

The Wisdom Of Scripture: Think Like A Stranger

1 Pet 2:11

1 Peter 2:11 - Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

Introduction:

- A. Our text uses two words to describe Christians: aliens and strangers (strangers). I wonder how many folks would understand Peters point.
- B. Our understanding of the word stranger suggests someone unknown. Alien perhaps suggests someone who is from a different country or perhaps a different planet. Yet, the Jew of Peter's day would have understood he was speaking of someone who had no permanent home where they were living.
- C Indeed, 1 Pet 1:1 indicates he writes primarily to Jewish Christians who were scattered throughout the world. The wisdom of scripture to Christian people is think like a stranger.

1 Peter 1:1 - Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen

I. We Are Temporaries!

- A. We may not think in those terms
 - 1. I am a citizen; I own property; I have plans
 - 2. We spend our lives planning to live here
 - 3. We put down roots - become permanent
 - 4. In that thinking there is danger (so Lk 12:20,21)

Luke 12:20-21 - "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

- B. We are clearly earthly temporaries
 - 1. Tent/tabernacle? an apt description of both our human bodies and human state - 2 Cor 5:1

2 Corinthians 5:1 - For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

- 2. Once to die - here's our future - Heb 9:27

Hebrews 9:27 - And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

- 3. Expectation? death and resurrection - 1 Cor 15:19

1 Corinthians 15:19 - If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

- 4. But do we think like strangers

- C. We live in view of the present, this life!

- 1. Every waking moment consumed with the here and now

- 2. We need, though, to remember 1 Cor 7:31

1 Corinthians 7:31 - and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

- 3. Yes, we must use the world – we're here

- 4. But if we think like strangers it does not become a consuming thing! - note Heb 11:13-16

Hebrews 11:13-16 - All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their

own. And indeed, if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

II. *Advice For Strangers?*

A. Abstain from fleshly desires - 1 Pet 2:11

1 Peter 2:11 - Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

1. There are enemies of strangers!
2. Fleshly lusts - an entire realm of casual desires which, without discipline, can undo us
3. Listen: Lam 4:5 - what a graphic picture of what happens when Gods people stoop to the flesh

Lamentations 4:5 - Those who ate delicacies Are desolate in the streets; Those reared in purple Embrace ash pits.

4. Do we really appreciate the real-life perspective Paul brings us - Rom 8:5-8

Romans 8:5-8 - For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

5. Abstain: have nothing to do with!

B. Exemplify the spiritual life - 1 Pet 2:12

1 Peter 2:12 - 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.

1. Certainly, abstaining is part of this
2. But there are some positives here a manner of life known for its goodness
3. Because of the moral/ethical strictness, folks will know you to be different (like an accent)
4. Already they are watching - what will they see?
5. Good works - making your surroundings better, pleasant, desirable - Titus 2:14

Titus 2:14 - who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

C. Orderly in behavior - 1 Pet 2:13-16

1 Peter 2:13-16 - Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.

1. True, our Sovereign is above the king
2. But strangers are not rabble rousers - they will respect, honor the laws, conventions of the land
3. Servants of God do not use their freedom to the hurt of to others - are responsible people
4. Should be good neighbors - good friends - speaking well of others, etc.
5. Listen: Titus 2:6-10 adorning the doctrine by orderliness of life

Titus 2:6-10 - Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so

that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

D. Value others - 1 Pet 2:17

1 Peter 2:17 - Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

1. Honor - to prize, to value
2. Some folks honor things and use people!
3. Strangers use things and honor people
4. Such honoring can well open doors of opportunity - those people have souls
5. Strangers want to touch others' lives well

Close:

Do you think and act like a stranger?