

Read: 1 Peter 1:17-21

Where Do You Belong?

1 Peter 1:17-19

Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. 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, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have you ever felt like you didn't belong? Maybe you were the new kid in class and didn't know anyone. Or you were trying a new sport and everyone else seemed to know what they were doing when you didn't. Maybe you got your first job, and working at the cash register was harder than you thought. It can be confusing and uncomfortable to feel like you don't fit in.

The people Peter was talking to were Christians who were suffering more than a little confusion and discomfort. They were being mistreated for their faith. They felt like outcasts in the world, like they didn't fit in. They felt as if they didn't belong.

Peter reassured them that they were strangers here in this world—and that's okay! God called them to live differently. They were to focus on him, living their lives with respect to him. The passage says they were supposed to live in "reverent fear." That doesn't mean they needed to be afraid. It's a way of encouraging them to live in awe and wonder at all God had done for them. They weren't supposed to worry about what others thought. All that mattered was what God wanted. As a result, their lives would look very different from those around them. They might even look different than the lives of their parents. But if Christians don't belong here on earth, where do they belong?

Peter assured them that they were saved from the empty way of life that the world lives. Not gold or silver, but Jesus' perfect life and innocent death paid the debt owed by sinners. We have been redeemed or bought back. After Jesus paid for our sins, he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. He promises that he has prepared a place for us. We have a home in heaven. There is a place where we belong! We have a forever home waiting for us.

Have you ever felt like you didn't belong? You're in good company! We will often feel like strangers in this world. We are uncomfortable, and we don't fit in. That's okay! Peter's words can help us when we feel like we don't belong. Live your life with respect to God, don't worry about what others think. God loved you so much he sent his son to save you and prepare a place for you in heaven. We can be confident that we have a forever home where we perfectly belong.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What did Jesus use to pay for your sins? Gold or silver? Or what else?
- Where did Jesus make a home for you?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- In the moments you don't feel like you fit in, where do you belong?
- What does it mean to live in "reverent fear"?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Today's devotion encouraged, "Live your lives as strangers in reverent fear." How can you live as a stranger here?
- How does today's devotion comfort you when you don't feel like you "belong"?

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for this message of hope in a difficult world. We know that we have a certain home in heaven with you. Help us live our lives as strangers in this sinful world. Amen.