

VISION SERIES



City Church

Of the City
For the City
From the City

Jan 2 -
Jan 16



VISION SERIES

A STUDY

January 2 - January 16

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Of the City

Hebrews 11:8-16

Of The City

Hebrews 11:8-16

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. 11 By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

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# Of The City

If you've ever joined a Sunday service at City Church, chances are high that you heard the MC say, "We are a church of the city, for the city and from the city!" But what exactly do we mean when we say that? We will start the new year with a series that unpacks these three aspects of who we believe God has called us to be as a church.

Of the three, the one that is perhaps most ambiguous is, "Of the city." Didn't Jesus say that we are not supposed to be of this world? To understand this core value we will turn to Hebrews 11, where the author describes the ultimate city that God's people call home and what that might mean for us here in Beijing.

Blessings,

Pastor Ben





## Discussion Questions

1. If you can live anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?
2. Read verse 8, as well as Genesis 12:1. How does faith enable obedience in Abraham? Give some examples from your own life where faith enabled you to be obedient.
3. If you have ever been called by God to go somewhere new (short term or long term), share that experience with the group.
4. Read verse 9. In which way is Abraham's pilgrim life similar to your life of the expat in Beijing?
5. Read verse 10. What city is mentioned in this verse? As you consider other verses in the Bible, what do we know about this city?
6. Read verses 8 to 13. Describe what role "faith" played in the lives of Sarah and Abraham. If your life were included in this chapter what events of faith would it describe?
7. Read Revelation 21:1-27. What does "faith" have to do with waiting for New Jerusalem?



## Discussion Questions

8. How does faith in the Heavenly City make you a better citizen of the earthly city Beijing?
9. Read verses 14 to 16. How does the fact of you being a citizen of Heaven change your perspective on your homeland on earth?
10. How is knowing that our homeland is Heaven ultimately changes your perspective of living in Beijing as a Christian?
11. End by praying for Christians around the globe who are in difficult situations and need encouragement to persevere by keeping their eyes on the Heavenly City.





*City that has foundations*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports

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# City Church

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For the City

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Jeremiah 29:4-7



# For The City

Jeremiah 29:4-7

4 “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

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At City Church we say we are Of the City, For the City, and From the City. But what does it really mean to be FOR Beijing? Does it mean we root for the Beijing GuoAn football club? Does it mean that we must love it more than we love Shanghai or Phuket? To answer this question we turn to Jeremiah 29. Israel has found herself exiled to Babylon and God gives a very strange command...Seek the welfare of the city and pray for it.

Join us this Sunday as we learn to love Beijing even more so that we might be able to faithfully seek its welfare.

For the City,

Pastor TJ



Seek the welfare of the city

Discussion Questions

1. Tell the group the story of how you ended up in Beijing.
2. Read verse 4. What do you know about the situation of the people of Israel when Jeremiah 29 was prophesied?
3. Read verse 4 again. What are the similarities and differences in your life in Beijing with the lives of the people of Israel in exile in Babylon?
4. How does knowing that God Himself sent Israel to exile change what you think about God?
5. Read 1 Peter 1:1 and 2:11. What are some passions of the flesh that we as expats could struggle with here in Beijing?
6. What are some factors that stop you from making Beijing your homeland?
7. Read 1 Peter 2:12. How does this verse encourage you to live as an expat in Beijing?
8. Read verses 5 and 6. What are the commands that God is telling people in exile to do? How does it practically look like for you to make Beijing (or any other city you would live in) your homeland?
9. How does it look like to be faithful to the place the Lord calls you to?



Seek the welfare of the city

Discussion Questions

10. Read Jeremiah 29:7. What does the word "welfare"(ESV) / "prosperity"(NIV) " mean? Watch the video from The Bible Project on "Shalom" (scan the QR code below).



11. What does it look like to you to see the shalom of the city?
12. What do you think is the role of the local church in the shalom of the city?
13. What are some groups and communities in Beijing that God calls you to reach out to?
14. In what ways is your workplace or school the main opportunity for you to bring shalom to Beijing?
15. End by praying for the welfare of Beijing and the church playing a crucial part in it.



Seek the welfare of the city

Prayer & Praise

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From the City

Acts 1:8

From The City

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

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We will all leave Beijing at some point. When we do we must leave purposefully, missing what we leave behind but looking forward to what lies ahead.

Join us this Sunday as we discuss what it means to be From the City.

In Him,

Pastor TJ



*You will be my witnesses*

## Discussion Questions

1. Have you known any missionaries, read about missionaries from the past, or supported anyone for missionary work? People like Jim Elliot, Hudson Taylor, Lottie Moon, Gladys Alwynd, etc.
2. What are the examples of missionaries in the Bible you know?
3. Read Acts 1:8. What power is described in the verse?
4. Have you personally experienced the power of the Holy Spirit? Share with the group.
5. Read Luke 24:47 and Acts 1:8 again. What is our mission as believers described in those verses?
6. Read Acts 1:8 again. What does the word “witnesses” mean?
7. How does viewing yourself as a God’s witness/messenger change your attitude towards being a church “From the City”?
8. What are the things that would prevent us from sharing the Gospel? What would you tell yourself to do the opposite?



*You will be my witnesses*

## Discussion Questions

9. What do the four places of “Jerusalem”, “Judea and Samaria”, and “the end of the earth” represent and how do they apply to you?
10. As you read this verse 8 again, how does it look practically for you to be a global citizen and share the Kingdom of God wherever you go?
11. Finish the study praying for missionaries around the world, specific people you know who do missionary work. As well as pray for God to reveal what is your part in the great commission.





*You will be my witnesses*

## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports