusing on Our Identity as Chosen Exiles on Earth

Today's Passages: 1 Peter 1:1-2

[1] 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, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Introduction

Main point: A deep-seated knowledge of who you are in Christ is the critical beginning point of strengthening our wills in the face of persecution.

Sub-point: If you think this world is your home, then you will do everything you can to be accepted in your chosen residence, including conforming the world's standards and values.

The sender: Peter

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ

The Recipients: Elect exiles (Christians)

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

Elect (eklektos) = chosen, selected, picked

Exiles (parapidemois) = sojourners, non-residents, migrants,

Of the Dispersion (diaspora) = those forced from their homes to live in another land.

Living in **Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia**
(modern day Turkey)

How did these believers get chosen?

- They were chosen by the *foreknowledge* (proginosko) of God the Father

Foreknown or foreloved?

If God chose us based on a prior knowledge that we would choose Him, then faith is not a gift.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, (Ephesians 2:8 ESV)

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. (John 1:12-13 ESV)

Foreloved

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and

those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30 ESV)

- The word foreknew is a verb, not a noun, meaning it is not something God possess (prior knowledge) but something God does (place His love on a person).
- It is identical to the Hebrew word *yada* used in the following OT passages:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5 ESV)

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2 ESV)

What practical significance did this have on Peter's readers and on us today?

- We should feel infinitely blessed knowing that we did nothing to deserve such grace.
- And because God blessed us with faith to believe we can pity our persecutors who may indeed not be chosen and who will spend an eternity in hell for their rebellion, all the while,
- Praying that God would open their hearts to His Son so that they too could rejoice in their undeserved election.
- This also means that you are not at the mercy of your feeble will to remain true to the Lord but instead are His child forever whom He will never abandon.

If our faith to believe did not come from us, then how did it get put in our hearts?

- It came by means of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

in (by means of) **the sanctification of the Spirit,**

(2 Thessalonians 2:13 ESV) But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

The English word sanctification comes from two Latin words, *sanctus*, meaning *holy* and *ficare* which means *to make*. Therefore it is the Holy Spirit who has made us holy at the moment of conversion when we were acquitted of all former sins and given a new nature or a new heart, and it is this aspect of sanctification in view in this verse.

This Spirit-induced faith produced genuine repentance

for obedience to Jesus Christ

(Psalm 40:8 ESV) I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

This Spirit-induced faith also sealed us, in blood, to a new covenant relationship with God

and for sprinkling with his blood:

(Exodus 24:7-8 ESV) Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

This new and unique covenant relationship (one which the world does not have) allows us to have intimacy with God to ask for and receive all the help we need in times of crisis.

(Hebrews 4:16 ESV) Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.