

"CHOSEN AND EXILED" - - 4/21/24 (NEW SERIES)

PASTOR LEE

Through Peter:

Addressing & Describing "THE ELECT"

Chosen By God

'Apostle, Elects

'Elect Exiles'

Then & Now

All Making A Difference

Our Core Identity: Jesus!

- Pastor Lee announces new Series embracing verse-by-verse study of 1 PETER. As a segue into the first 5 verses about Peter and the 'Elect', he recounts his childhood story about being 'that last chosen for anything (sports, etc.) kid' in grade school.....definitely appreciating the 'notion of 'elect' and 'non-elect'.
- In context of bible study methodology, he introduces the acronym: "SOAP"...standing for 'SCRIPTURE', 'OBSERVATION', 'APPLICATION' AND 'PRAYER'.

1 Peter 1:1-5 - Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, (2) according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the spirit, of obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with His blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. (3) blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead., (4) to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, (5) who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- V-1..."Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ...."apostle means "sent one" ...in context....to spread Jesus' message. Three collective qualifications to be His 'Apostle' 1. A person who has seen the resurrected Jesus (see 2 Peter 1:16...refers to them being "eye witnesses of His majesty" and the 'turn-around' event that was the Resurrection.; 2. They had to be chosen by the Holy Spirit; 3. They had to perform signs of wonder (miracles).
- These areas refer to places in what, today, is Turkey (ironically, today, one of the most "unchurched" areas of the world). Focusing on "elect exiles"...first, the word "elect" refers to God's choosing ('before the founding of this world') those who will be saved. With analogies about our need 'to belong', on 'the other end' of that 'need-to-belong' spectrum is God's choosing; we belong to Him (and to His Church).
- As "exiles", we realize that these early dispersed people were not where they once were... going from an early Christian conclave/safe-type environment to persecution (Nero's atrocities!), and finally, to dispersion. So as 'elect exiles', Peter is reminding them that, notwithstanding their experiences, fears, relocations, etc., they are chosen of God.
- Applying this today, we all sometimes feel in a rough spot, experiencing some form of pain, and would love to metaphorically be 'picked for that team'....to be chosen! But you already have already been chosen....by God....WITH YOUR IDENTITY IN JESUS CHRIST! What a sacred and holy phenomena!!! HE LOVES YOU!!!
- Our culture today emphasizes 'identity' - -whether political party, skin color, gender, ethnic group, nationality, etc...and with definitions that constantly change. For us 'Believers', we ought not focus on anything other than our identify in Jesus Christ. There is freedom to be found in God...in hope in Jesus...not in other people defining who we are.
- These exiles were different than the populations in which they were dispersed....and today, we Believers are different as well and can make a difference in lives.
- V-2... God knew us and chose us before the beginning of time....predetermined! Re: "sanctification", the more we grow in Jesus through faith, knowledge and obedience, we are engaging in that process. Our whole foundation- -our own identity- - progressively, is locked in Jesus' identity. That fully embraces our security....no longer dependent on other people to feel secure.

God's Gift:
Our
Inheritance

Treasure
It!

Our Living
Hope!

- Pastor Lee shares his memories of different places lived...each having its nostalgic highlights...yet- -at the end of the day....he recognizes none were perfect...that ...just like the exiles referred to by Peter...we were meant for another place and where we are doesn't compare to what God has in store for us.
- CS Lewis: "WE ARE HALF-HEARTED CREATURES, FOOLING AROUND WITH DRINK AND SEX AND AMBITION WHEN INFINITE JOY IS OFFERED TO US, LIKE AN ARROGANT CHILD WHO WANTS TO GO ON MAKING MUD PIES IN A SLUM BECAUSE HE CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT IS MEANT BY THE OFFER OF A HOLIDAY AT THE SEA. WE ARE FAR TOO EASILY PLEASED"
- That fact that our God chose us, loves us and has a plan for each of us is so much more important than any other aspect/dimension of our lives.
- Reinforcing the point, CS Lewis also says: "IF WE FIND OURSELVES WITH A DESIRE THAT NOTHING IN THIS WORLD CAN SATISFY, THE MOST PROBABLE EXPLANATION IS THAT WE WERE MADE FOR ANOTHER WORLD."
- V 3, 4, 5:- -Further reflects these thought...that there is a "living hope"... "through the resurrection of Jesus..."...."an inheritance" imperishable, undefiled..."... "kept in heaven for you...". So this inheritance is for those who have been chosen by God.
- So these exiles (like Believers today) were blessed to be different AND chosen....with things in store so much greater than this world can offer. Salvation!

*Math 11:28 - Come unto me all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.*

**FOR THOSE OF US WHO PUT OUR FAITH IN JESUS
CHRIST- WE GET TO LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!!!**