

Principle #11

Sojourners

this world is not my home



Principles of Discipleship

All our lives, we have been accustomed to looking at the world as our home. It is the only environment we know, the only citizenship we have experienced. Yet when we come to Christ, He calls us to a different allegiance, a new citizenship. So where does that leave us? In relationship to the world we have grown up in, who are we?

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. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ 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....

HEB 11:32 And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. ³⁵ Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. ³⁷ They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated-- ³⁸ the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. ⁴⁰ God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

Main Passage: Hebrews 11

Hebrews 11 has been called the “hall of faith” because it recounts the lives of many Old Testament heroes of the faith. Hebrews 11:1 gives a classic definition - maybe *the* classic definition - of what faith is. What does it say?



Paraphrase in your own words what verses 13-16 are saying:

Read verses 17-31 in your own Bible:

The author of Hebrews makes the point that many of these people of faith did not receive in their lifetimes the things they were longing for. What is the reason (given in verse 40)?

What can we learn about our own lives from looking at the actions and sacrifices of these courageous men and women?

How does 1 Peter 2:11-12 relate to all of this?

letter from Jonathan Edwards
to his newly-married daughter, Esther Burr, after a serious
illness – March 28, 1753



“We are glad to hear that you are in any respect better but concerned at your remaining great weakness. I am glad to see some of the contents of your letter to your Mother and particularly that you have been able to make a free-will offering of yourself to God’s service, and that you have experienced some inward divine consolations under your affliction ... For these you ought to be thankful and also for that unwearied kindness and tender care of your companion, which you speak of. I would not have you think that any strange thing has happened to you in this affliction: ‘Tis according to the course of things in this world, that after the world’s smiles, some great affliction soon comes. God has now given you early and seasonable warning not at all to depend on worldly prosperity. Therefore I would advise, if it pleases God to restore you, to count upon no happiness here. Labor while you live, to serve God and do what good you can, and endeavor to improve every dispensation to God’s glory and your own spiritual good, and be content to do and bear all that God calls you to in this wilderness. Lay your account to travel through it in weariness, painfulness, and trouble, and wait for your rest from their prosperity ‘till hereafter where they that die in the Lord rest from their labors, and enter into the joy of their Lord. You

are like to spend the rest of your life at a great distance from your parents,* but care not much for that. If you lived near us, yet our breath and yours would soon go forth, and we should return to our dust, whither we are all hastening. ’Tis of infinitely more importance to have the presence of an heavenly Father, and to make progress towards an heavenly home. Let us all take care that we may meet there at last.”

* Actually the Edwards family was quite close, and Esther had several more opportunities to see her father before his death 5 years later. He was probably America’s greatest theologian.

SCRIPTURE

Which verses significantly impacted you and why?



ARTICLE

What did you personally glean from this article?



PRINCIPLE

Summarize the truth you've learned in a concise statement:



LIFE APPLICATION

1. *What makes the truth that "our citizenship is in heaven" so difficult to believe and apply?*

2. *How does this concept affect how we deal with painful struggles and broken dreams?*

