Every Christian Is an Interim Minister

Hebrews 11:8-10

Introduction:

1. When we are traveling, we exist in a way we would not want to live for a long time.
	1. Drive long distances for many hours to see family and friends.
	2. Camping.
2. As children of God, we are on a journey to heaven.
3. If we are Christians, we are not citizens of earth trying to get to heaven, but citizens of heaven making our way through the wilderness of this world.
4. WE ARE PILGRIMS.
	1. Abraham and his children were pilgrims and strangers. Hebrews 11:8-16
		1. Abram’s call. Genesis 12:1-4
		2. Abraham’s statement at Sarah’s death. Genesis 23:4
	2. The same words are used to describe the Christian’s relationship to this world.
		1. Strangers, sojourners, pilgrims. 1 Peter 1:1,17; 1 Peter 2:11
		2. Sojourner: “one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives; hence stranger, sojourning in a strange place, a foreigner” (Thayer, pages 488).
		3. A Christian realizes his relationship to this world and heaven. Philippians 3:20
5. WE ARE OFTEN IN TRANSITION.
	1. Transitions.
		1. Development as an aging person, starting at birth.
		2. Leaving home.
		3. Finishing school.
		4. Getting a new job.
		5. Becoming a Christian.
		6. Marriage.
		7. Divorce.
		8. Moving.
		9. Retiring.
	2. The transition process.
		1. Ending, Losing, Letting Go.
		2. The New Beginning.
		3. The Neutral Zone.
6. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS AN INTERIM MINISTER.
	1. A minister is someone who serves. Matthew 20:25-28
	2. People who serve as interim ministers.
		1. Parents.
		2. Grandparents.
		3. Elders.
		4. Deacons.
		5. Teachers.
		6. Friends.
		7. Neighbors.
		8. All Christians. Matthew 28:18-20
	3. Characteristics of interim ministry.
		1. You are temporary. James 4:13-15
		2. Somebody preceded you. Deuteronomy 6:10-12
		3. Somebody will follow you; you are a facilitator. Deuteronomy 6:4-7
		4. You are to make it better for the ones following. Matthew 5:16
		5. Interim ministry is painful. Luke 9:23
			1. You are not the star of the show.
				1. A third of the people don’t want you when you come.
				2. The rest are praying for you to finish and leave as quickly as possible.
			2. Does this sound like the situation of the parent of an adolescent?
		6. Interim ministry is rewarding. 3 John 4
	4. Comments to an interim minister.
		1. Know that when you are doing God’s will and work; you are where you need to be. 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:9
		2. God’s word is powerful when it is read, lived, and taught. Isaiah 55:10, 11
		3. Encourage others to do the best they can, with what they have, where they are in God’s service–but leave the choice up to them. Joshua 24:14, 15
		4. You are an interim minister–not a policeman, judge, and jury–mind your own business. 1 Thessalonians 4:11

If

If you can keep your head when all about you

Are losing theirs and blaming it on you.

If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,

But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,

Or being lied about, don’t deal in lies,

Or being hated, don’t give way to hating,

And yet don’t look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream–and not make dreams your master;

If you can think–and not make thoughts your aim;

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

And treat those two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,

Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,

And stoop and build ‘em up with worn out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings

And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,

And lose, and start again at your beginnings

And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew

To serve your turn long after they are gone,

And so hold on when there is nothing in you

Except the Will which says to them: “Hold on!”

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,

Or walk with Kings–nor lose the common touch,

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,

If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute

With sixty seconds worth of distance run,

Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,

And–which is more–you’ll be a Man, my son!

- Rudyard Kipling

Conclusion:

1. The word stranger is used in relationship to the land, state, or condition recognized as home.
	1. An American citizen is at home here, but a stranger and foreigner when in Europe.
	2. A citizen of Paris is at home there but an alien here.
2. This is true in a spiritual sense.
	1. This world is home for rebellious sinners but only a land of sojourn for Christians.
	2. To a Christian, being in Christ, in His church, heaven is home; for the sinner, it is a foreign land.
	3. However, this can be changed.
		1. It was for the Gentiles. Ephesians 2:11-19
		2. The new birth must take place. John 3:3-5