

## East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:

### Citizens of Heaven: Navigating Our Dual Citizenship

Speaker: Pastor Keith Jenkins

Date: September 8, 2024

#### Introduction:

In this powerful sermon, Pastor Keith Jenkins addressed the challenges of living as citizens of heaven in a divided world. He emphasized the importance of understanding our true identity and allegiance as followers of Christ, especially during times of political tension.

#### 1. The Kingdom of God:

Pastor Keith highlighted the concept of God's kingdom and our place in it as believers.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. How does understanding yourself as a citizen of God's kingdom change your perspective on current events?
2. In what areas of your life do you need to more fully submit to God's authority?

#### Supporting Verse:

Colossians 1:13-14 - "For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins."

#### Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Paul was writing to the Colossian church, emphasizing their new identity in Christ.
- Theological Significance: This passage highlights the dramatic shift in allegiance and identity that occurs when we follow Christ.

- Application: We should live with an awareness of our citizenship in God's kingdom, allowing it to shape our values and priorities.

## 2. The Dilemma of Dual Citizenship:

Pastor Keith discussed the challenges and responsibilities of being citizens of both heaven and earth.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How do you balance your responsibilities as a citizen of your country with your primary allegiance to God's kingdom?
2. Can you share an experience where your heavenly citizenship conflicted with earthly expectations?

### Supporting Verse:

Philippians 3:20 - "But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior."

### Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Paul was writing to the Philippians, who took pride in their Roman citizenship.
- Theological Significance: This verse reminds believers of their ultimate allegiance and future hope.
- Application: We should live with an eternal perspective, recognizing that our true home is in heaven.

## 3. Living as Exiles and Ambassadors:

Pastor Keith explored the biblical concept of believers as pilgrims, sojourners, and ambassadors in this world.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How does viewing yourself as a "resident alien" in this world affect your daily choices and interactions?
2. In what ways can we be effective ambassadors for Christ in our current cultural climate?

### Supporting Verses:

1 Peter 2:11-12 - "Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."

2 Corinthians 5:20 - "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

### Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: Both Peter and Paul were writing to early Christians living in pagan societies.
- Theological Significance: These passages emphasize the distinct identity and mission of believers in the world.
- Application: We should live in a way that reflects our heavenly citizenship while actively engaging in God's mission of reconciliation.

### Conclusion:

Pastor Keith Jenkins' message reminded us of our true identity as citizens of heaven and the responsibilities that come with it. In a divisive political climate, we are called to live as distinct representatives of God's kingdom, promoting unity, reconciliation, and the values of our true King.

### Reflection Questions:

1. How can you cultivate a deeper sense of "homesickness" for heaven in your daily life?
2. What practical steps can you take to be a peacemaker and agent of reconciliation in your community?
3. How might your social media presence change if you viewed every post through the lens of your heavenly citizenship?

#### Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for making us citizens of your kingdom. Help us to live with an eternal perspective, balancing our earthly responsibilities with our primary allegiance to you. Give us wisdom to navigate the challenges of our dual citizenship, and empower us to be effective ambassadors for Christ in our divided world. May our lives reflect the values of your kingdom and draw others to you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

#### References:

##### Primary Sources:

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##### Collaborative Contributions:

LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided sermon notes and biblical passages.

LLM Training Data:

LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to April 2024.