

SOARING THROUGH THE BIBLE

September 3, 2010

“Aliens and Strangers”

1 Peter 2:11-12

Today is, Friday, September 3. Thank you for joining us for today’s edition of Soaring. My name is David Cooper and I am one of the pastors at South Shore. The scripture reading for today is from 1 Peter 2:11-12. If you have not read the passage, take time now to read the verses and then rejoin us for the devotional.

My last Soaring Devotional talked about living our lives in obedience to the authorities placed over us and in right relationship with our neighbors. I ended the devotional with a reminder that Christ is coming again soon. Today I am beginning with another reminder to live our lives in the anticipation of the Second Coming of Christ. We do not hear much talk about this in Christian circles. But we must! Christ is coming back. What a difference it will make! Is it a waste of time to focus on the Lord’s return? Absolutely not! It’s biblical; it’s the very thing Titus 2:13 says we ought to do: “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”

Peter uses a similar challenge for us in the verses of today’s text. We are to live our lives as aliens and strangers in the world. Hebrews 11:10 says Abraham was “looking forward to the city with foundations whose architect and builder is God.” An old hymn we used to sing said, “This world is not my home, I’m just passing through, my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue, the angels beckon me from Heaven’s open door and I can’t feel at home in this world anymore.”

Our new position as God’s own possession sets us apart from the people of this world to become aliens in this world. We now live in a country to which we do not belong, and our true citizenship is with Christ in heaven. Paul said in Philippians 3:20 “But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,” Hebrews 11:16 says “they were longing for a better country – a heavenly one.”

Because we are foreigners on this earth, we must abstain from the world’s evil pleasures, which seek to destroy our soul.

Peter in our text says “abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.”

Paul writes in Galatians 5:16-26 about the acts of the sinful nature and the challenge that brings to our walk with Christ. The sinful nature (Greek word Sarx) pictures the human nature with its corrupt desires. We continually wrestle with the sinful nature and must work to keep it under control. Galatians 5:21 says that those who practice the acts of the sinful nature cannot inherit God's kingdom. Therefore, this sinful nature must be resisted and put to death in a continual warfare that the believer wages through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 12 of our text today concludes Peter's thoughts. He says, "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." We should live disciplined lives as Christians so that our neighbors and the world around us see Jesus in us. Personal and private lives of abstinence. Public lives that reflect the nature and virtue of Christ. Our lives should be the testimony of the gracious working of God's spirit in us.

So, what do we do in anticipation of the second coming of Christ?

1. Get your act together. Live disciplined and distinctive Christian lives.
2. Don't sit around waiting for some bugle call or looking for the rapture cloud.
3. Don't quit work and set dates for Christ coming.
4. Live your life every day (as if it's your last) for Christ's glory.
5. Do your work diligently on your job and in your home (as if He isn't coming for another ten years) for his names sake.
6. Make absolutely sure you are ready for Christ's second coming.

Are you ready?

Thank you for joining us for today's edition of Soaring through the Bible. God bless you today!