

“Citizens Of The Kingdom”

Ephesians 2:19-22

Sermon Series: “Be Rich”

Introduction: We tend as Americans to sometimes struggle with church because we are individualistic, consumeristic, and spoiled. We don't just go to church, but we are the church. So, what does it mean to be the church?

Let's let Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest define the terms in verse 19. Together the terms speak of all who were not citizens

Strangers-“The word, ‘stranger,’ is *zenos* [xenophobia] ‘an alien.’

The word speaks of that which is of a different quality or nature than something else, thus, alien to it. Sinners are aliens to the kingdom of God, having a totally depraved nature that makes them different, and different in a hostile sense.”

Foreigners-“It speaks of one who has a home alongside of someone else. It is used here of one who comes from another country or city and settles in another, but does not rank as a citizen.”

Fellow citizens-Members of city or state, speaks of belonging together to God's Kingdom

Main Idea: We are united together in the church as citizens of God's Kingdom.

1. The Meaning of the Kingdom:

A. The Kingdom Manifested: There are at least 4 manifestations of God's Kingdom that we must understand.

God is the King, or ruler of all. Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who personally revealed God and His kingdom
The Past Aspect-God's Kingdom was present on earth when he came the first time (Matthew 4:17).

The Future Aspect-Jesus will literally set up God's Kingdom on earth when He returns (Revelation 11:15, Daniel 2:44, 7:14).

The Present Aspect-Christ's rule and reign in the hearts of believers (Colossians 1:13-14).

B. The Kingdom Defined:

-God's reign: Charles Colson writes, “But the kingdom of God is a rule, not a realm. It is the declaration of God's absolute sovereignty, of His total order of life in this world and the next.”

-God's restoration of us as individuals and the restoration of His created world:

2. The Members of the Kingdom: The church is those who through the cross have been reconciled to the Father, made alive in Christ, and are indwelled by the Spirit. These people are united together in one body as one new humanity and are citizens of God's Kingdom.

What are characteristics of citizens of the Kingdom?

A. We are super naturalized (John 3).

B. We have a new ruler as Jesus is our King.

C. We have a new ultimate allegiance to Jesus and His Kingdom.

D. We have a new purpose, which is glorifying God through the building of His Kingdom.

E. We have a new destination (Philippians 3:20).

3. The Mission of the Kingdom: How are the Church and Kingdom related? And what is the mission of the Church in light of the mission of the Kingdom?

How does the church do this?

A. The Church does battle against the kingdom of darkness (Colossians 1:13).

B. The Church participates in God's rescue mission of the world through the gospel.

C. The Church is to be a picture of the coming Kingdom.