

I am a Citizen in God's Kingdom

WHO ARE WE? IDENTITY IN CHRIST · 1 PETER 2:9-12; EPHESIANS 2:19-20 · NOVEMBER 3, 2024 · PASTOR JIM CALER

SERMON OUTLINE:

Jesus began His earthly ministry by preaching that the kingdom of God was at hand

- Mark 1:14-15

What is “the kingdom of God”?

- “The realm in which God's will is fulfilled.” –Webster's online dictionary
- “The domain over which the spiritual sovereignty of God or Christ extends, whether in heaven or on earth.” –dictionary.com
- Luke 17:20-21
- “The King's power, over the King's people, in the King's place.” –Professor Patrick Schreiner

Why is it good news?

- The "good news" of the kingdom of God being at hand signifies that God's reign of righteousness, love, and salvation is now accessible to people through Jesus Christ, offering forgiveness of sins, hope for a better life, and the promise of eternal life.

Who is a “citizen of God's kingdom”?

- John 3:3-5; Colossians 1:12-13

How should we live as citizens of God's kingdom?

- Responsibilities:
 - We seek to serve our King first
 - Matthew 6:33, 10; 2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Peter 2:9
- Rewards:
 - Romans 14:17; 2 Peter 2:10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Open Up: (answer one of these two questions)

- List four or five ways you would identify yourself. When you think of your list, which one is more noticeable? Which one would be the most surprising to those who interact with you?
- Have you ever spent an extended period of time in a land that was not your home country? What is it like to be in a place that is not your home? How did people view

you and react to your presence? What differences made it difficult to navigate a land that was not your own?

Dig In:

- Pray for God to lead you through this discussion.
- If someone looked at your life through your social media posts, your spending habits, the words you say and how you live in general, would they describe you as a devoted citizen of heaven or an citizen of this world? Why?
- Read these verses as an overview of the idea of the kingdom of God found in Jesus' teaching: Mark 9:47; Matthew 13:42, Mark 12:34, Matthew 23:13, Mark 1:15, Luke 17:20-21. What are some thoughts you have about being a citizen of the kingdom of God based on these passages?
- Read Matthew 6:25-34. How do you think how we handle the “cares” of this world reflect our belief in our heavenly citizenship?
- In what ways do you find yourself being more like an earthly citizen instead of a heavenly one? What keeps you from being entirely devoted to your true homeland?

Live it Out:

- Memorize: 1 Peter 2:9
- **For those exploring Christianity:** Read the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3:1-21. What stands out to you in these verses? What questions does it raise for you?
- **For new & growing disciples:** One of the reasons many Christians struggle to live as heavenly citizens is that their knowledge of politics and worldly issues is greater than their understanding of Scripture. Honestly evaluate your time spent in God's Word. Do you invest as much in your knowledge of the character and story of God as you do in politics or earthly concerns? What is one thing you can do to grow in your understanding of the things of God? How can your prayer life better express your faithful citizenship to the kingdom of Christ?
- **For Christ-centered disciples:** Consider all the places God has you in this season (work, home, school, etc). What do you hope and pray would be the outcome of your presence among those places and peoples? What would shift for you in the way you approached those places if you fully embraced your identity as an ambassador for the kingdom of God there?
- Want to dig deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Luke 16:16; 22:29; 1 Peter 2:11; Matthew 5:13-16; 28:16-20; Colossians 1:13; Philippians 3:19; James 1:7-8; 3:17; John 18:33, 37; Judges 8:22-23; Ephesians 1:10, 22-23; and Galatians 1:4.