

Aliens

11 Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners” to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. 12 Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

1 Peter 2:11-12 (NLT)

1) Imagine you are an Iraqi Christian living in America these last seven years. What would it be like? What trials or difficulties would you likely encounter? How would you feel? Considering the above, how would you want or need to live your life?

2) 1 Peter 1.1 (NASB) “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who *reside as aliens...*”

“resident” *adj* 1. living permanently or for a considerable period of time in a particular place 2. living somewhere as part of a particular job

“alien” *n* 2. somebody who is a citizen of a country other than the one in which he or she lives or happens to be 3. somebody who does not belong to, is not accepted by or does not feel part of a particular group or society

Read Eph. 2.11-19 and Phil. 3.18-20. Describe how the above definition relates to you.

3) The fancy theological term for living as resident aliens is “eternal perspective,” which means basing life choices on eternal values rather than earthly, temporal values. Beginning with the things Peter mentions in 1.1.17-25, what things are temporal/perishable and what are eternal?

4) “Therefore” (1.2.1), our identity as resident aliens (1.1.1) should significantly impact how we live. Summarizing the letter’s main points, how does Peter say we are to live as resident aliens?

According to 1.2.11-12, why is living this way important for resident aliens?

5) Scripture identifies many resident aliens that lived before Peter’s time. Read Heb. 11.1-16, Psalm 39, 119.19, 1 Chr. 29.10-16 and John 1.11. Comment on these examples.

6) In 1.5.13, Peter sends greetings from a “she” in “Babylon”? Does he mean the literal Babylon (located in modern day Iraq)? Or is this a metaphor for another place? Hint: what significance did Babylon have in Jewish history? Read Lev. 26:14-17,40-45, Jer. 25:1-14 & 29:1-14, and Daniel (who I consider a prototype for resident aliens).

Who is “she”? How does this relate to being “resident aliens”?

Read: Next week’s sermon (5/23/2010) starts our new series in which we will go through the Gospel of Mark together. Take time prior to next Sunday to read through Mark once, pray over major themes that surface, meditate on the passages that strike you, etc.

* This guide is from Ryan Roeder’s 2004 group guide.