

# A Better Country

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, last week began with a day of action as we went to the polls on Monday to cast our votes. And the next day, Tuesday, we found ourselves settling into the reality of what the majority of our fellow Canadians in each riding had decided.

And for many of us, the result was quite disappointing. We all have a deep longing in our hearts for a country where righteousness and goodness and justice and peace reign.

And yet we need to ask ourselves, even if the leader most of us wanted to win had won, could he bring that about in Canada? Or was he just better than the other guy?

Moments like these stir up a deep desire within us for a greater country. And what I want to do this morning in our time in the Word is to remind us that we who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, we have a greater country to which we belong.

And so this morning's sermon is going to be a little different. We're going to meander through a few different passages of Scripture which remind us of the great and certain hope that we have.

[ 1 : 30 ] This week I was reminded of Abraham. By faith, Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

By faith, he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country. He lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

For he was looking forward to the city with foundations whose architect and builder is God.

And by faith, even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.

And so from this one man, and he is good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

[ 2 : 49 ] All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised.

They only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.

If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one.

Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. This is from the New Testament book of Hebrews.

And the author there points us back to the story of Abraham to encourage us. His main goal is to illustrate what true faith looks like.

[ 3 : 58 ] And so he points us back to Abraham's life. There in Canaan, Abraham pitched his tents, trusting the promise that God would give him that land someday as his inheritance.

And by the end of his life, he owned little more than a burial plot in Canaan. God also promised that he would be the father of a great nation through his son Isaac.

And yet Abraham barely lived to see Isaac's two sons enter their teenage years. The words that struck me the most here came in verse 13.

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised. They only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.

Admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. What is he saying here? He seems to be saying that Abraham continued to trust the promise of God right up until the day that he died.

[ 5 : 12 ] Even though he had not yet come to possess the land of Canaan, which was promised. In other words, Abraham died believing that God would still yet give him the land.

Even though at the time of his death, he owned almost none of it. We might wonder, how does that make any sense? Well, the author of Hebrews gives us a clue.

There was something in Abraham's faith which looked beyond the present state of things. There was something in Abraham's faith which hoped beyond the mere stuff of earth and the way things were in his day.

In faith, he reasoned that there would be a future day in which God would make good on his promise. And if not before Abraham died, then after in the resurrection.

There would be a future day in which God would give him a country of his own. A place to live where he wasn't a foreigner and a stranger.

[ 6 : 25 ] A better country than the one that he was tenting in. A heavenly country. Verse 16.

They were longing for a better country. A heavenly one. I wonder if Abraham's thoughts and feelings resonate with you. Do you look around at our world?

And at our country? Do you see what the majority of Canadians in each riding valued and decided? And do you feel like Abraham did? Like a foreigner.

And stranger. Living in a country. But not the country that we long for. I want to encourage you this morning.

Take heart. There is a better country. And it's not the United States of America. There is a heavenly country which God is preparing for all who have faith in him.

[ 7 : 33 ] Like Abraham did. And it's a place which actually feels like home. Not like this world where we live now.

I was reminded also of what the Apostle Paul said to the church in Philippi. In Philippians chapter 3 he writes this.

As I have often told you before. And now tell you again. Even with tears. Many. Live as enemies. Of the cross of Christ.

Their destiny. Is destruction. Their God. Is their stomach. And their glory. Is in their shame.

Their mind. Is set on earthly things. But our citizenship. Is in heaven. And we eagerly await a savior from there.

[ 8 : 32 ] The Lord Jesus Christ. Who by the power that enables him to bring everything. Under his control. Will transform our lowly bodies.

So that they will be like his glorious body. We may be discouraged with the state of our world. When we look at the news. When we hear the results of elections.

When we discover just who there is to choose. Between on the ballot. But Paul puts things in perspective for us. Many. Live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Many. Are on the path of destruction. Many. Many. Many. Celebrate. And pride themselves. In what is shameful. Many.

Have their minds set. On the stuff. Of earth. The things of earth. God reminds us here. That if we love the cross of Christ. We're in the minority.

[ 9 : 39 ] Many. The majority of people in our world. Are against. What we love. What we value. They are driven. By their gut desires.

Living only to please themselves. Caught up entirely. In the stuff of earth. But the good news. Is that we.

Belong. To heaven. But our citizenship is in heaven. I love this statement. Paul reminds us that we. Jesus people.

Do indeed. Belong. To that heavenly country. We have a share in it. Citizenship. It's our home.

Which means that this world. As it is. Is not. Our lasting home. Canada. As it is. Is not. To be. Our ultimate. Home.

[ 10 : 37 ] And native land. We have been born from above. Of God's spirit. And now we belong. To his country. Our citizenship.

Is in heaven. Where he is. And I love how Paul describes. Our hope. Related to that. In verse. 20. He says.

Our citizenship. Is in heaven. And we eagerly. Await a savior. From there. The Lord. Jesus Christ. Who by the power. That enables him. To bring everything. Under his control.

Will transform. Our lowly bodies. So that they will be like. His glorious body. Is so much good news. In those words. Speaking of heaven.





his will be a kingdom marked by pure and perfect justice and that would exclude us because we've all sinned.

[ 23 : 08 ] We've all broken his holy law but he has loved us so much that he did what was needed to atone for our sins and put us back on the right side of justice so that we can be with him.

Let me just point you back to that word Paul used earlier in Colossians chapter 1. God has qualified you qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light and so we want to remember the qualifying work of Jesus that got us this heavenly citizenship.

We want to remember this morning how Jesus offered his own body and blood up to death on the cross for us.

We do this by eating bread by drinking of the fruit of the vine just as Jesus did with his first disciples the night before he died and so we're going to take a moment to just reflect quietly and to pray and if you believe in Jesus as your savior and king then I want to invite you to remember with us and partake with us if not please just let the elements pass you by we'll have a few minutes of quiet now to reflect on what Jesus has done for us at the cross and then once everyone has been served I'll lead us in partaking together in remembrance