



THE CHURCH OF THE
ADVENT

Read: 1 Peter 2:9-12

Summary: This week we are continuing our series about our Advent DNA. Pastor Tommy preached on 1 Peter 2:9-12 to highlight the third aspect of Church of the Advent's mission – that our church exists to join people to Christ's work of renewal in Washington, DC, and through it, the world. In this passage Peter helps the Church to understand who we are and why we are here.

Peter identifies the Church as “exiles” and “a royal priesthood.” In doing so Peter deliberately evokes specific moments in Israel's history, namely their formation as God's covenant people after the Exodus (Exodus 19:1-6) and their exile to Babylon in the 6th century BC. As exiles the People of God are confronted with the question “how do we relate to this foreign culture?” Peter exhorts the Church to pursue a way of faithful presence between fortification and assimilation by seeking the welfare of their city, just as Jeremiah had exhorted Israel as they were exiled to Babylon (Jeremiah 29).

Peter likewise exhorts the Church to recognize and fulfill their general vocation as royal priests, to proclaim God's excellence. Each one of us is called to be a royal priest, to be faithfully present in the world, to evangelize and pursue justice and mercy among the least and lost. We also live out our particular vocations, the specific occupations where God has called us to use our gifts and passions to minister to the world's needs according to God's priorities. In so doing we become incorporated into the building of God's kingdom and participants in his renewal of all things in Christ.

- Questions:**
1. What does it mean for us to live as *sojourners and exiles* in the world today? How are we to be in the world and not of the world, to be salt and light, to be sent into the world and yet set apart from it? How should we embody a posture of *faithful presence* and *seek the welfare of our city*?
 2. What does it mean that the Church is a *royal priesthood*? How are evangelism, justice, and mercy central to this general vocation of all believers? Consider the unique royal and priestly dimensions of our calling as reflected across the Old and New Testament Scriptures.
 3. Pastor Tommy highlighted how our particular vocations are typically found at the intersection of 1) God's priorities, 2) our passions, gifts, and abilities, and 3) the world's needs. How well does this framework overlap with your specific vocational calling?

4. How does our work in evangelism, justice and mercy, and vocational ministry participate in the building of God's kingdom and the renewal of all things in Christ?

5. How can we as a community mutually discern, support, and equip one another to proclaim God's excellence to the world? How can we better seek the welfare of our city as a congregation? Consider how each of us are called to contribute to the communal life of the Church.

Prayer: Pray that God would grant us the wisdom, humility, and courage to be a faithful presence in the world. Pray specifically for the welfare of Washington, DC and for the grace to discern how each of us is uniquely called to minister the world's brokenness.

Do: Reflect on the ways that we do and do not proclaim God's excellence to the world, and how the Cross is the basis for God's renewal of all creation. Identify areas where we can deliberately grow into our royal priestly calling and share those with one another. Reach out to each other throughout the weeks to follow to encourage one another in these areas of growth.