

# ***Temporary Residents!***

***Hebrews 11:13-16 • August 15, 2021 • Dave Gibson***

***Listen!*** Campgrounds don't offer citizenship, just tent sites!

***The Problem:*** Most American believers have made themselves at home on this planet.

***The Truth:*** As a Christian my home is a place I have never been.

***In the book of Philippians, Paul says that, as believers in Christ, we have our citizenship in heaven. List some of the benefits of being a citizen of a state or country.***

***Why is it so important that we know where our citizenship is and why it's important?***

***The Habits of Strangers, Aliens, Temporary Residents, Exiles:***

- ***They see the promises of God before they arrive.*** – “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.” (***Hebrews 11:13a***). ***In John 8:56 and Hebrews 11:26 the writers speak of the patriarchs, Abraham and Moses. Both of these great men were able to grasp the future promises of God even though they weren't able to realize the splendor of the Promised Land and the ultimate coming of Jesus Christ in their earthly lifetimes. Using them as our example, why is the practice of faith critical in claiming the promise of eternal life with Christ that the Bible promises?***
- ***They embrace and confess their identity as sojourners.*** - “And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.” (***Hebrews 11:13b***) ***When we travel, we often “live out of our suitcase” for a short time. We don't take the time to unpack everything because we know we won't be at the hotel or rental very long. Do you ever feel the “tug” of heaven, knowing that this world is not your genuine home? What other illustrations can you think of that might describe the very temporary essence of life on earth?***
- ***They constantly seek their eternal home.*** – “People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own...Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one.” (***Hebrews 11:14, 16a***). ***It is often said that a Christian should know Jesus so intimately in this life that crossing into eternity won't be a big deal. We will be comfortable with our Savior and the home that He has prepared for us. What spiritual practices help comprise a more intimate relationship with Christ that makes our everyday search for our real country meaningful and comfortable?***

- *They do not go back to the life they left behind.* – “If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.” (Hebrews 11:15)
- *All of us have yesterday, today and tomorrow. Through Christ’s work of salvation on the cross all of our sins are forgiven during the time we have on earth. Abraham, Moses, and John the Baptist did not live in the past but worked and pointed to a better future. Why do you think the Lord wants us to learn from the past but not let it influence our lives in the present? (Why is it so important not to cling to things in our past while we grow in relationship with Jesus?)*

#### **God’s Major Rewards for Strangers and Exiles:**

- *He will proudly identify with them.* – “Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God...” (Hebrews 11:16b). *As God’s dearly beloved children, he is deeply in love with us. He identifies us as His own if we recognize that this life is temporary and we act in Christ’s love in all we do and say. Can you think of a time in your life where you were so proud of someone you loved that you were bursting at the seams? If that is true in human experience, meditate on how much more it is true when God identifies with us!*
- *He will give to them a prepared city.* – “... for he has prepared a city for them.” (Hebrews 11:16c). *During the great discourse at the Last Supper before Christ’s crucifixion, Jesus tells His disciples that He is going on before them to prepare a place that is absolutely perfect for each individual believer throughout eternity. A place where joy accelerates continuously. Have you ever meditated on the greatness of this eternal home being prepared for you? What are some of the things you think about? Does it generate a deep gratitude in your heart?*

#### **Conclusion:**

“So long the city I desired to reach lay hid.  
 When suddenly its spires afar flashed through the circling clouds,  
 You may conceive my transport,  
 Soon the vapors closed again, but I had seen the city!”

*Robert Browning in “Paracelsus”*