

WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

CHRISTIAN
RESPONSIBILITY
IN THE LAND
OF THE FREE

God's Heart for the Outsiders • September 2, 2020

"The Ground is Level at the Foot of the Cross." -Billy Graham

Theme Verse: Deuteronomy 10:14-19 (NIV)

14 To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. 15 Yet the Lord set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations—as it is today. 16 Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. 17 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. 18 He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. 19 And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt."

Equality in the United States

- **14th Amendment (1868):** *"No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."*
- The **15th** (1870) and **19th** (1920) Amendments ensured that no one's right to vote can be taken away based on their race, color, previous status as slaves, or gender.
- **Voting Rights Acts of 1965:** *"Aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote as guaranteed under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution."* (Source: [history.com](https://www.history.com))

"The Faith of the Outsider" by Frank Anthony Spina

1. God created a good world.
2. Human rebellion created chaos and division.
3. God chose one people (exclusive) to bring everyone (inclusive) back home to God.

Despite Israel's exclusive status as the people of God, God frequently uses "outsiders" to advance his mission, demonstrate his grace, and to highlight his heart for all people.

Exclusivity is "a central and unambiguous feature of the metastory in which God selects one and only one people to accomplish the goal of blessing and reconciling the whole world (Gen. 12:1-3)... But it would be a mistake to construe Israel's exclusive election as a function of its superiority."

Who's Included in the Nation of Israel?

Foreigners, Widows, Orphans, and the Poor were among the most vulnerable members of society in Biblical times. God instructs his chosen people to take special care of each of these groups, ensuring that they are not oppressed or taken advantage.

Foreigners:

- **Exodus 22:21**, “Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt.”
- **Exodus 23:9**, “Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt.”
- **Exodus 23:12**, “Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and so that the slave born in your household and the foreigner living among you may be refreshed.”
- **Leviticus 19:10**, “Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God.”
- **Leviticus 19:33-34**, “**33 “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. 34 The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”**
- **Leviticus 23:22**, “When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the foreigner residing among you. I am the Lord your God.”
- **Numbers 15:14-16**, “14 For the generations to come, whenever a foreigner or anyone else living among you presents a food offering as an aroma pleasing to the Lord, they must do exactly as you do. 15 The community is to have the same rules for you and for the foreigner residing among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the foreigner shall be the same before the Lord: 16 The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the foreigner residing among you.” Numbers 15:14-16

Widows and Orphans

- **Exodus 22:22**, “Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless.”
- **Deuteronomy 24:17-18**, “17 Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge. 18 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this.”
- **Deuteronomy 24:19-22**—Leave extra crops for the foreigners, orphans and widows.
- **Deuteronomy 26:1-15**— God instructs his people to set aside a prime portion of their best crops as a tithe / offering to God. In the third year, these tithes are given to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows.
- **Deuteronomy 27:19**, “Cursed is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow.” Then all the people shall say, “Amen!” (*Also in the same chapter, curses for those who take advantage of the blind and the innocent*)

The Poor

Deuteronomy 15—Establishes a regular practice of canceling debts and freeing slaves to give everyone the chance to prosper.

Deuteronomy 15:7-8, “7 If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them. 8 Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need.”

How Did Jesus Live This Out?

Jesus spent time with the marginalized, the oppressed, and the sinners:

Matthew 9:10-12, “10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’ 12 **On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.”**

Jesus read from **Luke 4** to begin his ministry, highlighting his calling to minister to the poor, the prisoners, the blind, and the oppressed.

Jesus spent time with contagious lepers, prostitutes, a woman caught in adultery, a Samaritan woman with a checkered past, tax collectors, children, the abject poor, and partygoers.

There Can Never Be Discrimination in God’s Kingdom.

Galatians 3:26-29, “26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

James 2:1-13 is a powerful teaching against judging people based on their appearances: “My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism...” (James 2:1)