

Ambassadors And Dual Citizens

Christians are both ambassadors of Heaven and dual citizens of Heaven and their home country.

Introduction

50 or more years ago it was common to use the phrase Ambassador of Heaven when encouraging people to live out their faith. We wanted people to understand that we are representatives of God's Kingdom here on earth once we make Jesus our Lord and Savior. This was an important lesson and example for society at that time.

The world has not changed much since then. There is still strife and wars around the world. Hunger and disease are still plaguing the world along with corruption on every level of government in every nation. This should not be a surprise. But what is a Christian supposed to do?

Ambassadors of Heaven

We get the notion of being ambassadors of Heaven from Jesus' prayer found in John 17. Here we read Jesus' prayer for his disciples as the end of his earthly ministry approaches. He knows he is about to leave them and return to God the Father. Jesus prays for the disciples and those that follow them.

Let's read John 17:14-16.

John 17:14-16

(14) I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. (15) My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. (16) They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

Verse 16 says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it." This is the chief verse quoted by people who are solely concerned with Heaven and have lost sight of the mission we have here on earth. You may have heard the phrase that someone is so Heavenly minded they are no earthly good.

We must minister to those around us, whether they are Christian or not. That is explained by Jesus in Matthew 25 and is a pillar of the doctrine of Cell Life Church International. We do this in the name of Jesus Christ and represent Heaven while doing it. We cannot be so Heavenly minded that we ignore what is going on in the world, in our nations, in our regions, and our own communities.

An ambassador of a nation represents that nation's interests in another nation, but they also assist the other nation. We, as ambassadors of Heaven, must represent Heaven here on earth but also assist the nations of this world in the name of Heaven. All humanity needs to eat and needs clean water. Every nation needs peace, love, and forgiveness. All of our communities need us to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. We cannot just be focused on representing Heaven and pointing out sin, we are here for a purpose.

We are here for a purpose

Jesus was clear in his prayer for the disciples and for those that followed them as we continue reading in John 17:17-20.



John 17:17-20

(17) Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. (18) As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. (19) For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. (20) "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

Jesus was sending the disciples into the world just as God had sent him into the world. We are citizens of Heaven the moment we ask Jesus to be our Lord and Savior. We are part of the family of God and are co-heirs with Christ. However, we are living here and are planted in a place where we can represent Heaven and be of use in ministering to others. Serving others is at the center of Jesus' message to all mankind.

During Jesus' sermon on the mount that we read in Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7, we read a great passage that pertains to being here on earth for a purpose. Let's read Matthew 5:13-16.

Matthew 5:13-16

(13) "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. (14) "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. (16) In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

We are the salt and light of the world. Jesus has labeled us and commissioned us for this important purpose. Salt is useful for enhancing the flavor of food and light is good to help us see in dark places and at night. If the salty lose their saltiness or our light goes out we lose our effectiveness as ambassadors or representatives of Heaven. We also lose our usefulness in our community, nation, and world.

Our saltiness and light come from Heaven but are used where God has planted us. We need to keep our connection to Heaven and our ultimate purpose of seeking out the lost and pointing them to Jesus. Our citizenship in Heaven and focus on Christ maintain our saltiness and light which is then used to enhance where we live. We are more than ambassadors of Heaven, we are dual citizens.

Dual Citizenship

Dual citizenship is a fairly new thing in the world that has come about in the last 30 or 40 years. Before that, if you emigrated from one country to another and wanted to become a citizen of the new country, you had to relinquish your citizenship in your home country. Without being a citizen of your new home you could not vote, or hold any kind of public office. In some countries, you must be a citizen to own property or even work.

Many nations now allow you to be a dual citizen. We know people who are dual citizens of Italy and the United States. These are people that enjoy the benefits and bear the responsibilities of citizenship in both countries. Not all nations allow dual citizenship and some limit it to certain nations. Nevertheless, it is a great example of being part of two nations and having rights and responsibilities in both of them.



Christians are dual citizens. We are citizens of Heaven and co-heirs with Jesus in the family of God. We are also citizens of this world and the country we live in. Each of these has its privileges and responsibilities. They are not mutually exclusive. You can be a born-again believer in Jesus Christ and be living your life for the Lord and also serve your community, region, or nation in some kind of public service.

There is a man we read about in the book of Esther that is a great example of this. We encourage you to read about Mordecai, Esther's uncle, in Esther chapter 2. Mordecai was a Jew in exile in Babylon. He learned of a plot to assassinate the king. He passed this information along and the king was kept safe. Mordecai was then exalted to a place of honor in the king's palace and government.

Mordecai was a man of God and wanted his people to be able to return to their homeland and no longer be in exile, but he also took an active role in the earthly government and lived up to God's ideals and plans at the same time.

We can do the very same. We can serve in public service or public office and keep our eyes on Jesus. In fact, we can do a lot of good, as long as it is what Jesus is calling us to do. The key is understanding you are not only a citizen of your community and nation, but you are also a citizen of Heaven.

Does this mean that you may be forced to do some things you do not like just to survive another day and serve others? Yes. We read about Naaman, the commander of the army of the king of Aram. Naaman had leprosy and went to Elisha, the prophet of God, to be healed. After he swallowed his pride and was healed he returned to Elisha. Let's read a part of this in 2 Kings 5:15-19.

2 Kings 5:15-19

(15) Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant." (16) The prophet answered, "As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing." And even though Naaman urged him, he refused. (17) "If you will not," said Naaman, "please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD. (18) But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I have to bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this." (19) "Go in peace," Elisha said.

Naaman asked Elisha to forgive him because he would be forced to bow to an idol, but as he bowed, he would be praying and bowing to the Lord, the God of Israel, not the idol that was in front of him. Elisha said to go in peace.

We know of many of you that live in sensitive countries. Places where it is dangerous and even illegal in some cases to be a Christian. Yet, you have had an encounter with Jesus. You have asked him to be your Lord and Savior. Yet, you must turn and pray 5 times each day when the call to prayer is made. That is okay. Pray to Jesus.



Some of you are in families where being a Christian is very dangerous or are being forced to do things you do not want to do. Trust the Lord. He knows what is happening. Lean on the strength of the Lord. He will guide you. You will know what to endure and what to stand up to.

Conclusion

We encourage you to be a dual citizen of Heaven and your home nation. It is okay to get involved with public service and public office. It is encouraged that you vote your conscience when given the opportunity. We must have people who believe in and serve the Lord at all levels of government and service.

Christians cannot sit idly by and just let the world fall apart. We have a responsibility to stand up in the name of the Lord and do what is best for all of mankind and serve others. This is summed up with the two greatest commandments. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself. Everything else, all the law, everything that is right, hangs on these two things.

Friends, you are dual citizens. Fully engage in both. Enjoy the benefits of being a citizen of Heaven and your home country. Carry out the responsibilities of being a citizen of Heaven and your home country.

