

Living Between Two Homes

“9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. . . 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them” Hebrews 11:9-10, 14-16 (NKJV).

As I sit to write this devotional, the last two Sundays have been Homecoming Sundays for me. August 9th at Rocky Mount, where I currently pastor, and August 16th at Pulaski, where I first started pastoring 30 years ago to the month. Needless to say, the word “nostalgia” has been on my mind. Nostalgia can be defined as an emotional response which can be described as a bittersweet longing for the past; it can also refer to the idea of being homesick. Squire Parsons made popular a song back several years ago called “Sweet Beulah Land.”

I'm kind of homesick for a country
To which I've never been before
No sad goodbyes will there be spoken
For time won't matter anymore

Beulah Land, I'm longing for you
And some day on thee I'll stand
There my home shall be eternal
Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land

As we reflect on our lives here on Earth, we must recognize that, as children of God, we are living between “two homes.” In the communities that we live in, we may live in towns or cities, in houses or apartments, in transitional dwellings or permanent homes. But no matter how temporary or permanent we think we are, it is, at best, temporary.

In the Hebrews 11 text, Abraham was dwelling in the Promised Land as a stranger, dwelling in tents, which at best are very temporary living conditions. Yet with eyes of faith, he yearned for a more permanent *“city which has foundations (which implied permanence), whose Builder and Maker is God.”* It's been said that Abraham's temporary lifestyle was driven by a permanent vision. May we live out our lives with our spiritual eyes on the better and heavenly.

The language of the text implies not only the actual obedience in his deeds *“by faith Abraham obeyed,”* but also a very public profession of what God was doing in his life. The phrase *“those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.”* Their profession was both public and plain. The Greek word for *declare plainly* means to “declare by oral testimony and to manifest by the witness of the life” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance). By their faith and testimony, they showed that for them there was no turning back. It’s also been said that the eyes of faith are not focused on this sinful world; they are focused on the God who promised.

May we be like Abraham, looking for that permanent city and that prepared city. May we faithfully be looking for that heavenly homeland.

Pastor John Collins – CBC Ex. Board

Weekly Prayer Point

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” Corinthians 15:58 (NIV).

We worship You, Heavenly Father, for You are the One and Only True God, full of love and grace for all humanity. We praise You, Almighty God, for doing the heavy lifting and providing everything needed to accomplish Your purposes.

We thank You for being our Shield and Defender. Help us stand firm in our faith and not be moved by discouragement, fear, weariness, or doubt. Give us strength and courage to give ourselves fully to the work You have called us to do, serving with joy, faithfulness, and perseverance.

Remind us that every act of obedience, every prayer, every word of encouragement, and every labor done for Your glory is never wasted. Amen

CBC Prayer Committee