

WHY ARE CHRISTIANS LEFT IN THE WORLD

Text: John 17:14-16

INTRO: In our text & context, Jesus prays to the Father for the apostles He has appointed & trained. Their mission was to go into all the world & preach the gospel. But much of what was true of the apostles is also true of Christians in general. Read verses 20-24.

Verse 24 hints at a destiny for Christ's followers in glory beyond this world. But for now, we are to continue to serve in the realm where Jesus has placed us.

For the next few minutes, let us consider the question: "Why are Christians left in the world?"

I. CHRISTIANS ARE NOT "OF" THE WORLD, vs. 14, 16.

A. Christians constitute a kingdom that is not of this world, John 18:36.

B. They are warned about becoming obsessed with the things of this world.

1 John 2:15-17, Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Luke 8:14, The ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

2 Cor 6:14- , Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them & walk among them. I will be their God, & they shall be My people." Therefore come out

from among them & be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, & I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, & you shall be My sons and daughters,” says the LORD Almighty.

C. Frequently the world will misunderstand—and even hate them.

1 John 3:13, Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

1 John 4:3-5, Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, & is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, & have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.

II. THO WE ARE NOT “OF” THE WORLD, WE ARE “IN” THE WORLD

A. Our relationship is that of travelers & pilgrims.

1 Pet. 2:11, Beloved, I beg you as sojourners & pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

B. Our ministry is a stewardship.

Matt 25:14-30, For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants & delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave 5 talents, to another 2, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went & traded with them, & made another five talents. And likewise he who had received 2 gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, & hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received 5 talents came & brot

5 other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained 5 more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good & faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' "He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained 2 more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, & at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, & give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

1 Cor. 4:2, Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

III. WHY ARE CHRISTIANS LEFT IN THIS WORLD?

A. For our own development.

Rom 5:3-5, Glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; & perseverance, character; & character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

James 1:2-4, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect & complete, lacking nothing.

NOTE: Heaven wouldn't mean much to a person who had never know what it is to experience sickness, pain, sorrow, or death. A lifetime on earth prepares us to properly value our eternal home.

B. For the benefit of others.

Matt. 5:16

1 Tim 4:16, Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Phil 1:20-25, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, & to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith.

IV. CHRISTIANS WILL NOT ALWAYS BE LEFT IN THIS WORLD. John 14:1-6; 1 Thess. 4:16-18

1 Peter 1:3-4, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

Highway 29, Liberty Hill, TX, February 9, 1964

Cox Springs, TX, February 20, 1964

Jonestown, TX, September 15, 1968

Springhill, LA, June 16, 1974

La Porte, TX, October 14, 1979

Exton, PA, July 28, 1991

Susquehanna, Marieta, PA, October 5, 2003