

All the Difference in the World

Being a stranger

Strange customs

Jacket Potatoes, Pies, Custard on everything

Learning more English, driving on the left

Hot water tanks, baths not showers

Not having family here

Not being British

Not allowed to vote here

Different perspective

Valuing the good things of Britain and Netherlands

Recognising what can be better in both countries

But not feeling quite at home

Here

Or in the Netherlands

Less attached to the national feelings or intrestes

Helped me finding home in Jesus, not in place or family

Israel in exile

Long history of Exile

Abraham, first stranger in Israel

"I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead."

[^] Gen 23:4

Abraham had gone forward from his father's house

People of Israel in exile in Babylon

⁴ This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ "Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷ Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."

[^] Jer 29

Returning in Israel but then occupied by foreign peoples

God's home for Israel is with him first

then in the physical location of Israel

And both will come to pass

Christians in exile (Slide 2)

[^] 1 Peter 1:1-2

Peter addresses the readers of his letter

Not just an address

But with whom the are in Jesus

Seperated from place, people, customs and nations

Like Abraham was seperated from his people and his faith

In order to follow God to a new place and new calling

in exile

Who are we

God's elect (Slide 3)

Gk Lit: The Chosen Exiles

The term "Elect" is a bit of theological minefield

"Chosen"

Can be elitist

I have been elected (based on who I am)

But no, we are elected/selected by God for his purpose

Grace

Not because of who we are

But because of who he is

What is our status

Exiles (Slide 4)

1. Because of departed Israel and live in Asia Minor

2. Seperated for a time from their eternal home

"...emphasizing that they are surrounded and outnumbered by the citizens, the natives, who misunderstood them and constantly test their faith"

This seems to describe our current situation perfectly

While 20 years ago societies norms and values were Christian based

Now it seems that we live in a different country all together and norms and values, about fidelity, honesty, truth and relationships have changed dramatically

Not to speak about the ideas of religion

Or God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit

I feel less at home now then 20 years ago

and have a greater sense of the gap that we have to bridge

The difference is that they changed in situ

Whereas for us the world has changed around us

Scattered (Slide 5)

Provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia (Slide 6)

The Christians find themselves in scattered places - as they were called and converted

They have a sense of wanting to be together

but God has scatered them throughout all these provinces

And we find ourselves scattered (Slide 7)

We do not all live in Canterbury

Our lives are scattered

where we have work, family or places of intrests

Are all over the place

See our own map

What are we for?

Chosen (Slide 8)

We are chosen by Jesus

According to the foreknowledge of God (Slide 9)

He wanted us - he did predestine us

And he knew in what situation they would be and where we would be

He has chosen us as a perfect match in our situation

Work

Family and Friends

Place and influence in our communities

Our reach

Our frontlines

Through the sanctifying work of the Spirit (Slide 10)

He has prepared us through his Spirit

He will equip us through his Spirit

Works of the Spirit

N New Life

S Sanctification

E Empowerment

W - We, Community, Konoinia

To be obedient to Jesus Christ (Slide 11)

We are not chosen for nothing

We have a purpose

To be obedient to Jesus Christ

His agenda for us

Where does Jesus put our front line?

And are we obedient to him there?

Not only in the safe spaces of our lives

But there on the edge, where we risk

being hurt

rejected

humiliated

marginised

Sprinkled with his blood (Slide 12)

But Jesus has prepared us with his blood

He died so that we can be set free

Have a relationship with him

Repent

Forgiven

Restored

Redeemed

being obedient!

Frontlines (Slide 13)

Where are our frontlines?

What are we called to do there?

Who will help us with that?

Jesus

Holy Spirit

Starting with Prayer (Slide 14)

Ask Jesus to confirm your frontline

Do you need to change your pin?

Is he calling you to a different frontline?

Ask Jesus what you are called there to do

Pray?

Listen?

Speak about him?

Address injustice/unfairness?

Help?

Ask Jesus how we wants to help and equip you.

Pray with each other

Find prayer partners and come together to pray regularly?