

Radically Different
Are You Strange To The World?
1 Peter 1:1-2, 17-21

The Big Idea: Being radically different than the world means that we are strangers in this world.

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ: To God's elect, **strangers** in the world...” 1 Peter 1:1

“Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as **strangers** here in reverent fear.” 1 Peter 1:17

“Dear friends, I urge you, as **aliens and strangers** in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.” 1 Peter 2:11

- Question: If you are a follower of Jesus, do you seem **strange** to the world?

The Danger: We sometimes embrace misconceptions as to what makes us strange to the world.

- Being strange is not ultimately about **looking** or **sounding** different than the world.
- Being strange is not about having a lot of **rules**.
- Being strange is not about spending a lot of time at **church**.

The Challenge: We need to live like a stranger.

- We are strangers in that we live with a **holy fear** of Father God.

“...live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.” 1 Peter 1:17a

Note: This is not cringing fear, but the fear of **awe** and **reverence**.

- We are strangers in that we care more about the **Father's** opinion of us than the **world's** opinion.

“Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.” John 12:42-43

- We are strangers in that we pursue the values of **heaven** rather than the values of **earth**.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” Colossians 3:1-2

The Bottom Line Question: Are you living with a holy fear of God that makes you strange to the world?

“Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble.” Proverbs 28:14

Study Questions: Read 1 Peter 1:1-2, 17-21

1. What do you think of when you hear the word stranger?
2. Why does Peter choose this word to describe people who are followers of Jesus? What is he trying to communicate through that image?
3. Look at the misconceptions we have about what it means to look like a stranger, i.e., to look different than the world. Can you give some examples of these misconceptions?
4. Notice that in verse 17 Peter uses a central concept to define what it means to live as a stranger, that we live with a holy fear of God. Answer the following.
 - How would you define this fear of God? How is it different than cringing fear?
 - Read Isaiah 6:1-8 and Acts 5:1-11. What do they teach you about the holy fear of God?
 - How does the fear of God makes us different than the world? How does it help us care more about God's opinion than those of the world?
 - Where are you at in the struggle between caring more about God's opinion than the world's opinion?
 - How does the fear of God help us focus on the values of heaven rather than the values of earth?
5. Do you think people around you see you as a stranger in this world? Why or why not? What do you need to do so that they will see you as a stranger in the proper way?