

# Aliens and Strangers in the World

- Is it important, or even possible, to hold all that we have in an “open” hand?
- How can we make Jesus the only “Thing” we really hold onto with a “never let go” grip?
- Who are you and where is your “home?”

I hope the following is an encouragement to place God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Source of joy, peace, meaning, hope and power, above all else.

**There are several strong indicators (or “red flags”) that suggest the things we value most.**

- 1) Our calendar (how we spend our time)
- 2) Our check book (how we spend our money)
- 3) How we react to loss.

**Time:** Look at how you spend your time and determine where your priorities appear to lie. Write them on the back or on a separate piece of paper. How do you support God’s work with your time and talents?

**Money:** Next, look at your check book or bank statements and determine where you spend most of your money (outside of essentials like food, rent/mortgage, tithing, car payments, etc. - UNLESS these are out of proportion to everything else). How do you support God’s work with your financial blessings?

**Loss:** Finally, when you experience loss (job, loved one, friend, financial catastrophe, home and material possessions, news of a terminal illness or impending death, etc.), how do you react?

**A comment on grief:** Grieving is normal and an essential response to loss. In fact, stuffing our feelings and NOT grieving may lead to serious consequences. Circle the following spiritually unhealthy ways you have reacted to loss:

- Feelings of hopelessness
- Depression
- Stuck in anger
- Bitterness
- Resentment
- The loss of peace, meaning or joy

**Consider the following examples of things we may place above God (circle your areas of struggle):**

- Money
- Material possessions
- Reputation; what others think
- Job, or position in the community or church
- Entertainment
- Electronic / digital devices and media
- Self
- Health
- Spouse, friend or other relationship(s)
- Addictions (numerous possibilities)

**Explain the common theme in these passage:**

- |                  |                  |                          |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) Psalm 39:12   | 3) Hebrews 10:34 | 5) 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 |
| 2) John 17:15-16 | 4) 1 Peter 2:11  | 6) 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 |

**Compare with the theme in these passages:**

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|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1) John 14:2-3  | 3) Matthew 6:19-20 | 5) Philippians 1:21-23 |
| 2) Isaiah 65:17 | 4) Luke 23:40-43   | 6) Revelation 21:1-4   |

**If we have a foot in the “world” but desire Jesus Christ to be first in our life, consider the following:**

- 1) Confess that things are out of whack (1 John 1:9)
- 2) Pray for God’s power to place and keep Him first (Psalm 66:16-20)
- 3) Commit to loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength (Mark 12:30)
- 4) Now put the things you know into **practice**. Be “doers” of the Word (Luke 8:21, James 1:22)

**Some final words of encouragement for the aliens and strangers in the world:**

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| • <b>1 Corinthians 2:9</b>     | • Proverbs 3:5-6   | • Ephesians 3:20-21       |
| • <b>2 Corinthians 4:16-18</b> | • Matthew 11:28-30 | • 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 |
| • <b>2 Corinthians 5:1-9</b>   | • Romans 8:28      | • James 1:2-5             |

**We often don’t know that Jesus is all we need until He is all we have.**