

A Biblical Framework for Being a Dual Citizen

Big Idea: As Americans, we celebrate our nation—but remember: our ultimate citizenship is in heaven. Love your country, but live as a faithful steward knowing this is temporary. Set your eyes on Christ and the eternal home awaiting us. Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Main Points

1. **We are strangers and exiles** - This world is not our ultimate home
2. **We are stewards, not owners** - Everything belongs to God, including our country
3. **We live with gratitude** - Thank God in all circumstances, even when things change
4. **We focus on the Gospel** - Making disciples is our primary mission
5. **Heaven is our priority** - Our citizenship in heaven should shape everything we do

Scriptures:

- Philippians 3:17-21
- Hebrews 11:13
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- Matthew 28:19
- Colossians 3:1-4

Opening Question:

Share one thing you're grateful for about living in America and one thing you're looking forward to about heaven.

Discussion Questions:

What does it mean to be a "stranger and exile" on earth? How should this perspective change the way we live day-to-day?

Pastor Tim used the illustration of renting an apartment versus owning it. How does viewing our time in America as "temporary" affect our priorities and investments? What are we tempted to "over-invest" in?

Read 1 Peter 2:11 together. What are some "passions of the flesh" that our culture tells us to pursue? How can we resist these while still being engaged citizens?

What's the difference between being a steward and an owner? Share examples from your own life where you've struggled to remember that God owns everything.

Randy Alcorn talks about living for "the line" (eternity) rather than "the dot" (this life). What would change in your life if you truly lived with an eternal perspective?

How can we be good stewards of America (voting, serving, obeying laws) while keeping heaven as our primary focus?

Pastor Tim mentioned it's "easy" for many Americans to be grateful because of our freedoms and blessings. How might Christians in oppressive countries like China practice gratitude differently? What can we learn from them?

Read Romans 12:15. Pastor Tim shared the painful story of losing his daughter Hannah. How can we better "weep with those who weep" in America - particularly with those whose experience of America has been marked by suffering (slavery, Native American treatment, etc.)?

What does it mean practically to seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33) while living in America? Give specific examples.

Pastor Tim emphasized that the church's primary role is to make disciples. How does political involvement fit with this mission? Can it ever become a distraction?

Practical Applications:

1. Eternal Perspective Exercise - Each day, write down one thing you're investing time/energy/money into. Ask yourself: "Am I treating this as a 'dot' (temporary) or 'line' (eternal) investment?" Pray about how to realign your priorities.
2. Weeping with Those Who Weep - Research one group of people in America whose experience has been painful (Native Americans, victims of slavery, immigrants, etc.). Spend time in prayer asking God to give you His heart for them. Consider: Is there a practical way you can show love or support?
3. Disciple-Making - Identify one person you could begin meeting with regularly to help them grow in Christ. Reach out and invite them to coffee or a meal. If you need help with this, talk to Pastor Tim or elder about connecting you with resources.
4. Gratitude Practice - Write down 10 things you're grateful for about America. Write down 10 things you're looking forward to in heaven. Reflect: Which list was easier to write? Why?

Closing Thought/Prayer:

Lord, teach us how to live as grateful and faithful citizens here, while keeping our deepest loyalty and hope fixed on our true home with you in heaven.