

DAY 1
**LIVING AS A STRANGER
ON THE EARTH**

This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to God's chosen people who are living as foreigners in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. May God give you more and more grace and peace.

—1 Peter 1:1–2

Everything about us was different. Our clothes, color, language, lifestyle, and life experience were a world apart from those living in cardboard and sheet-metal shanties lined side by side in the sprawling slums of Mathare. As we walked through the Nairobi slums on a narrow dirt path littered with garbage, trying to avoid the mud and puddles of stagnant water, we looked, talked, and felt like “strangers.”

Those of us called by God, bought with the blood of Christ, and set apart by the Holy Spirit can get a little too comfortable with this world, can't we? We become settlers instead of strangers,

surrounding ourselves with the “necessities” of life, obsessing over the “now,” and putting the eternal out of our minds. The world becomes our home, and heaven, well... it’s a nice thought to talk about when loved ones die and go to a “better place.”

In his letter to “God’s chosen people who are living as foreigners,” the apostle Peter calls us to the life of a sojourner headed for heaven who is just passing through town on our way. That focus makes us look, talk, and feel different. Not polyester-leisure-suit-wearing-and-standing-on-the-corner-telling-people-to-turn-or-burn different, but lives that demonstrate the Living Hope of God’s presence different. So, as for me, I am trying to keep the Mathare “stranger” feeling and not get too comfortable with this short stint on earth. Want to join me on the sojourn?

*Father, may we hold the uncertain things
of this earth loosely and the certainty of heaven
with a firm grasp. Help us to live with and
demonstrate the Living Hope within us.
In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

DAY 2
**DON'T GET
COMFORTABLE**

*But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives.
And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.*

—Philippians 3:20

Growing up, I used to listen to a guy named Bob Harrington, the self-proclaimed “Chaplain of Bourbon Street.” When anyone asked Harrington where he was headed, he’d say, “Heaven. Just passing through town on my way.” I always loved that line. It’s a great description of the truth in today’s passage.

The believer is a stranger and sojourner on this earth. God has made us for eternal things, not the shiny, temporal, tempting things that surround us. The reason we are so often dissatisfied with the stuff around us is because we were not made to be satisfied with the stuff around us. We long for something more, and that “more” is heaven—where our Savior is. We eagerly await his coming.

Certainly our feet are planted on the earth ... for now. There are bills to pay, families to provide for, relationships to enrich,

and responsibilities that only we can fulfill. But don't get too comfortable. Keep your "passport" with you at all times. Keep your bags packed. This is a temporary layover. Under "Citizenship" your passport is marked "Heaven"! That's where we are headed. We're just passing through town on our way.

*Father, never let us get too comfortable
in this land of sojourning.
Remind us often of eternal stuff.
Keep our hearts yearning for eternity.
In Jesus' name. Amen.*