



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

CITIZENS OF HEAVEN | 7/5/2026 •

MAIN POINT

As citizens of heaven living on earth, believers are called to bring the principles and values of God's kingdom into every area of life by loving others, submitting to God's authority, serving their communities, and trusting Christ above every earthly kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What are some responsibilities that come with being a citizen of a country?

Have you ever found yourself more passionate about a political issue than about advancing God's kingdom? Why do you think that happens?

What are some practical ways Christians can positively influence the communities where they live?

As Christians, we live with a dual citizenship. While we are citizens of an earthly nation, our ultimate allegiance belongs to Jesus Christ and His kingdom. The question is not whether Christians should engage the world, but how we should engage it. Jesus teaches us to pray, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Our calling is to represent heaven well while faithfully living on earth.

UNDERSTANDING

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:9-10.

What does Jesus teach us to pray in these verses?

What does it mean for God's will to be done "on earth as it is in heaven"?

Jesus begins the Lord's Prayer by directing our attention upward. Before we focus on earthly concerns, we recognize God as our King and submit ourselves to His rule. Our prayers—and our lives—should reflect a desire for God's kingdom and God's will to shape every part of our world.

Why is it important to remember that our allegiance belongs first to God's kingdom?

How would our daily decisions change if we consistently viewed ourselves as ambassadors for Christ?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 12:9-21.

According to Paul, what characteristics should mark the lives of God's people?

Why do you think Paul begins with loving fellow believers before discussing our response to the world?

Paul explains that cultural transformation begins with spiritual transformation. Before Christians can influence the world, they must demonstrate genuine love within the church. He also commands believers to bless their enemies, refuse personal revenge, pursue peace, and overcome evil with good. These are radically different values than those promoted by the world.

Why is loving difficult people often one of the greatest demonstrations of the gospel?

What does it practically look like to "overcome evil with good" today?

How can showing compassion toward our enemies point people to Jesus?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 13:1-7.

What reasons does Paul give for submitting to governing authorities?

What does biblical submission to government look like?

Paul teaches that government is established by God to promote order and restrain evil. Christians are called to obey governing authorities, pay taxes, and show respect and honor whenever doing so does not require disobedience to God. Our respect for authority ultimately reflects our trust in God's sovereign rule.

When might believers be required to obey God rather than human authorities?

How can Christians demonstrate respect toward leaders with whom they disagree?

Why is it important that our political engagement reflects the character of Christ?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JEREMIAH 29:4-7.

What instructions did God give His people while they lived in exile?

Why do you think God commanded His people to seek the welfare of Babylon?

Although Israel lived in a pagan society far from home, God did not call them to withdraw from culture. Instead, He commanded them to build homes, raise families, work faithfully, serve their communities, and pray for the city. Likewise, Christians today are called to engage their communities by seeking their good and displaying the values of God's kingdom.

The sermon identified five practical ways God's people influence their communities:

Build houses and live in them (Theology of Place)

Plant gardens and eat their produce (Theology of Economy)

Multiply and do not decrease (Theology of Growth)

Seek the welfare of the city (Theology of Service)

Pray for the city (Theology of Intercession)

Which of these five areas do you think Christians most often overlook today?

How can our small group intentionally seek the welfare of our community this month?

What role does prayer play in transforming our neighborhoods and cities?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Are you more influenced by the values of God's kingdom or the values of the culture around you?

How can you better demonstrate genuine love toward fellow believers this week?

Is there someone you need to forgive, bless, or serve instead of resenting?

What is one practical way you can seek the welfare of your community this week?

How can you become more intentional about praying for your city, its leaders, and its people?

What specific step can you take to live "on earth as it is in heaven" this week?

PRAYER

Close in prayer, thanking God for making us citizens of heaven through Jesus Christ while calling us to faithfully serve as citizens on earth. Ask Him to help our church reflect the values of His kingdom by loving one another deeply, blessing our enemies, honoring rightful authority, serving our communities, and faithfully praying for our city. Pray that God would use His people to bring the light of Christ into every neighborhood, workplace, school, and sphere of influence.

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 6:9-10

Jesus teaches His disciples that prayer begins with recognizing God's authority as King. Believers are to seek the advancement of God's kingdom and desire that His will be accomplished on earth just as it is perfectly obeyed in heaven. This heavenly perspective shapes every aspect of the Christian life.

ROMANS 12:9-21

Paul provides a blueprint for Christian witness in a hostile world. Genuine love, humility, hospitality, forgiveness, peacemaking, and kindness toward enemies demonstrate the

character of Christ. Rather than responding to evil with revenge, believers overcome evil through acts of goodness and grace.

ROMANS 13:1-7

Government is part of God's common grace for maintaining order in society. Christians honor God by respecting governing authorities, obeying laws that do not contradict God's commands, paying taxes, and treating leaders with honor. Ultimate allegiance belongs to God, but faithful citizenship includes responsible participation in earthly society.

JEREMIAH 29:4-7

While living as exiles in Babylon, God's people were instructed to engage rather than isolate themselves from their community. They were to establish homes, work diligently, raise families, seek the city's welfare, and pray for its flourishing. Christians today likewise serve as ambassadors of Christ, seeking the good of their communities while pointing people toward the eternal kingdom of God.