The Foursquare Church
Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8

Immigrants and The Foursquare Church of the U.S.

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Introduction

Throughout America's history people have come to these shores in waves and trickles from every part of the earth, joining the original inhabitants of this country. We recognize that the issue of immigration is politically charged and often controversial. The immigrants, however, are important to God and to The Foursquare Church in the United States.

The biblical patriarchs were immigrants. Their experiences help inform our belief and practice regarding immigrants: our outreach and ministry to them and our partnership with them.

Abram moved from Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan in obedience to God's calling. God still calls His people to move away from their lands and family. Some will be called to come to the United States; we wish to position ourselves to welcome them, serve them, and partner in ministry together.

Isaac was the child of an immigrant (second generation immigrant). He lived a migratory life and experienced conflict with other residents. The United States has millions of second generation immigrants. We recognize the importance of being hospitable. We will strive to be understanding of and accepting of their journey, and we will do our utmost to protect the most vulnerable among them.

Jacob immigrated to Egypt when he was faced with a famine in his land. Some immigrants to the United States come out of necessity, seeking survival, refuge or asylum. We believe that God holds us responsible for reaching out to those in need.

Biblical Concepts Regarding Immigrants

The Foursquare Church of the United States believes in and endeavors to apply the teachings found in the Old Testament that are applicable to the treatment of immigrants. Leviticus 19:33-34 states, "And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God." Deuteronomy 24:14-22, refers to ethical treatment of strangers or aliens in regard to work practices, legal processes, and charitable provision. The prophet Isaiah stated that "the sons of the foreigners" will join with God's chosen people in worship of Him. His house will be called "a house of prayer for all nations" (56:6-7).

We recognize and embrace the New Testament concept that all followers of Christ are "immigrants" in this world because it is not our home. Jesus declared that He was not of this world (John 8:23); Paul clearly stated that believers' citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Holding to this understanding gives us a kinship with immigrants to our country. Further, the teachings of Jesus and the early church leaders clearly demonstrate God's heart to reach out those from other nations and ethnic groups.

Conclusion

The Foursquare Church of the United States endeavors to reach all people that come to this nation, whether visitors or immigrants. We believe that some immigrants are brought here by the Lord to assist the U.S. church in extending God's Kingdom as we evangelize, develop leaders, plant churches, and send out missionaries. We are dedicated to developing these relationships and to cultivating partnerships in ministry. We will commit to adapting our structures and policies so that they serve the mission to which we are called.

We also recognize that many immigrants come to this land when their lives or nations are shaken by spiritual, natural, economic, or political upheaval. But we believe many are also brought here so that they might experience salvation in Jesus Christ. We have a responsibility to find ways to demonstrate and share this good news, ultimately making disciples.

Our response requires us to live with a Kingdom of God priority in both our practice and our polity. We will give special attention to reaching those "strangers" and "foreigners" among us who are often most disenfranchised in our culture.

Statement on Immigration