

**General Topics :: Aliens and Strangers****Aliens and Strangers - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2004/5/5 14:16**

I just typed this up for my web site, and thought I'd share :-)

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

(1 Peter 2:11; NASB)

There is something different about those who are from another country. Some foreigners stick out so badly that you could pick them out of a large crowd as not fitting in, and coming from another country. Some are not so obvious. Still just the same, if you were to bump into somebody from another country and begin a conversation with them, you would quickly recognize they were not from around your neck of the woods.

A Christian must understand themselves and such, and be understood as such. As Christians, "our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). We are in this world, but we are not of this world. We are just visitors. We are just pilgrims. We are just those who are passing through. There should be much parallel between the Christian life and being a foreigner in another country. Foreigners are often distinct from the country they find themselves visiting. Some obvious differences are apparent at first sight.

Many foreigners look different, talk different, dress different, and often just seem like they are lost and don't belong. If you were to sit down over lunch with somebody from another country, you would probably ask them many questions about the land they came from. You'd ask them about their customs, their government, their currency, their history, and their capital city. Over the course of your meal, you would probably notice that they don't quite have the same tastes as you do. You would probably notice that they don't find some of your jokes funny. Some comments you might make rather casually and are socially acceptable in your country might be down right offensive in theirs.

Are you hearing what the Spirit of God is trying to say to you today?

Christians are not just sinners who have received forgiveness. When you were born again of the Spirit of God, if indeed you were, then there should have been a profound change in your life. When you were born again through the Spirit, your birth certificate should now read: "Born in the City of God." As a result we should no longer be as we once were. The old things have passed away, and behold, all things have been made new. You have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of Light. You are a new pedigree. You are what the early Christians called themselves, "the third race," for you are no longer Jew or Gentile, you are a new race of man, one from heaven.

There should be something totally profound and different about your life. As a Christian, whose citizenship is in heaven, you should simply not fit in this world. You should stick out as not being from here. The way you live your life should be as if you were in heaven, where the presence of God is manifest. Tell me, are you different? Do you stick out? Do people notice that your manner of dress has changed. Do people notice that you now talk kinda funny? Do they hear you talking in another language? Do people notice that you do not hunger and thirst for the same things that they do? Do people notice that when a racy joke is told that you do not laugh? Perhaps instead of hearing a chuckle as they might expect, instead they see a tear?

Congrats, you are a Christian! But nobody in the world knows it but yourself and those whom you tell. And when you do tell them, they are shocked and say in amazement, "Oh, I just did not know!" I am not trying to come down hard on you. I myself have for the great majority of my Christian life been rather unknown as a Christian. I've worked with people for over a year who had no clue that I was a Christian. That simply should not have ever been.

Nor should it be in your life. Come, let us examine some situations in life. Are you different? Do you go to the same movies that you used to go to? Do you watch the same TV programs that you used to? Do you listen to the same music? Do you still just store up your money in barns that will burn? Do you still hold unforgiveness in your heart towards another? Do you still gossip? Do you still tell off-colored jokes? Do you still play politics at work, and put people down so that you

might get ahead? Do you still lie to friends, family, coworkers, bosses, and clients? How about your free time? How do you spend it? Do you spend it engaged in long distant phone calls and letter writing to your Father back home? If you were to get a letter from Zion in the mail, wouldn't you drop everything you were doing to read that letter? Do you spend much time reading over His long letter that He has written to you, or do you just sometimes skim over it, saying you'll read a page per day?

We as foreigners in this world must keep the exhortation the apostle Peter gave us, to abstain from fleshly lusts and desires. We must realize that we are not here in this world as simply somebody who is going to visit a distant cousin. Rather, we are here as ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20). An ambassador is somebody who goes to another country to represent the nation that he is from. An ambassador means business. He is not a tourist who is coming to get and take in all that he can from the land he's in. He is here to conduct business, represent his king, and come home back home. As ambassadors of Christ, it is absolutely important we maintain our identity as foreigners, and remain as distinct as possible. We are here on royal business, and know that every single action we do is important, for we are here representing Christ, and anything that is done or said will be as his representative. So, let us represent Him well.

Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

(1 Cor 15:34; NASB)

You might be the only Jesus some people know. You might be the only Bible somebody ever reads. Which is why it is so important in this day we live in that we cease sinning, and conduct ourselves with the upmost sobriety. As an ambassador for Christ in this world, you might be the only chance people have in knowing anything of Him and His kingdom. The media does a great deal of reporting on the country we are from, but most of it is simply not accurate at all, and often deliberately so.

There is simply no chance people will be freed from this world outside of the Lord using us. We must lead people into seeing Jesus through us. We must lead people to encounter Christ, through the fruits of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. Unless people genuinely see Christ in us, they will think of us no better than a drunkard who makes all sorts of boasts while in a bar, who tells of all he's done and everywhere he's been, yet doesn't have a thing in the world to show for it.