## Just Visiting



The Holiness of a Homesick Heart
September 24, 2025

**Today we're building our** *faith* **by embracing the** *feeling* **of being a** *foreigner***.** Cuz in one way or another, a lack of *harmony* with our *earthly home* is the *hallmark* of human life that *separates* us from every other animal. And that *reality* should *prompt* you to *truly* ponder **Do you** *belong* here?















Deer do; fish do; birds do. And you know how I know? They're perfectly content to live the life the earth allows and die the death the earth demands. But you? No way do you belong here! And you know how I know? You're never completely content! None of us are — that's why we need the new pillow with stay-cool technology, the special lotion with anti-wrinkle retinol, and all the other products that promise to finally make us feel at peace in our lives. And yet, despite all our best efforts — we just can't seem to get comfortable; why? Well, it's because we were built with an appetite for something beyond earth. Deer, fish, and birds weren't — but you just want more than this place has to offer. And that's a good thing because home is where the heart is, but the heart is where the hope is.

So, if your *heart* calls *this* world *home* – like the deer, fish, and birds *do* – your *hope* will never outgrow what we have *here*. It's only when a heart *recognizes* Heaven as *home* that hope can *rise* past this place. So, when we *admit* that we *don't feel* like we *belong* down here – *that's* when we can finally *diagnose* the everyday *ache* of existence; we're homesick.

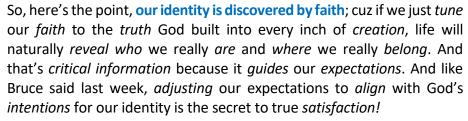
Like Buddy the Elf. Cuz he was a human —but since he was raised as an elf, he assumed the North Pole was his home. And although he tried to be kind and content — he couldn't help feeling hopelessly out of place. Tiny desks, short beds, and a host of other mismatches kept grinding against him day after day until all his problems pointed him to the undeniable truth: he didn't belong there. But, that realization didn't make him bitter; it made him brave. Cuz he reasoned that his misfit feeling wasn't just a curse, it was also a clue — cuz if he didn't belong there, then he must belong somewhere with more suitable surroundings that would serve as a more satisfying home. So he took the hint as enough evidence to set sail for a father and home that he believed before seeing. That's faith. It isn't wishful thinking or blind guessing; faith is rational reasoning. And it's what happens when we see our homesick heart as a reason to believe we should set sail to find our true Father and real home where we feel our fit.

[Cuz] Faith is the <u>substance</u> of things hoped for, [not the hope, and it's] the <u>evidence</u> of things not seen. [not the things] – Hebrews 11:1 NKJ

So, where we put our faith decides how we see our life, cuz faith is the reason we use to make sense of reality. It's the trees bending that reveal the reality of wind; it's the apple falling that reveals the reality of gravity; and it's our foreigner feeling that reveals the reality of another home.

Like C.S. Lewis famously argued: "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water... If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world."







I mean, if you woke up in an airport with amnesia, would you assume it's your apartment? No! Cuz every clue around you would lead you to conclude you're a traveler – not a resident. So, it would be frustrating to expect a stove, a bed, or a couch to get comfy; but it'd be fulfilling to expect a suitcase, a ticket, and a plane to take you back to your real home!



And that's what happens when we faithfully follow the clues of this world: we learn we are travelers away from our heavenly home. And the more faith proves the point, the less we expect this airport to feel like our apartment. And the less we expect from this world, the more we can expect from a real home. Cuz faith means every earthly obstacle, conflict, and conundrum is just evidence we're meant for a better-fitting real home.



[So, all that to say] Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must [first] believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. [Like Abel, Enoch, Abraham, and Noah who used earthly evidence as faith to figure it out. So,]...All these people were still living by faith [down here] when they died. [Cuz] They did not receive the things promised [up there]; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, [How? By] admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. [Because] People who say such things show that they are [leaving] looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them [to return to]. — Hebrews 11:6, 13-16 NIV



Cuz it sure would be a shame if you acted like Heaven was your home, but in the end, your heart lowered its expectations and accepted earth! It breaks God's heart to see us settle for less when we're meant for more. And that's why His Word says the hallmark of the heroes in Hebrews' "Hall of Faith" is an earthly passport stamped "Just Visiting."

So, the real question is, why is it so hard to follow the faith that tries to lead us where we belong?!







Well, to put it simply, there's a war for your residency! Both this world and your Heavenly home want you on their side – but for very different reasons: Heaven wants your allegiance so you'll finally feel right but earth wants your allegiance to try to prove God wrong. That's it. Because, like every demon in the Bible and every enemy of your faith – this world knows it's too weak to compete with God in a fair fight. So, it fights dirty. This world uses half-truths, shallow reasoning, and deceptive distractions to recruit more residents – so it can use us as pawns to claim superior power by virtue of the popular opinion. But again, God just wants us home with Him to be healthy and happy; and the only reason He lets us endure the war is to teach us how to turn down the enemy temptation that led us to leave back in the beginning. That is, we're here to grow in faith so we won't fall for weak evidence ever again! And as Peter says, that begins with affirming a holy identity:

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is *holy*, so <u>be *holy* in all you do</u> ... <u>live out your time</u> <u>as foreigners here in reverent fear</u>. – 1 Peter 1:1, 14-17 NIV

Get it? *Living* like a *foreigner* is the beginning of *holiness* – and you know *why?* Cuz the word *holy* just means to be "set apart" – the way a *foreigner's* home makes their identity "set apart" from the *locals*. Cuz odd *accents*, eccentric *appetites*, and curious *customs* all *set strangers apart* – but the qualities that *set* foreigners *apart* keep them *connected* to their *homeland*. So, we're commanded to *stay* "set apart" from *down here* to *keep* our *connection* with *up there*. But, boy do the locals love to try and convert you to their customs – *I know I do!* 

[Which is why Peter reminds us of the battle:] Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. -1 Peter 2:11 NIV



Now, I don't *think* I'm trying to *steal souls*, but I *do* love *convincing* people to *desire* what *I desire* – I make my poor family *watch* weird British *shows*, *eat* strange spicy *sushi*, and *try on* Costco's comfy *clothes* all the time. So, what's *so wrong* with trying to *convert* others to *my* customs? Well, maybe you should ask a whale.



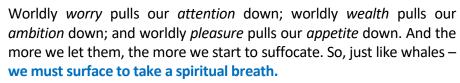
Cuz whales are a lot like you and me – they're born without an understanding or their surroundings, they rely on environmental evidence to guide their actions, and they're obviously different from all the other animals that fill the ocean around them. Cuz whales need air.

Sure, just like fish, they live *in* the water, but they are not *of* the water. So, unlike fish, they must routinely surface to breathe the air from a foreign environment. And if a fish ever convinced them to just stay underwater the way everybody else lives their lives, they'd feel less and less strong and healthy – until they died from suffocation. Cuz **creatures with higher needs can't survive lowering their standards.** Cuz *everything* was designed with something specific to consistently need for survival; for fish it's water; for whales it's air; and for us it's the *presence* of God.

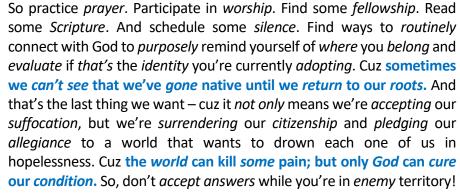
And because *He* makes *His* residence in *Heaven*, *survival* becomes *simple* upon *arrival* – **it's just** *this* **journey home that puts us in** *jeopardy*. Cuz, while we're here, *we're* like *whales underwater* – *disconnected* from our *designed need* and *surrounded* by a world of fish who feel at home. So,

[Sometimes His Word which Scripture calls] The seed... is *choked* by [*earthly*] life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature – Luke 8:14 NIV











Don't you know that <u>friendship with the world means enmity against God?</u> Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. – James 4:4 NIV

Of course the *locals* are gonna try to *recruit* you with *quick fixes, temporary relief,* and *empty promises* – but *don't* take the *bait! Every* **struggle in life is a** *symptom* **of** *separation* **from our** *spiritual source!* **Cuz** *financial* **frustrations,** *health* **problems,** *relationship* **difficulties, and** *everything else* **that the** *world* **offers to** *fix* **–** *isn't* **even a** *problem* **if we let faith** *explain* **the way** *past* **all the** *earthly pain***:** 

For we [foreigners] *know* that if the earthly tent [this body] we live in is destroyed, we have a [spiritual] building from God, an eternal house in *Heaven*, not built by human hands. [But, because waiting makes us feel homesick,] Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling – 2 Corinthians 5:1-2 NIV

But groaning *isn't* grumbling. **Grumbling means** *complaining* – *groaning* means *yearning*. And *homesick groaning* is *good* cuz it *reminds* us we *belong* somewhere *better* and we just need to *surface* for a spiritual *breath* to strengthen our *connection* to our *intended destination*. **It's hopeless** *grumbling* that carries a *death* sentence; cuz it convinces us to *expect less*, *give in*, and go *native*.

So, this week, when you feel surrounded by all the pressure of your problems, remember, you're just passing through. And you should expect to feel suffocated by your surroundings because you're not built to breathe this air! And you should see every difficulty down here as the evidence that builds your faith in one reality: you're a foreigner and this place is beneath you. So, stay strong, surface often, and stick it out – cuz you are just visiting – and there's no place like home!

Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.