

Living for God in a Strange Land

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[0 : 0 0] a little paper, then you've got a kind of an outline of what we're going to do tonight. But before we get into Jeremiah, I'd like you to find 1 Peter chapter 2, and I'd also like you to find John chapter 17. We'll get to Jeremiah shortly, but I'd like to lay a little groundwork, if I could, and set up the idea of what we're going to study here. It's already kind of posted, but I'd still like to lay a few things out first. 1 Peter chapter 2, 1 Peter, and John 17. I'm also going to read something out of Hebrews 11 in between those two. If you want to be prepared to scoot over there, feel free. So starting in 1 Peter, now the

Bible calls Israel the firstborn or children of God, and being of the seed of Abraham, they're considered as a nation in that covenant, the children of God. Then everybody else in the Old Testament, strangers. They're outsiders. They are strangers of that covenant of promise, and they have no hope and no connection to Israel or to God. But Ephesians chapter 2, in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles in Christ are brought nigh, and he made of twain one new man.

And the Bible says in Ephesians 2 that we're no more strangers or foreigners, but we're fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. And so while we are strangers to God as Gentiles without any covenants of promise through Abraham, through Jesus Christ, we get in on something even better. And we get in now. We're of the household of God. We're no longer strangers and foreigners. However, take a look at 1 Peter chapter 2 and look at verse 11.

1 Peter 1, Peter literally writing to some Jews that are scattered, and those Jews are strangers still in this earth, scattered outside of their land, but even spiritually to believers that in chapter 1 have been begotten by the word of God and unto a lively hope and on and on. To believers, spiritually, we're strangers and pilgrims in this world. Now, back in Hebrews 11, I didn't ask you to grab it, so I'm just going to get there and read. And Hebrews 11 and verse 13 describes a kind of backtracking of these individuals of faith like Abel and Enoch and Noah and Abraham and Sarah. And it says, these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And it's going to go on from there. So by faith, it's a chapter on faith. Come to John 17 now. By faith, you and I, strangers and pilgrims, just no real place to belong here on this earth as children of God.

[4 : 0 6] In John 17, I want to draw your attention to some of the words that Christ prayed. And he's praying for his disciples, but then praying beyond them as well. I'll start in verse 14.

The Lord says, I have given them thy word and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. As thou has sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world. He's going to go on to talk about them, their word and people believing on Christ through their world, their word in verse, I think 20.

So, so we're strangers and pilgrims and we're sent out into this world by the Lord Jesus Christ. We're not of the world. And in this world's a place we don't belong and we don't have an established system and we're a family. And as it were, we don't have roots. We are just traveling through, waiting for our Lord to come and get us, to bring us to a better country and a better city and a better place. Now, would you come back to Jeremiah? And I want to show you an Old Testament passage here that I think very well parallels and gives us some, some good thoughts to this as a doctrine of who we are in Christ and where we don't belong.

Jeremiah 29. Before we read in this, I need to understand that Jeremiah is a preacher, a prophet of God, and his preaching and his ministry comes at the very latter phase of Israel's kingdom.

And they've already gone through some good and bad kings and it's coming down to the end. And he, in his ministry, is the word that God gave him. He's strongly warning God's people, particularly there in the southern part of, in Judah. He's there, he's warning of the coming judgment and his preaching is just largely ignored. And so the, the deportation begins and the captivity begins and Nebuchadnezzar comes and he takes a certain of the king's seed. And if you remember in reading Daniel chapter one, he was part of that, he was some of those, the better, the cream of the crop of Israel that were taken out and deported to Babylon. And so Daniel was part of the first phase of the deportation, but that thing went on for almost two decades. It wasn't just, you know, hop on an Amtrak and get them all out of here, but it was rather just in stages of finally, of getting a group over and then coming back for more. And, and in the meantime, Israel kind of regathered and fortified.

[7 : 02] And then he came back and fought against them, destroyed them and took them back. And, and so Jeremiah, Jeremiah's preaching amidst all of this, his, his lifetime spanned this entire thing.

And he's called to minister and to preach to those Jews that are in Judah before their captivity, as they're being taken out. But then also he's called to minister to the ones that are far away in Babylon. And that's what we're going to read here. The summit, the Jews were taken and they were strangers. Hear that strangers in a strange land. And of course it was of their own doing their rejection of God and their rebellion against his word. But what I want to notice is that God gave instructions to them on how they can live in a heathen land and prosper even in judgment.

God is still sending his word to his people. He still has a will for them. This is just, this is just punishment. It's going to last 70 years. It's not the end for you at all. God knows his, I mean, this is in the passage, um, verse 11, for I know the thoughts that I think toward you, even in judgment, he still has a plan for his people. So it's not over. He's going to give them instructions on how he's not trying to annihilate them and wipe them off the earth. He could have very well easily done that, but he's putting them through something. Now let's read the first 10 verses now in Jeremiah 29. Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah, the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders, which were carried away captives and to the priests and to the prophets and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon.

after that, Jeconiah, the king and the queen, the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem and the carpenters and the smiths were departed from Jerusalem by the hand of Elisa, the son of Shaphan and Gemariah, the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah, king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, saying, here's the letter saying, verse four, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel unto all that are carried away captives whom I have caused to be carried.

Notice, I have caused, God, have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon. Build ye houses and dwell in them and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them.

[9 : 22] Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters and take wives for your sons. Give your daughters to husbands that they may bear sons and daughters, that ye may be increased there and not diminished.

And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, let not your prophets and your diviners that be in the midst of you deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which he calls to be dreamed, for they prophesy falsely unto you in my name.

I have not sent them, saith the Lord, for thus saith the Lord, that after 70 years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you and causing you to return to this place.

So now you've got the setting. I think you've got pretty well the idea where we're at, what we're looking at. Now let's make sure we make application throughout this whole thought, because we've already seen we are considered strangers in a place that, if we had our way, probably wouldn't stick around here too long, or we'd change this place an awful lot to match what's in this book, something that would give us a better life.

But we live in a world that we don't belong, and we live amongst people that we are not of, according to Jesus Christ. And I want to make an important point here that you can take a hold of, is that your Christian life, like yours, your personal Christian life, every individual in here, not your family, not his church, your personal Christian life cannot be dependent upon your surroundings.

[11 : 03] It must be a product, it must be a product of your relationship with Jesus Christ, your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

It cannot be dependent upon a good government, upon a godly society. These things, they cannot be the ultimate factors of your Christian life.

If you live in a moral environment, then your life will likely reflect those morals. But that is not in itself a Christian life. And that is not evidence of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

For example, if you grow up in church, if you grow up in a Christian home, and you're surrounded by godly people all the time, it's likely that your life will evidence those fruits or that influence.

But if you don't learn to have a personal, this is individual now, you and God, a personal relationship with God, then you're not going to know how to live when you get out in the world.

[12 : 10] When you get out living on your own, out from underneath, when you move away from this place, and you're doing something else in life, you're not going to know how to live. And you're not going to know how to please God when you're a stranger in a strange land.

And so God instructs his people, while captives, on how to live and what to be doing. And so the title of the message is Living for God in a Strange Land.

And I want to say tonight just some simple things out of these verses 4 through 10 that I think you can take a hold of. I think it's great that they're simple because it shouldn't be hard.

And so number one, and if you'd like to fill in as we go, number one, some simple instructions from God is be attentive and receptive to the word of God.

Be attentive and be receptive to the word of God. Well, in the passage in verse 29, we see it three times in just this short passage that we read. In verse 4, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captive.

[13 : 19] In verse 8, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. In verse 10, Thus saith the Lord, and this isn't the end of the letter, it continues. He's got something to say. And the point here is that these people, these same people have heard the word of God their whole lives, yet they've ignored it.

They just took it for granted and didn't care for it. And since they despised the word. And now here in Babylon, the word of God is still there for them to give ear to.

It's still there for them. If they'd open their hearts, they would hear and receive the word of God. They could have done it a long time ago and they wouldn't be in this spot. Yet here they are.

And God is always faithful as ever. Sends his word to them. In the time of judgment, in the time of captivity, God still has something to say to his people.

Has something to instruct them. And in Babylon, his word is just as relevant and just as right and just as needed as it ever was when they were living in prosperity in the promised land.

[14 : 36] And so God sends his word. Advice number one from Jeremiah in living for God in a strange land is to be attentive and be receptive to the word of God.

You and I are in a strange land in this world that we're not of. We're strangers and pilgrims. And yet God still has truth for us to receive and to hear and to obey.

You can grow up around the book just like I did and you can easily, easily ignore it. And it can just come in and just go right out. You can just hear it. You can memorize it.

You can be familiar with it. And it just never actually take. You can never, it never just gets into your heart where it's a part of you. You know, the Bible says desire the sincere milk of the word.

You can go through your Christian life, your church life, your influence around others and never desire the book on your own. That's possible. And probably happens far too often.

[15 : 37] You can overlook it. You can take it for granted. And if that's the case, you're going to grow up and find yourself one day in this strange world as a pilgrim and as a stranger.

And you're not going to know what to do. And you're not going to know how to handle yourself. And you're going to need help. And you're going to need guidance. And you're going to need counsel. So be attentive.

In a strange land, be attentive to the word of God. It's always coming through. It's always available. It's always there for you. And it's never irrelevant. And it's never obsolete.

It's always what you need no matter where you find yourself in this life. So be attentive and be receptive to the word of God. It's better that you cultivate a relationship with this book as soon as possible.

Desire it. Like I said in Psalm 119, the psalmist says, That my soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.

[16 : 39] That's something special there. That's a heart that wants the word of God to lead him, to strengthen him, to comfort him, to care for him, to be the lifter up of his head. Cultivate something in that book.

I've tried to instill this in my four kids. I've never forced it in them. But I've tried to lead them and teach them and encourage them and lived by example to read the Bible.

To read their Bibles on their own. And when I see them, I see one or two or three or all. When I see them reading their Bible, it rejoices my heart to see them opening up a book and reading the Bible.

And I don't say, well, boy, I did a great job, didn't I? Look at them reading their Bible. I don't say that at all. I think, oh, thank God they have a chance.

They have a chance because they're going to leave this house one day. And they're going to find themselves in this life and in this world. And as their own stranger in this world, they're going to need a relationship with God through that book.

[17 : 42] So be attentive and be receptive to the word of God. That's what will get you through in a strange land. Something else, verses 5 and 6. Let's read them again.

In Jeremiah 29, verse 5, he says, Build ye houses and dwell in them. And plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. And take wives, beget sons, daughters. Take wives for your sons. Give your daughters.

Be increased, he said in verse 6. So number two, write down this. Be active and productive. The worst thing that these Jews could have done in Babylon is just sit around and murmur about how bad it is and how unfair God is or how horrible it is to live here and how much they miss their land, you know, hanging their harps on the willows.

The worst thing they could have done. They would have had just a defeated attitude. And it would certainly be a temptation, having been carried away captive in a strange land, to just hang it up.

To just whatever. And just sulk. And just pity yourselves. It certainly would have been a temptation and some of them did it. And just sit in the corner and cry.

[18 : 53] But the result of that attitude is they'd be weakening their own hands and eventually just shrivel up and die doing nothing. And as a nation, they'd grow old individually and they'd die off.

They'd be weak. They'd be unable to survive on their own in 70 years as God opens the door to send them back. They'd be pathetic. And you know what? The Lord, in verse 6, look at the very end of verse 6 again.

He says that ye may be increased there and not diminished. So the Lord actually expects his people to increase in Babylon.

And he gives them instructions on how to do that. Get busy. Get active. Be productive. Marry. Have children. Be reproductive. And so he informs them there's plenty to do.

Be productive. You can't sit with an attitude of just how bad this thing is. It's so terrible. That's not going to get anything done. That's going to defeat yourself. And Christians, we can't hold that attitude either.

[19 : 59] Some of the language that we read in these two verses, they seem to kind of have a good spiritual application to the church. It says build ye houses. Think of the house of God in this age.

The church. We're called the temple of God. A spiritual house. An habitation of God through the spirit. To be building that church in a sense of growing it.

Reproducing. Begetting. Paul says to the church at Corinth that I have begotten you through the gospel. It sounds to me like we ought to be active. Winning souls to Jesus Christ and increasing as we're able.

In the same language in verse 5, plant. Plant. Doesn't that sound like something Paul said in 1 Corinthians chapter 3? I have planted.

Apollos watered. But God gave the increase. That's a part of the gospel ministry. Talks about fruit coming from their efforts. This sounds like the gospel ministry.

[21 : 00] So be active. And be productive. You may not like your society. You may not like your surroundings. And I know preaching this to Americans, it probably would hit a lot harder somewhere else where they actually have to suffer to live for Christ.

If we were some underground church in China right now or North Korea, they'd understand it a little bit clearer than you. But it doesn't mean if you don't like your surroundings.

Okay, we're in America, but we can still say we're in California. And most of the nation thinks California is just total reprobate, total rebellion, total loss, just total kooks and nuts.

They don't believe the gospel's here at all. They're just deceived and deluded from the news. That's true. They really are. And that's not true at all. The fact of there's plenty to do right here.

And so my advice is to do something that shows that you have a desire to be successful in your Christian life. Don't just sit around and watch the world go by.

[22 : 04] Two things could happen. You could get totally calloused to the world and totally immune and inoculated that it even is there. And you're just waiting for God to get you and free you.

Or secondly, sitting around watching the world too much, you might get a little attracted by it too. If you'd get in the fight, it would declare which side you're on. And so that'll keep you.

Stay busy. It'll keep you from being attracted to the world. And stay busy so you don't grow numb to it either. Instead, be active.

Be productive. Be busy working for God. I say there's plenty to do. And you and I in Southern California, surrounded by the lost, we have opportunity to do anything we can do for Jesus Christ.

The opportunities abound. People are servants of sin. And God places his people in a place that it pleases him to do. And so it's our job to heed his word and be active and be productive while we have opportunity.

[23 : 09] Number three, be peaceful and prayerful. In verse number seven, seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it.

For in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. Pray unto the Lord for Babylon. I mean, you know what comes up later on this book about Babylon, don't you?

Some of the terminology there, pray unto the Lord. Yeah. That's what he tells them when they're living in that world. Because rebellion and resistance would be absolutely wrong for these Jews to attempt.

They've already attempted it and failed, and God was going to see to it to try to live a rebellious life in Babylon's absolutely against the will of God. His will is stated in his word.

Seek the peace of the city. Seek the peace of the city. Pray unto the Lord for it. So be peaceful and prayerful. There's some things that we need to understand, and I just think we all need to just grasp this and believe this, is that although this world is not our home, although we're strangers and pilgrims, it is where we lay our heads at night.

[24 : 29] It is where we raise our children. It is where we function. It is where we've been called to serve Jesus Christ. Right here. So rebelling and throwing a fit and complaining and resisting, how is that profitable for the work of God?

My hope and my allegiance is not in any man or in any human government, but I do have instructions from God and how I'm supposed to carry myself and act toward them.

Now, you can scribble down if you want to take a look at 1 Timothy chapter 2, where we're called as believers to pray.

As a matter of fact, it's worth reading, so let me flip there. You can write it down, and I'm going to read it. In 1 Peter chapter 2, because it has to do with peace, not of the country, not of the city, but of believers.

In 1 Timothy chapter 2, I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority.

[25 : 37] Why? Why? That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved.

So it's a good idea that we pray and seek the peace of the country that we live in or the city that we live in where God has us as strangers and pilgrims.

It's not to kick against the system. It's not to fix the system. It's to pray for it, that God would work something, that we could live a peaceable life and be able to serve him in the gospel ministry while we have opportunity.

Now, if I may, I'll just digress just for a moment from this text and from this scripture. You know, one of the big reasons why I voted for Donald Trump, why I cast my one vote for him, it wasn't because there was that many choices to choose from, really.

There was two. And I chose him. And I don't care. I don't have any, I don't apologize for that. I mean, he won. And it wasn't because of my vote.

[26 : 48] But one of the reasons I cast is not because he sold King James Bibles, although if you're familiar with that, that was just a fundraiser, and he did tons of that, if you're familiar with it. But a big reason is because of the wickedness and of the abominations that have been spread and publicly applauded and supported by the other candidate and their party.

And I'm seeking the peace of this land so that I can live a quiet and peaceable life, so that I can not just be comfortable and happy, but to minister for the Lord Jesus Christ and his word.

I don't expect a revival to come from Republicans getting in office and, you know, turning it red and things like that. I don't expect anything spiritual to take place from that.

But I will enjoy the relief, small as it is, the relief from the bombardment that we've experienced the last many years of ungodliness and wickedness just being shoved down your throats.

And so if this just brings the needle back a little bit to normal, then praise the Lord for that. Why? So that we can seek the peace of the land that we live in. To minister for Jesus Christ without being locked up or told we can't say anything or offending everybody and hate speech and just allowing the laws to just tighten up and tighten up and tighten up so that the word of God can just be pushed aside.

[28 : 22] For now, we've gained some liberties back perhaps for a few years if God allows. And so let's take advantage of that. But again, rebellion, resistance, that's absolutely the wrong outlook of what we're here to do.

And so on that note, be careful how connected you get to politics and to government. Be careful because you might be tempted to violate the word of God in pursuit of your political opinions and your political values and to keep them on the throne.

But live in peace. Be peaceful and prayerful, as it says in verse 7. Now let's go to verse number 8 and 9. And number 4, you can write down to be cautious and vigilant.

And specifically, when it comes to messages that are preached or supposed truth that's being proclaimed, policies or... Or...

Or... I don't know how to word that. In this case, it's prophets and diviners in verse 8. Or it's themselves.

[29 : 30] So whether it's coming out of pulpits or whether it's coming out of the White House or wherever, be cautious and be vigilant not to believe everything that comes in your hearing.

Verse 8, he says, Let not your prophets and your diviners that be in the midst of you deceive you. They're lying. Neither hearken to your dreams which you have caused to be dreamed, for they prophesy falsely unto you in my name.

I have not sent them. What they say is wrong. And it's not from God. Now, let's keep your place, but flip over to 2 Timothy. I just want to run a couple quick references along this line.

There's a real chain of this we could run in the New Testament. And I'm just going to give you two passages back to back. 2 Timothy chapter 2 and then chapter 3.

Be cautious and be vigilant, particularly when it comes to doctrine, to what's truth. And we get it from the book.

[30 : 37] We don't get it from the culture. We don't get it from politicians. And we don't get it from false teachers either. 2 Timothy 2 verse 14. 4 From Genesis 2 verse 14.

that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection's passed already, and overthrow the faith of some.

So we're to study. We're not to strive. There's some things it says in verse 16, we're to shun, and we're to study the word, and shun things that aren't true. Look now at chapter number three, and let's look at verses 12 through 15. Yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, but evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures. Continue in the scriptures, Timothy, and watch out for seducers and deceivers. And so here's the thought, and I guess time would fail me to really speak on this exhaustively, of the false doctrine, the cults, the women pastors, not just preachers or evangelists, but pastors, the supposed miracle workers with their supposed gifts of the Spirit and their healings and things that are going on and what they claim. I was doing some research and doing, putting together the last doctrinal booklet on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and I was looking at something about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and I decided to just to search online and watch just to hear a few other teachings on this, and I got on a video of a guy teaching you how to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as he called it. And it's grotesque, the distorted scripture and the ridiculous view that is held by just so many, and he's teaching you on YouTube how to speak with other tongues. And then I watched a video, I don't even want to get into it, but it would, it's disturbing. It's sad, it's sickening to see what goes on in other churches, claiming it's the

Holy Spirit of God. We need to be cautious living in this strange land as strangers and pilgrims. We need to be vigilant because there is, there is deceived teachers and preachers, and you've got them at a fingertip on your phone, hundreds and hundreds of them that make a mess of the Word of God, and you could just absorb it just like that, and be deceived. And so many are. Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 2, let no man deceive you by any means. And there's a verse I love, you can write this down, write down Proverbs 19 verse 27. I find this verse has so much application to this age of the internet and YouTube preachers. Proverbs 19 27, the Bible says, cease my son to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge. Stop listening to it. These are words that are causing people to error.

[34 : 40] We just read that in 2 Timothy. They've overthrown the faith of some. They've erred concerning the truth. And he says, stop listening to it. So believer, you need to learn how to ignore, how to shun, how to not heed these false deceivers and liars. They don't deserve your ear, but on the contrary, study to show thyself approved unto God, and continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and has been assured of in the Holy Scriptures. Amen. Now let's go back to one more thing in Jeremiah.

So number four is be cautious, be vigilant, because they're liars and deceivers, and they don't deserve your time or attention. And now finally, verse number 10, for thus saith the Lord that after 70 years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word towards you and causing you to return to this place. So the fifth thing in living in a strange land is be expectant and hopeful.

Be expectant and hopeful. He said he'll visit you, so he will. You have the word of God on it. And there's time that's going to pass. That verse shows 70 years, so they can just start their clocks, and they can count on it 70 years. But what can they do in those 70 years? Well, they can live every day knowing with anticipation that God will visit us, that he's going to get us out of here, that this is not the end for this nation. We messed up bad, but it's not the end for them. And they can spread that word of hope amongst themselves. And they can teach their children and generations that come in that land as they increase in obedience to the word of God, that he's going to get us out, that he's going to send us back to our land. And they can raise their kids in hope that this strange world, where we're just strangers and pilgrims, is not our resting place. He's coming to get us, and he's going to take us out.

So be expectant and be hopeful. Living in a strange land doesn't mean it's all doom and gloom without hope. There's always hope. There's always hope. The word of God gives us that hope. Now, I'm going to, we can close with this. I'll flip to a couple passages. Go to Titus. You can just grab that one, please, and this will be the last place to turn. Maybe. Philippians 3. I'm reading this one.

For our conversation, Philippians 3.20, our conversation is in heaven for whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We look for the Savior. We're down here in this earth.

[37 : 41] We're strangers and pilgrims, but we're not, our eyes aren't stuck here. We're looking for somebody. Titus 2 and verse 13. I'll back up one verse since it seems to match.

Titus 2 verse 12, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Be expectant and be hopeful.

It's not a political party that we're looking for to change things and turn a tide. It's nothing to do with this land, but it's everything to do with the return of Jesus Christ. That's where our hope is.

We are children of God, so we're looking for the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. While you're so close, flip back to 1 Timothy 6. This will be the last verse. 1 Timothy 6.

He mentions the appearing of Jesus Christ here, which is what we're talking about. And if I could just take a little liberty in verse 14 and kind of connect what Jeremiah wrote in those verses to those people, those strangers that are to live for God in a strange land. If I could imagine that verse 14 is referring to that and to all that instruction we just read. Verse 14, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times, for them it's 70 years. For us, we don't know, but in his times, he shall show who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

[39 : 51] Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable until the appearing. What's the commandment? Well, the one we're studying tonight is to be attentive, to be receptive to the word of God. Always, never take it for granted, never ignore it. You'll be tempted to getting so familiar with it, just in one ear, out the other. This is your lifeline. It's more important than you know. Get yourself a real, authentic relationship with God with this book in your hands. Be attentive and receptive. Be active and productive. Live your life like you're trying to do something for the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't just sit and wait for it to be over with. You're going to get weaker and weaker and weaker. Your flesh will get stronger. The world will either get two things numb to you or attractive to you. You need to take a stand for Christ and get busy doing something while you can. The commandment again is be peaceful and prayerful. Be cautious and vigilant and be expectant and hopeful. So we're strangers and pilgrims in this world. And I think that that works what we just studied tonight. Those instructions God gives to a people that are strangers in a strange land, they're instructions that we can follow and obey today and come out on top and come out rejoicing when our time here is up. Let's pray. Father, please take these words and this passage and instill these truths inside of our hearts. Strengthen us in the inner man with your word tonight. Help each one of us to be cautious in this world of deception and lies. Help us to ever be looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And while we wait and while we watch and while we're faithful, help us, oh God, to be fruitful, to be diligent doing the work that you've called us to do.

Lord, may each one have a relationship with you in this book. And God, help us not to get on the wrong side of things, but rather to remain innocent and peaceful in this life as much as lieth in us. Father, that we'd follow after peace and things that make for peace and that you'd guide our steps in all ways. Please keep us protected. We pray for your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come back soon and to take us out of here, that we could no longer be strangers and pilgrims, but that we could ever be with the Lord. And we ask for their blessing upon this night in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. All right.