



Faith for Exiles Part 1

1 Peter 2:9-12, 16-17

Exile Definition: The state of being barred from one's native country, typically for political or punitive reasons.

As the people of God, who live in His Kingdom, our identity as “exiles” is not an experience to be rejected, but a gift to be embraced.

“Like [Peter] and [John], exiles in Babylon sometimes have a love-hate relationship with the place, like the feeling you have when visiting a big, noisy city in another country; it is intoxicating but exhausting. The complexity can be both fascinating and repellant. Those who love Jesus often feel this tension deeply; we truly appreciate what our society has to offer yet can't help but long for something more safe, more comfortable. A place that feels like home.” – Kinnaman & Matlock

I. Being an exile is being *rooted in Jesus*

“Rooted in rich Christological exposition, this is intended to highlight just how different the Christian way of life is from the surrounding culture *while also mitigating any animosity that their social nonconformity might invoke*. Peter, by calling his readers ‘foreigners and exiles,’ reminds them of the social displacement they have already experienced. Their continuing response should be to abstain from sinful desires and to live lives filled with good deeds so that the gentiles might glorify God on the day of his visitation.” – N.T. Wright & Michael Bird

II. Being an exile is *communal*

“The believing community was not just a sub-community among the Jews but a new work of God in history. Christians began to think of themselves as a third race: neither Jew nor Gentile, but something new transcending both. They were the new Israel, the new people of

God fulfilling Old Testament promises and expectations, but as a new social reality transcending the separate identities and allegiances of Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female... This was not merely spiritual renewal. *It was social revolution.*" – Howard Snyder

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." 1 Peter 2:9-10

"Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." 1 Peter 2:11-12

"From a Christian point of view, the world needs the church, not to help the world run more smoothly or to make the world a better and safer place for Christians to live. Rather, the world needs the church because, without the church, the world *does not know who it is*. The *only* way for the world to know that it is being redeemed is for the church to point to the Redeemer by being a redeemed people." – Hauerwas & Willimon

III. Being an exile is *prophetic*

"Whenever God's cause on earth is about to leap forward, God always creates a Zion. That means a community of people who live a distinct life and keep an open heart and mind for God's working and speaking. There has never been any illumination from God given to the world without such reality... Without a Zion we wither and die away." – Christopher Blumhardt

IV. Being an exile is *action-oriented*

"The point of any revolution is to turn things around – to change the world that is into the world that ought to be. The 'quiet revolution' of God's kingdom doesn't spring up big and tall, parading its supremacy over all the other kingdoms of the earth. Instead, it spreads underground. It thrives beneath the surface. When you whack some little piece off, it just spreads somewhere else. And in the end, God's kingdom wins." – Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove