

Strangers

by Kelly McFadden

Dear brothers and sisters, you are foreigners and aliens here. So I warn you to keep away from evil desires because they fight against your very souls. — 1 Peter 2:11

Earlier this year, I spent a few days in a little village in Scotland called Gullane. What makes Gullane famous is that it is home to Muirfield Golf Course and *The Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers*. Their recorded history dates back to 1744, when the club wrote the original 13 rules of golf. The unique aspect of being there was that I was allowed inside the clubhouse. Few women get this opportunity, as it is an all men's club. I found myself carefully minding my manners, enjoying the privilege, but never quite feeling totally at home inside. For as welcoming and as wonderful as everyone was, all the ladies and guests knew that the moment the match was over, the doors would be shut to us for good.

Is this not how it is for believers? Peter talks about Christians being “foreigners and aliens” here on earth. This world is simply a temporary dwelling place, as our real home is in heaven. Not the heaven we see in cartoons or on TV where angels with wings and harps are floating around on clouds, but the real heaven, where the Lord reigns for all eternity. God has been revealing His plan slowly through time, giving us Jesus and the Holy Spirit, so we participate in His kingdom even now. Someday, the Lord will return in His glory, and He will reign over all.

You are not alone if you sometimes feel out of place as a Christian. This is a world that, as a whole, disregards God. But knowing we are strangers here means we live with different priorities and loyalties. Our citizenship is in heaven. Our focus should be on living a life pleasing to God, which may mean that oftentimes we choose to make unpopular and sacrificial choices, remaining faithful to Him.

GOING DEEPER:

1. Think about a time when you were a visitor or stranger somewhere. Why is it important in those situations to be on your *best behavior*?
2. As Christians, strangers in this land, why is it especially important to “keep away from evil desires”?

FURTHER READING: Psalm 132:17; Galatians 5:16-18; James 4:1-10