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Ephesians 2:19
Covenant Citizenship
4/14/24

Discussion Questions:

1. How can you or have you changed your mindset to become more others focused in gathering at church?
 2. What responsibilities do you think you have in your church? What benefits do you enjoy others?
 3. What does it mean to you to be a “citizen” of God’s kingdom?
 4. How might a Christian American be different than someone who is not a Christian American?
 5. What is an important thought or takeaway for you?
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Teaching Notes:

2:19 "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, **21** in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, **22** in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

We are “fellow citizens” w/the saints in the kingdom of God.

We are members of the household of God.

We are fitted and growing together into a holy temple.

A covenant is an official agreement between two parties with mutual benefits and responsibilities.

Message title: Covenant Citizenship

Big idea:

Benefits and responsibilities come with our covenant together.

People need people...

...And God uses people for people...

“Church” in Greek is ekklesia: “a gathering/assembly”.

For God’s people...

1. **Gathering is essential and intentional.**

10 out of 12 times “One Accord” in Acts:

Homothumadon: One heart, one mind, one passion.

Unique Greek compound of 2 words: to "rush along" & "in unison"

After Jesus ascended into heaven...

1:14 These all continued with **one accord** in prayer and supplication,
Right before Pentecost 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were
all with **one accord** in one place.

After Pentecost...

2:44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with **one accord** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

And into the future...

Hebrews 13:24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 **not neglecting to meet together**, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

What should we do when we gather? From those verses...

1. Obey the Lord
2. Pray
3. Love and meet needs for each other
4. Break bread
5. Praise God
6. Have teaching
7. Stir up/encourage each other to love & good works

A sign of health for believers is gathering...

...If we are not gathering there is something off...

...Either it is a season, it is out of your control, or you are in sin.

It is our sin nature & the nature of sin to separate us.

Since Adam hid in the garden sin has separated us.

...I do my thing, I take what I want, I go my way,...

...That is how the world apart from God works...

...but it should not be the way we work as the church.

In the church, love is what keeps us together.

NOW...Let's look at the idea of citizenship:

2:19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but **fellow citizens** with the saints

What is it to be part of the kingdom of God w/ His saints?

...It is a spiritual covenant & a spiritual kingdom

...Jesus is the king, & we live here according to His will there.

2. Jesus is king over country.

God's kingdom exists w/lesser kingdoms....

...But Jesus is always Lord over all.

What does it mean to be a Christian American?

- Our fight is not against people, but principalities.
- Our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual.
- Our allegiance is not to a party or person, but Christ the Lord.

With the dual citizenship of Christ & country...

3. We should be the best citizens.

...We can serve people but hope in Christ.

...We can love people but with the unconditional love of Christ.

...We do not fear the future because we trust in Christ.

Do you remember what Jesus told Pilate?

John 19:11 ...You would have no authority over Me at all, if it had not been given to you from above; for this reason the one who handed Me over to you has *the* greater sin.

The danger for the church is to lose our love, to compromise the truth, and to say we are serving God but really be compromising with sin or the flesh.

So, how should we live as Christians in this country?

Jeremiah 29:7 in Babylonian exile God said...

And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.

Work is an opportunity to be productive.

I Timothy 2:1-2 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

Prayer is not a last resort, it's a normal part of our citizenship

Titus 3:1 Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good.

Submission doesn't mean you don't have a voice.

It is not just the what, it is the how...

Titus 3:2 They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone.

W/o slander and quarreling (not a brawler, fighter, contentious)