

“Peter has mentioned twice already (in 1:1 and 1:17) that true Christians are aliens and strangers on the earth. Here in verse 11 he mentions it a third time. He must regard this as important. So we should too.

It will help us restore the weightiness and importance of God in our world if we remember that we are aliens and exiles. The reason we are aliens was given in verse 9: *You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession . . . he called you out of darkness into his marvelous light*...and in verse 10: *now you are the people of God...now you have received mercy*. We belong to God, not to the world and not to America. We learn to live from Him. We are aliens because we are God's.

We must cultivate the mindset of exiles. What this does mainly is sober us up and wake us up so that we don't drift with the world and take for granted that the way the world thinks and acts is the best way. We don't assume that what is on TV is helpful to the soul; we don't assume that the priorities of advertisers are helpful to the soul; we don't assume that the strategies and values of business and industry are helpful to the soul. We don't assume that any of this glorifies God. We stop and we think and we consult the Wisdom of our own country, heaven, and we don't assume that the conventional wisdom of this age is God's wisdom. We get our bearings from God in his Word.

You ponder what is good for the soul and what honors God in everything: food, cars, videos, bathing suits, driving speeds, bedtimes, financial savings, education for the children, unreached peoples, famine, refugee camps, sports, death, and everything else. Aliens get their cue from God and not the world.” John Piper

#### Wrap up:

##### Believers:

1. Are a chosen people (9)
2. Are a worshipping people (9)
- <sup>9</sup> *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, (so) that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*
3. Are a people away from home (11)
4. Are a warring people (within our inner selves) (11)
5. Are to live uprightly lives (12) [They are watching!]

**Series:** Biblical Gen. Ed.

**Title:** Where Is Your Furniture?

**Topic:** Be a stranger

Today we are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of 1 Peter. We quickly see a description of believers with a call to live our lives on display. Keep in mind that he was writing to persecuted people.

**1 Peter 2:** <sup>11</sup> *Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.* (NIV)

(Sojourners and pilgrims, NKJ)

<sup>11</sup> *Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. <sup>12</sup> Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.* (NASB)

**1. Believers are a people away from \_\_\_\_\_.** Verse 11

1. Aliens (foreigners/ sojourners) means literally to dwell near and thus to have a home alongside of. It refers to a person living in a foreign land *alongside* of people who are not of his kind. In short, it refers to dwelling at a place only for a short time. The idea is that of a **sojourn** which describes one's stay in a foreign place as a temporary resident.

2. Strangers (exiles/pilgrims) is describing someone who passes near but on to something beyond. It literally means a stranger alongside. This person is not simply one who is passing through, but a foreigner who has settled down, however briefly, next to or among the native people.

#### Still verse 11:

- A. There is a \_\_\_\_\_ to develop (if it isn't already).  
We are aliens and strangers on this earth which is for now under the dominion of the evil one. We're not simply foreigners, we're on enemy turf!



Our sense of identity should not be derived from this world, but from our relationship to God and His people, bound for heaven.

“Most people think that they’re in the land of the living, heading toward the land of the dead. But the truth is we’re in the land of the dying, heading toward the land of the living.” Hendricks

Aliens/strangers don’t get attached to the country they’re passing through. They have a destination in mind, and they look forward to getting there. If they pass through a scenic area, they’ll enjoy the beauty, but they won’t decide to move there. They have a traveler’s mentality that affects how they live on the trip.

## 2. Believers are a people at \_\_\_\_\_.

Verse 11

*Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, [as aliens and strangers and as sojourners and pilgrims,] to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.*

Always at the root of *urge* (parakaleo) is the idea of enabling a person to meet a difficult situation with confidence.

## B. There is a \_\_\_\_\_ to fight.

Waging war points not to a single battle but to a military campaign. Every believer faces a \_\_\_\_\_ struggle against these fleshly lusts which, if yielded to, will take a person captive, and destroy him.

*Abstain:* away from - the idea of putting some distance between.  
*Sinful desires, fleshly lusts:* “*The desires of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, [and] carousing*” (Gal. 5:19-21).

Romans 7:15-23:

Peter calls for the believer to hold himself away from contact or influence of the strong desires that originate from our utterly depraved nature inherited from Adam.

Our old nature is not eradicated at conversion, and it does not grow weaker as we grow older. We’re in a war for the rest of the time that we’re in this body.

## 3. Believers are a people who live \_\_\_\_\_.

Verse 12

<sup>12</sup> *Live such good lives or* <sup>12</sup> *Keep your behavior excellent:* Present tense, so always do this.

“One of Peter’s favorite words is the Greek word, *anastrophe*. He uses it six times in 1 Peter (1:15, 18; 2:12; 3:1, 2, 16) and twice in 2 Peter (2:7; 3:11). It is only used five other times in the entire New Testament. It means “way of life” or “behavior.” The point is, as Christians our way of life, our conduct and behavior should stand out like a foreigner stands out. This doesn’t mean weird, but distinct. Christians should stand out as godly people in a corrupt, ungodly world.” Cole

## C. There is a \_\_\_\_\_ that is on display.

<sup>12</sup> *Live such good lives among the pagans that [so that], though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. (in the day of visitation)*

Notice that the pagans (“Gentiles”) \_\_\_\_\_ our good deeds. This word has the nuance of long-term, reflective observation. Even if you’re not aware of it, unbelievers are watching your life. They see how you react to things at work. They observe how you talk about others. They watch how you deal with problems. They notice how you treat your family.

“The goal of human behavior is the glory of God. *Keep your behavior excellent so that . . . the Gentiles might glorify God.* The positive significance of our lives is derived from whether our lives direct people’s attention to the glory of God.

If we live our lives in such a way that they don’t point people to the glory of God, then our lives are without positive significance from a Christian standpoint. What we become is just an echo of a God-neglecting culture. We fit into the world so well that our lives don’t point beyond the world. We are no longer aliens and strangers, but simply conforming citizens of the God-ignoring world.” John Piper



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**More:**

1. What Sinks Ships? - Someone has pointed out that it isn't the ship in the water but water in the ship, which sinks ships. A ship can ride out the most severe storm so long as it isn't capsized or punctured so that water gets inside. There may be a great external threat, but if the water can be kept out, the ship will remain afloat. It's just so with the spiritual life of a Christian. We are in the world, but not of the world. All around us, and often very close to us, there are immoral and unspiritual elements which, if allowed to penetrate our defense, will surely "sink" us. Those elements must be kept out at all costs. We must be strong to keep the world out of our hearts and lives. John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1John 2:15), and then identifies those things more closely as the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life." The problem isn't the Christian in the world, it's the world in the Christian. Whatever takes our eyes off Christ, discourages us from serving Him in the church, or compromises our spirituality and morality in any way, can destroy us.

2. Cal Thomas, a committed Christian who is a syndicated newspaper columnist, wrote:

I got a letter from an editor of a newspaper that recently started carrying my column. He said, "I'm so frustrated because I'm the only believer on the entire editorial staff." I wrote back and said, "Let's say that you weren't on the newspaper staff but that you were a CIA plant in the politburo of the Soviet Union. Would you be complaining that you were the only one there? You would be rejoicing that your government had placed you in such a strategic position." That is the attitude we ought to have. God has placed us in strategic positions no matter what our job is, whether we are employed or not. If we can catch that vision, if we can see ourselves as the spiritual equivalent of CIA plants and the world as the politburo, then I think we can get on fire for God and really do something significant.

3. David Wells in his book called *God in the Wasteland* says,

It is one of the defining marks of Our Time that God is now weightless. I do not mean by this that he is ethereal but rather that he has become unimportant. He rests upon the world so inconsequentially as not to be noticeable. He has lost his saliency for human life. Those who assure the pollsters of their belief in God's existence may nonetheless consider him less interesting than television, his commands less authoritative than their appetites for affluence and influence, his judgments no more awe-inspiring than the evening news, and his truth less compelling than the advertiser's sweet fog of flattery and lies. That is weightlessness. It is a condition we have assigned him after having nudged him out to the periphery of our secularized life. His truth is no longer welcome in our public discourse. The engine of modernity rumbles on, and he is but a speck in its path.