

Why Church of the Exiles?

Throughout Scripture, God's people are often living in exile, people whose true home is not the place where they currently live. As followers of Jesus Christ, we belong to the Kingdom of God, yet we continue to live in a world where God's reign has not yet been fully realized. Like God's people throughout Scripture, we wait with hope for the day when our King will bring His Kingdom to its perfect fulfillment.

Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God has come (Mark 1:15), yet Scripture also teaches that Christ will one day return, bringing His victory over every enemy, including death itself, to its final and complete fulfillment. (1 Corinthians 15:22-28). Until that day, we live faithfully as citizens of His Kingdom while living as exiles in this world.

Scripture reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). Like Abraham, we live with the hope of a better country, a heavenly homeland, and the city whose designer and builder is God (Hebrews 11:10, 16). This fallen world is not our home.

The Apostle Peter writes, "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles..." (1 Peter 2:11-12). As exiles, we are not called to withdraw from the world or to conform to it. Instead, we are called to live faithfully, love generously, and bear witness to Christ wherever God has placed us (John 13:34-35; Acts 1:8).

Israel's exile in the Old Testament often came as the result of covenant unfaithfulness (2 Kings 17:7-23, 2 Chronicles 36:15-21). Yet our exile is different. Because of the saving work of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1-11) and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17), we live as citizens of God's Kingdom while awaiting its fulfillment. Our exile is not merely something to endure; it is an opportunity to faithfully represent Christ and bear witness to His Kingdom (1 Peter 2:11-12; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

This understanding of exile shapes both our identity and our calling. As citizens of God's Kingdom living in a world that is not our home, we seek to live faithfully, love generously, bear witness to Jesus Christ, and encourage one another as we await the return of our King. We believe the Church is called to be a visible expression of God's Kingdom, a people grounded in His Word, led by His Spirit, united in Christ, and devoted to making Him known to the world around us.

For us, the name **Church of the Exiles** is not a statement of defeat or isolation. It is a declaration of hope. We know who our King is. We know where our true citizenship lies. And while we await the fullness of His Kingdom, we desire to live as faithful exiles until He comes again.