

1 PETER 1:17-19 HOLY LIVING

¹⁷ Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

When God called Abram and covenanted with him, he called a people to himself so that through them he might reveal himself to the world. The first command to Abram was to leave his home, his father, his people and go to a place where he'd be a stranger. This is how God sets us apart...how he makes us holy. Like Abram, we are to respond to God out of reverence and respect for who he is. Holiness is the sum of God's call and our obedient response. By our actions we can refuse to be set apart.

What can be stranger in a world that puts a premium on silver and gold than a community of people that gives even higher value to the blood of an executed criminal? As believers in Jesus Christ, God calls us to be different, to be strangers in this world. Why? Because God is asking us to participate in the redemption of the world. The only way people will see the emptiness of the worldly way of life is by seeing the fullness of a life set apart by God, but lived in their midst.

We are different. We have been redeemed by Christ. We are citizens of the Kingdom...strangers and aliens in this world. We are no longer to live for ourselves but for the One who died for us. God's love is to rule our lives and not the love of self. Now that is strange in this world – it's holy.

Lord God, keep me from the fear of being seen as alien to anything or anyone other than you. Put in my heart the desire to live my life only according to your will. Amen.