

Hebrews 11:13-16 *These all [Abel (Adam's son), Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Sara, Isaac, and Jacob] died in faith, not having received the promises [from God], but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them [convinced they would receive them], and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. <sup>14</sup>For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a [different type of] country. <sup>15</sup>And truly, if they had been mindful of [they were thinking about] that country from whence they came out [country they had left], they might have had opportunity to have returned. <sup>16</sup>But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly [country]: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

1. Introduction:

- a. Book written to Jewish believers
- b. Author unknown, but it was not written by Paul (see Hebrews 2:3)
- c. Book's theme: Jesus Christ is superior to everything (angels, prophets, Moses; The Law, the priestly sacrifices, the Temple)
- d. Hebrews 11 is the "Great Hall of Faith" chapter, and these people are described as "strangers & pilgrims"
- e. What are the applications of these lessons for today?

2. Strangers Belong to Different Country (not a country of this world)

- a. These Pilgrims are citizens of a better country (Not important who you are. Who do you belong to?)
  - i. Christians belong to Christ & Christ belongs to God  
1 Corinthians 3:23 *And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*
  - ii. We have Jesus living inside us & belong to Him  
1 John 4:4 *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them [false prophets]: because greater is he that is in you [the Holy Spirit], than he that is in the world [he spirit of antichrist].*
  - iii. Christians are fellow citizens in the household of God  
Ephesians 2:13, 19 *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh [near] by the blood of Christ. ... Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;*

b. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world

John 18:36 *Jesus answered [to Pilate during His trial], My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence [here]*

c. These strangers came from a country earth (verse 15)

d. Strangers are now citizens in heaven (verse 16)

3. Pilgrims Behave Differently

Philippians 3:7,8 *But what things were gain to me [the things I was so proud of], those I [Paul] counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung [garbage], that I may win Christ,*

a. Pilgrims believe differently

i. Pilgrims persuaded of distant (future) promises (verse 13)

ii. Abraham in Genesis 12 believed & obeyed God looking for a city built & made by God

Hebrews 11:8, 10 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after [he would later] receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out [he left his home], not knowing whither he went. ... For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

b. Pilgrims behave differently

i. Strangers speaks of the place we live in, that we don't get comfortable there.

ii. Pilgrim speaks of conduct different from those around us

iii. God blessed Abraham Genesis 12:1 - 3

iv. God gave us salvation – no one earns salvation

Hebrews 5:8-9 *Though he [Jesus] were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect [And having done everything His Father told Him to do], he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

v. God calls us His sons

John 1:12 *But as many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

c. God's work of salvation (1 Peter 2:10-16)

1 Peter 2:10-16 *Which [We] in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which [previously] had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. <sup>11</sup>Dearly beloved, I beseech you **as strangers and pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; <sup>12</sup>Having your conversation [lifestyle] honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers [if they falsely accuse you], they may by your good works, which they shall behold [your good works will defend you], glorify God in the day of visitation [the Day God returns]. <sup>13</sup>Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man [earthly law] for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; <sup>14</sup>Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him [the king] for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. <sup>15</sup>For so is the will of God, that with well doing [good behavior] ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: <sup>16</sup>As free [people in Christ], and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness [don't use your liberty to hide evil deeds], but [use your liberty] as the servants of God.*

- i. God's people receive His mercy (verse 10)
- ii. Our behavior should **NOT** be:
  - a) Insubordination: don't obey laws and customs of this world
  - b) Isolation: remove ourselves from any contact with this world
  - c) Imitation: copy the customs and behavior of this world
- iii. Our behavior **SHOULD**:
  - a) Abstain from fleshly lusts, verse 11
  - b) Maintain a godly testimony, verse 12 (orderly, honestly, charitably)
  - c) Retain an obedience of civil authority for the Lord's sake (verses 13-16)
  - d) Proclaim good news (the gospel) to this world, as servants of God

4. Foreign Residents Live Differently

- a. Live faithfully while on life's journey

1 Corinthians 4:2 *Moreover it is required in stewards [managers of our own lives], that a man be found faithful.*

- b. Live life with joy, just as Paul desired to finish his life with joy

Acts 20:24 *But none of these things [the threats to Paul's life] move [upset] me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and [and I would give up my life gladly if that means I can finish] the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

c. Fix your eye upon Jesus

- i. Jesus begins & finishes our salvation

Hebrews 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus **the author and finisher of our faith**; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- ii. Jesus left heaven & took form of a servant

Philippians 2:5-7 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of [being of the same nature as] God, thought it not robbery to be [did not show Himself as] equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and **took upon him the form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men:*

- iii. Jesus is ultimate example of a stranger & pilgrim, who had no place to call home

Luke 9:58 *And Jesus said unto him [a recent disciple], **Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.***

5. Conclusion

- a. In God's time-frame, one human life is as a passing wind`.

Psalm 78:39 *For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.*

- b. But God's Word is enduring forever unlike human lives

1 Peter 1:24-25 *For all flesh is [people are] as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass [is even shorter]. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

- c. God's Word written that you may know that you believe in Jesus & have eternal life

1 John 5:13 *These things have I [Apostle John] written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that **ye may know that ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*