

Greetings! I'm Jim Taylor, thanks for joining me and IN Favor Resources in this video blog, the third in a series of four, entitled **HOOSIER PROUD**: or, more specifically, **Four reasons *Why you should never, ever be embarrassed to live in Indiana***

As I've said, I *consistently* see this "inferiority complex"—an embarrassment, almost a *shame*. If or when Indiana is mentioned by the media, in a TV show or Hollywood production, in the news, by politicians, it is almost always negative, even insulting, and occasionally hateful.

But I'm giving you reasons why ***you should never, ever be embarrassed to live*** here—In the first post, **Reason #1** was **BECAUSE GOD** has **CALLED YOU TO BE HERE**, and **NOW** There are several important decisions *you didn't make for yourself; God made them for you* Among them—**Acts 17** teaches that God decided *when* and *where* you would live If you find yourself in Indiana in 2021, *it is because God planned it that way*

In the last post, **Reason #2** was **BECAUSE GOD HAS GREAT PLANS FOR OUR STATE!** How do we know? Because *God told the prophets* what he was going to do here, **Amos** said: "**Surely the Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to the prophets**" And you heard some of the mind-blowing things God said he has in mind for Indiana!

And how does God intend to get some of those incredible, world-changing plans accomplished? This is the best part of all—*he intends to get these things done through you and me!*

### **Reason 3: BECAUSE YOU HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN WHAT GOD IS DOING**

In **Jeremiah 29** we find a situation where some were living in a place they didn't really want to be. Let's learn from God's counsel on how they were to live: <sup>4</sup> *This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:* Notice God said, **"I have carried you into exile."** The Jewish people didn't want to be in **Babylon**. They'd been **carried there** as captives by the conquering armies of Nebuchadnezzar. They were prisoners in **Babylon**, and *they hated it*. So, listen to this, anyone out there who has been thinking/saying, "If I could just get out of Indiana, go someplace else—any place."

God fully intended to take them back to their homeland, and he did—later, but not just yet. In the meantime, God reminds them that *it wasn't Nebuchadnezzar that carried them away*—God said, **"I carried you into exile."** He wanted them to know: *"I brought you here. You're here here because I wanted you to be."* So, as long as you're here, this is how *I* want you to live...

<sup>5</sup> *"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. <sup>6</sup> Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease."*

"I put you there; unpack your bags; don't be in a hurry to leave; *make yourselves at home*; work for positive change; let your roots grow deep; plan to stay a while." And there's more: In fact, there are three important ideas: <sup>7</sup> *"Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."*

**First idea:** There is the expectation that people who have been placed in a city by God will ***seek the peace and prosperity of that city*** ... *even if they don't especially like being there.*

You may be actively looking to move somewhere else. You may not enjoy life in Indianapolis/Evansville/Lafayette/Ft Wayne/S Bend or somewhere else in Indiana.

You might be chafing at the bit to go somewhere else, anywhere else.

And maybe God will move you someday ... But in the meantime, *God's expectation is that you will work for the betterment of your community* as long as you are a part of it.

We are to be **seeking its peace**—How can we help keep our neighborhood safe?

What can we do so that we and others can live quiet and godly lives?

And, we are to be *seeking its prosperity*—We are to be living and working and blessing and anything else we can do so that the place where we live *prosper*, so that it becomes a better place economically, socially, educationally, spiritually, and in every way. Our job is not to go looking for a better place to live. Our job is to ask, “God, what can I do to make *this a better place* for everyone to live in, for as long as you choose to have me here?”

The **second idea** in this verse closely follows the first: After we are told to *seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile*, the very next command is to *Pray for it* ... And THAT is the most available/powerful/underused/effective way to increase *the peace and prosperity* of the place where we live: *PRAY for it*.

*Pray for it* like in *Isaiah 62:6 I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, <sup>7</sup> and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.*

Oh, we have a job to do! We have a contribution to make. *We have a part to play.*

And the **final idea** in this verse connects us inseparably with our community and state: God said, “Do these, because *“if it* (the place where you live) *prosper, you too will prosper.”* If we work/pray for the city where we are placed, and *it prospers*—if things improve, *then we will prosper too!*—this is a little more personal (and maybe a more interesting).

Whether you are a business person or employee or civic leader or student or single mom: *If life improves in your city, then your life improves too.* If things get better, you get better. God says, “When I improve things *around you*, I will also improve things *for you.*”

*You will prosper too!* This is a win-win situation, bringing positive public and personal results.

*Wouldn't you like to live in a better Indiana?* Well, we have something to say about that. We have a contribution to make. We have a stake in what happens. *We have a part to play.*

*George Bailey didn't want to live in Bedford Falls, but every time he tried to leave, something came up: his dad had a stroke; his brother had a better offer; (“I don't want to be here” and kisses her!); before they can leave on their honeymoon, there is a run on the bank. His best friend moves away, becomes a rich man, and mocks George for staying there. But George quietly and faithfully works to improve the living conditions around him and make the lives of others better.*

*Do you remember how it ends?* After he gets a glimpse of what life *in that town* would have been like *without him*, he runs down the middle of the street, shouting, “Hello, Bedford Falls! Merry Christmas, you wonderful old Building and Loan!” And George himself—who didn't have two nickels to rub together—is called “the richest man in town”!

And he realizes that because of his effort, his work, his sacrifice, the lives of those around him are much, much better; and because of that, *he really has had a wonderful life.*

Folks, this is our Bedford Falls: Our state/region/town/community. *If it prospers, we will prosper* along with it. Our well-being is tied up with the place God has *carried* and put us. We have some skin in this game; it matters to us; everything that happens here affects us.

And, thank God, *WE HAVE A PART TO PLAY* in bringing Indiana into its prophetic destiny. Linda Heidler asks, Why would we expect prophetic words to come true *if we don't do our part?* God has given you gifts/experiences/abilities/etc. to make your own unique contribution. We are not looking for a better place to live; *we are making Indiana that better place!*

Next: *Reason 4: BECAUSE NO PLACE IS PERFECT, BUT INDIANA IS BETTER THAN MOST*  
You may think, “Oh, I wish I could live in France/Jamaica/Hawaii/Aspen/North Carolina,”  
but if you did, you'd find plenty to complain about there, too  
And there are lots of reasons to *prefer* our state above any of the others

At the end of this process, I trust that you will be more *informed* by the facts, more *impressed* by your state, more *intrigued* by the possibilities, more *involved* in making it all happen. You will know you are in Indiana, in the center of God's will, fulfilling his plan for all of us, and THAT YOU WILL NEVER, EVER AGAIN BE EMBARRASSED TO LIVE IN INDIANA, THAT YOU WILL BE PROUD TO BE A HOOSIER.

I am so glad, so grateful to be working with all of you to bring Indiana in line with God's favor!  
Thanks for joining me today; signing off until next time, hope to see you then.



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