

We submitted an application for a passport.

Kentucky or North Carolina

There is a difference between where you were born and where you are from.

Do you know where you are from?

Philippians 3: 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. **18** For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

The worship of the covenanters, the act we commemorate today, was a rebellion against those who told them that they COULD NOT gather, they could not worship.

In our present time, we are faced with a society that says you SHOULD NOT worship.

Stephen Hawking's - *The Grand Design* Hawking makes a claim that there is no need for God since we can explain the origins of the universe through natural laws.

Charles Bukowski "For those who believe in God, most of the big questions are answered. But for those of us who can't readily accept the God formula, the big answers don't remain stone-written... We are here to unlearn the teachings of the church, state, and our educational system. We are here to drink beer. We are here to kill war. We are here to laugh at the odds and live our lives so well that Death will tremble to take us."

Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms

"All thinking men are atheists."

"The God Delusion" by Richard Dawkins

A preeminent scientist -- and the world's most prominent atheist -- asserts the irrationality of belief in God and the grievous harm religion has inflicted on society, from the Crusades to 9/11.

Reviewers remarks:

- "I love this book. I can't believe I was ever religious. Reading this just reminds me that I should be proud to be an atheist, as it's the only real logical choice in life. It reminds me that I can embrace it just as much as Christians embrace Christianity."

- “This was an interesting book. I've read Hitchens, Barker, Harris and Ebling's for the humor. I don't understand how people can still fall for supernatural nonsense. In the age of scientific information, ignorance is a choice. I'd rather read scores of books and come away with a handful of solid reasonable answers to life's questions than read the bible and think I know it all.”

Philippians 3:19 [Paul says] Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

Do you see the result of a world and society that turns their back on God and relies on their own reason and morality?

Is our world becoming a better place as a result?

- Many will reflect on a day when their children could walk through the neighborhood to a friend's house to play and return when it was dinner time – WITHOUT CONSTANT CELL PHONE CHECK INS.
- Some can remember a day when they could leave the door of their house unlocked.
- Who is deciding the line of indecent exposure on television?

- Can you remember a day when our relationships were with people right in front of us rather than staring at a device in our hand and calling them friends. I know it is a big deal when you lose Wi-Fi connection but we have lost a far greater connection – close meaningful relationships.

And without those relationships we lose purpose, meaning and hope.

World Mental Health Day

- a. According to World Health Organization, Anxiety and Depression top mental disorders
- b. According to Mental Health America, Youth mental health is worsening. 9.7% of youth in the U.S. have severe major depression,
- c. Even before COVID-19, the prevalence of mental illness among adults was increasing. In 2017-2018, 19% of adults experienced a mental illness, an increase of 1.5 million people over the previous year's dataset.
- d. Suicidal ideation among adults is increasing. More people are reporting frequent thoughts of suicide and self-harm than have ever been recorded in the MHA Screening program since its launch in 2014.
- e. The number of people looking for help with anxiety and depression has skyrocketed.

We are an anxious and worried people because we are trying to carry all of our burdens on our own shoulders.

What is so bad about having a heavenly power that you can lay those burdens upon!?

What is so wrong with admitting that we don't have all the answers to the world's problems but God, who is gracious can guide us through his Holy Word and Spirit to walk the right path!?

What is so wrong with living without the fear of death and believing that a spectacular life continues beyond this temporary world!?

What is so wrong with believing that there is more to life than what this world offers? There is meaning and purpose that far exceeds the mundane tasks of our day!

We have come believe that we as individuals are the center of the universe.

Why is it so bad to think less of ourselves and more of how we can help and love our neighbor!?

What is so scary about that?

But for some reason the world hates these things and us for believing them!

Jesus explains why in John 17:14–16 (NRSV) — [Jesus prays]

14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. **15** I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. **16** They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.

There is a difference between where you were born and where you are from.

The Tartans are a Scottish tradition

I have done my family genealogy and I have no Scottish roots.

So when I'm asked whether I will wear a kilt or not for the Kirkin' my gut reaction is that I'm just a simple Carolina boy.

I feel more comfortable in a pair of jeans and flip flops.

Where I Come From, Song by Alan Jackson

'Cause where I come from
It's cornbread and chicken
Where I come from a lotta front porch sittin'
Where I come from tryin' to make a livin'
And workin' hard to get to heaven
Where I come from

Therefore...

Romans 12:2 (ESV) — [Paul says] Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing

you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Colossians 3:2 ESV - Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Because submitting to the world means losing who you are.

You are more than the product of this world.

See where the world leads you:

- drug and alcohol addiction
- the shallowness of materialism

- focusing too much on yourself and losing meaningful connections in your life.
- the empty allure of bodily desires leading to broken marriages and families torn apart.

You are meant for more than what this world has to offer.

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord.

Stand together, as the church

Bring love where you find hate.

Bring grace where you find judgement.

Bring hope where you find despair.

You have a passport in your name to a better life.

Stand firm in the power of Christ

Because in him you are greater and

can do ALL THINGS!