

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Return from Exil - Part 4

Scott Pilgrim

Introduction

In the New Testament we see many of Jesus' disciples disperse to different places and become exiles or foreigners in strange lands. Although they face all kinds of trials, Peter encourages them to remain strong. He tells them that they are being tested like fire tests and purifies gold. God is calling us not to be entrapped by the trials in this season nor try to escape into our comfort zones, but to engage with the broken world, embody God's love and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Jesus' feet and hands.

Read

1 Peter 1:1-8, Ephesians 4:16

Discuss

1. How have you been during these two weeks of lockdown in Melbourne? Share with the group some things that have made you feel like being on a journey exiled in a strange land.
2. Pastor Scott mentioned that we may feel entrapped in the chaos that we are facing, or we may be trying to escape into our comfort zone, refusing to engage with the world. To what extent does this apply to you? What are some barriers that may have discouraged you from engaging with the world?
3. Read 1 Peter 1:6-8. God has promised that though we may face trials at this moment, the end result of our endurance will be joy, just as gold is purified by being tested by fire. How can this passage help you endure this season? Share with the group some experiences where God has lifted you.
4. Pastor Scott mentioned that knowing our identity in Jesus can help us face the world with a sense of security so we can reach out to our community and journey with them. Is this challenging for you? What are some difficulties you face in sharing your journey with others?

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5. Many of us are feeling like exiles in a strange land but God has promised that we will return from exile to be refreshed and renewed for His work, just as Jesus was sent to the world after spending forty days praying and fasting in the wilderness. Discuss how your prayer journey with God has been and how you could deepen your relationship with Him.
6. Read Ephesians 4:16. We are joined together by His love to form the body of Christ and we are held together to grow and build each other up in love, as each part does its work. Which areas do you think God has built up in you for His kingdom? Discuss one area in which you could do your part as Jesus' hands and feet during this season.

Respond

This week, spend some quiet time with God and pray that He will open your heart and eyes to see the areas where you could be Jesus' hands and feet. Think of one thing that you could do to reach out to those who may need your help or connect with someone you could journey with during this season. Commit to doing it.