

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Michelle, Brenda’s Daughter has Bell’s Palsy and is undergoing treatments for it.
- Kass’ Grandmother has been diagnosed with Lung Cancer.
- Keep April in your prayers.
- Debbie’s Dad has been diagnosed with a blood clot in his lung.
- Jennifer & Kevin are be traveling over the next two weeks as they move to D.C.
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class tomorrow night 7:00pm at Chad and Kass’ on evangelism.

For prayer requests, call or text
Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<p><u>Today</u> Bible Study – Tom Mitchell Song Leader – Chad Mitchell Lord’s Table – David Porter Sermon – Ross Ward</p>	<p><u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ross Ward</p>
<p><u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – David Porter Lord’s Table – Chad Mitchell Sermon – Ross Ward</p>	<p><u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Chad Mitchell Invitation – Ross Ward</p>

Blackfoot Church of Christ
 370 North Shilling Ave.
 Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
 Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
 Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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In Search of a Better Home

By Ross Ward

In the Upper New York Bay stands the Statue of liberty, a national monument donated to us by the nation of France. A placard at this monument states the following:

“Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door! The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.”

These words ring loud to a nation where immigrants have been arriving for many generations seeking relief from oppression of various types. Millions of people left their homes, family, and life styles typically in search of a better home and better life style, the freedom that they heard was available in the United States. Many of us had family that came to America in ships that took them right alongside this monument to Ellis Island, where they were processed before entering our country. Many of my relatives from 3 and 4 generations back made this journey. I met a few of these relatives as a young child, though I do not remember much about them. On occasion, discussions would come up about their heritage and one thing I remember my nana stating emphatically: They were Americans! They were proud of their new country, proud of the opportunities, seemingly prepared to overcome any obstacle to have a better life. Yes they brought some of their culture with them, but left other parts behind. Being a young man I enjoyed some of the culture they kept. Things like cooking with garlic and tomatoes, apparently all an Italian staple. Cuban bread, Cuban coffee, Spanish pork, black beans & rice, garbanzo bean soup, along with many other culinary dishes. Yet they left many other aspects behind. Languages and dialects, ancient cities with narrow streets and houses built on top of each other (Thanks to Google Earth I can look down the streets of my Great Nana’s home town of Alessandria Della Rocca, Sicily). Land that had been divided and subdivided till families had very little to live on, limited job opportunities

compared to the industrial revolution was quickly arising in America. They probably even left oppressive governments. What an amazing part of our nation's history, yet I see parallels of this history in the church for which Christ died.

1.) We must be willing to give up our life style. Immigrants that came to America were not coming here to continue in the misery of their lives, they were looking for a release from it, a better life. They realized what was lacking in their homeland and were searching for something better. New Christians realize there is a better life for them. A new lifestyle waiting for them. They realize the one they have is not good enough, is lacking. Jesus fills that void perfectly. Jesus states:

Jn 10:10b, I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

This abundant life is lived when it is patterned after Godly morals and through a relationship in Christ's church. This brings many changes to a Christian's life, just as the immigrant was faced with many changes. These changes do not happen fast, they come with much effort. In Corinth we see a people straining to adapt to the new life. We see individual's struggling with Godliness and a group of Christian's struggling with relationships between each other. We see how much pain, humility, and meekness is required. We recognize the need for a love of God and fellowman. It also takes a tremendous amount of patience to adapt to a new life style. Patience in the form of endurance and patience in the form of long suffering between each other.

2.) We must be willing to give up our family and even our very Life. Immigrants risked the loss of many things, possibly the greatest of which was their families and their lives. When we consider what we value in this world, these would likely be greatest. Jesus tells us that we must be willing to risk losing all to be accepted:

Lk 14:26, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

3.) We must be willing to submit to one another. America has been called a Melting Pot. A place where people from many different cultures, blend together, yielding up many of their customs and habits to be formed to that of an "American". This can be a difficult process but many immigrants embraced this and became what is called an "American". This brings to mind the melting pot of the new churches we read of in the New Testament. Two cultures were colliding, two cultures of people with different habits, customs, and different preferences. I'm not talking about things of Godliness; I'm talking about things of personal preference or of liberty. Paul instructed the new Christians to be unified. One significant attribute that allowed them to be unified, though they were from two very different cultures, is that of subjection. We don't often think of subjection in this manner but Paul taught the Ephesians who were also struggling with this:

Eph 5:21, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

When it comes to personal preference, we need to be willing to give up our liberty to accommodate a unifying relationship in our fellow Christian. Paul commanded we do this and he did this very thing with the church in Corinth. He sacrificed his liberty because of his love for the Christians in Corinth and to accomplish the work Jesus gave him. To a great extent, immigrants blended into "American" culture. We as Christians are to be blended together and unified under Christ.

4.) We must be willing to leave our home. Homes can be places of comfort, places of reprieve, places of rest, and places of joy. Leaving our home can leave a void in our lives that can cause great stress in our lives. Yet we see millions of immigrants did that very thing. Why would a person - leave their family, purchase a relatively expensive ticket to stay in the steerage area of a ship (with little to no accommodations), travel across the Atlantic Ocean to enter a port in a new country they have only heard stories about? Hope I suppose. Hope for a better life, better health, better place to raise children, of riches in a land that was said to have streets of Gold. A hope for things they had only heard stories about, and they came, they came by the millions. It is reported that there were 40 million immigrants from 1880-1920, the time frame some in my family made the journey. They had a hope so great they were willing to give up their family, their home, and possibly their very life; for a home they had never placed their eyes on. The Christian has this same hope. Hope for a home we have never seen, a home in a place we have never been, along a road we have never traveled. Paul instructed Timothy:

II Tim 4:8, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

There is a prize awaiting the faithful, an eternal home. One we have not seen, down a road we have not traveled. We even see that the faithful under the Old Law searched for this too:

Heb 12:6, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Giving up parts of our life can cause great fear but the hope we have allows us to deal with these stresses. As we read the New Testament we find a people searching and yearning for a better home. There are many great things God has prepared for the faithful, such things can barely be described by what we see in this world. The metaphors used in Rev 21-22 by the apostle John are truly magnificent. The things we "give up" in this world are truly worth it.