

There is No American Nationality in Christ

By: Daniel Orona

There is no American in Christ, just as there is no Jew or Greek or English or French. All there is, is simply Christ. This is tough for the American Christian in particular to grasp. The identity of being American and living in this country is engrained in all of us from the time that we do the pledge of allegiance in school starting in first grade. To separate something that has been indoctrinated is difficult, but necessary. It is time for the American church to recognize that the nationality of a Christian does not matter and that the only thing that does is Christ.

Paul said in Romans 10:8-13, "But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of with which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For the 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

Paul here is clear that salvation is available for everyone, but says that is the same Lord who is over all. We often like to think that because we live in America that as Christians, we are in some way superior to those that are also Christians in other countries. The sense of national identity and patriotism is strong in America overall, but particularly strong in the American church. However, when we believe in Christ, we are then crucified with Christ and what we were before is done away with. We are resurrected into the newness of Christ and take on the likeness of Christ. Christ was a Jew from the Middle East before America was even founded.

Paul reiterates this point in Galatians 3:26-29, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

We are to be one with Christ and one with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus Himself teaches this when He talks about being the Good Shepherd. In John 10:11-16, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, on who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatter them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. **And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.**

Christ is teaching that we are one flock, the Jews and the Gentiles. This means all Gentile nations of those that believe in Christ and His death and resurrection. Understanding this teaching we need to see our brothers and sisters in Christ as equals regardless of where they are in the world or what nationality they are. Jesus reiterated this point in Matthew 12:46-50, "While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven in My brother and sister and mother."

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I cannot stress enough that we must see Christians from other countries as our brothers, our sisters and our mothers. As long as they do the will of the Father then we should treat them no differently that we would treat people in the local body. It's easy to think that we are superior in some way shape and form particularly given the missionary work that America has done. But once people come to the knowledge of Christ it is God who determines authority based on the calling and election. There are apostles in Africa. There are prophets in China. There are evangelists in Germany. All of these may have greater spiritual authority than we do and we should never look down or cast them aside because they are from a different country. We should see Christ in each believer rather than their nationality.

We are one body in Christ, brought into on baptism that is in Christ. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the member of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and have all been made to during into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many." Paul goes on to discuss how we all depend on each other to accomplish the work that Christ has set forth for us. How can we see the fullness of what Christ has for the church on earth if we don't see or understand that regardless of nationality, we are one body in Christ? Otherwise, we do exactly what Paul says we can't do by saying to the foot or the eye, I have no need of you.

Look America has done some amazing things, particularly in the form of missionary work to other countries. But that does not make us better than others, but rather makes us more responsible for the opportunity that God has given. Remember to whom much is given much is required. But even with that we should never lord our nationality over others or be patriotic to the point that we lose sight that there is no nationality in Christ and that there is only Christ.