

NEWS AND VIEWS
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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In the part of North Carolina where I live, I can observe a lot of people from other cultures. You can always tell when someone is “not from around here.” They speak, act, and in many occasions even look differently from people who consider themselves native to the land they occupy. While that belief can be historically debated, at the time of this writing, an election year issue has emerged with the existence of a traveling caravan of people from Central America. This group of people, currently passing through Mexico, has expressed a collective intent on entering the United States at the southern border. They hope to take advantage of the process available to asylum seekers provided through current law. At issue with the issue is the process...whether it will be legal or illegal...and whether the seekers are called aliens or immigrants.

If you’ve ever been a stranger in a strange land you know how frightening it can be. You feel out of place, don’t really know your place, and it’s hard to find your place. The Lord God has always taught His people to be kind to the alien because His people were once strangers in Egypt. While being an actual physical place, Egypt is also a *type* to describe a culture of sin. God called His people out of Egypt and still does. He has called us out of the place of sin’s dominion and slavery to it. Some of our greatest pain can come trying to live godly lives and yet not coming out of Egypt. We are wise to see ourselves in a process of spiritual migration. And we can also do well to remember we are all immigrants in this regard, seeking asylum from a place of painful persecution, fear, and destruction. Salvation sets us on the path of seeking a different country.

When we are born again, we have a new nature. And God expects that we will be uncomfortable in our old environment. This exodus out of sinful lifestyles glorifies God. Trying to be godly and still living sinful lifestyles tells us something is wrong. We do not belong to this world and its bondage anymore. This passage of Scripture evokes thoughts that should be evident to all of us that have embarked on this journey. Our destiny brings us to a new destination.

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

I. A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN SHOULD SPEAK HEAVEN’S DIALECT. Our language should be different from the world around us. Our language should not be a barrier to those who desire to understand Heaven’s language. The language of Heaven is the language of love.

II. A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN SHOULD ACT LIKE THEY’RE FROM HEAVEN. Our actions should be like those of an ambassador. We should represent our homeland in the most favorable light. Our actions should match the words that we speak. When we speak love, we should show love.

III. A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN SHOULD LOOK DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD THAT SURROUNDS THEM. In a world full of anxious people, Heaven’s citizen should have a peaceful countenance. In a world full of angry people, Heaven’s citizen should be a picture of grace. In a world full of sorrow, Heaven’s citizen should look joyful.

IV. A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN SHOULD BE ETERNALLY HOMESICK. That restlessness in a believer is homesickness of the soul. We have a longing to be in another country and often lament that we don’t seem to fit in trying to live in this world. That is a good thing. We don’t need to feel too comfortable here. This world is not our home. I, for one, am eternally grateful for that.

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam