

## Thought for a Wednesday

September 16, 2009

In the spring of 1989, I moved my family (Karen, Sara and I) to Atlanta, GA. leaving behind family and friends to pastor the Northside Alliance Church. What was only a 45-60 minute separation from those we loved became a 12-14 hour all-night marathon when we wanted to see our loved ones. In January, 1997 we moved back to the Northeast and could not have asked for a more central location as we moved into Springville, NY – 3 hours from each of our families, it was quite a God-thing in our lives at the time. And now, twelve years later, we are once again *scattered* from our family by a distance of 9-10 hours.

Karen's Mom and Step-Father will be in next weekend for a quick visit, as they pass through on a camping trip in New England – It will be good to see them and catch up on family events that we've missed. They're visit and this coming weekend's new series on 1 Peter centers around the idea of being *scattered* and living in a land foreign to your previous surroundings...

You know, at the end of each service we have this tradition of saying, "*You are dispersed, go and be the church...*" Sounds a lot like scattering to me – Whether by force or by choice, the intent is to leave and live out the life of Christ in whatever environment you're in: work, home, school, social setting, etc. To live our lives in such a way that by our life and by our choices, just like the butterfly effect, the ripples they create ultimately point those we know, those we love, those we associate with, those we work with to the One who makes life possible and purposeful – Jesus Christ!

It reminds me of one my favorite Christian Bands, and admittedly, this song dates me – Some of you younger folks probably haven't heard of this group...

### *Not of this World*

Bob Hartman – Petra

We are pilgrims in a strange land  
We are so far from our homeland  
With each passing day it seems so clear  
This world will never want us here  
We're not welcome in this world of wrong  
We are foreigners who don't belong

(chorus)

We are strangers, we are aliens  
We are not of this world

We are envoys, we must tarry  
With this message we must carry  
There's so much to do before we leave  
With so many more who may believe  
Our mission here can never fail  
And the gates of hell will not prevail

Jesus told us men would hate us  
But we must be of good cheer  
He has overcome this world of darkness  
Soon we will depart from here

*"Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul..." (1 Peter 2:11)*

*"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out*

*of the world. That is why the world hates you.” (John 15:18-19)*

*“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)*

Looking forward to our conversations in 1 Peter over the next couple of weeks...

Be Strong, Be Courageous, Be Fearless – and remember...

Christ **IS** All!

**Pastor Mark**