

## REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 1/29/18

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"But as it is, they desire a better country,  
that is, a heavenly one." - Heb. 11:16



Recently our little community had a surprising visitor, a young snowy owl. Snowy owls are seldom seen in southern Ohio so this fellow generated quite a bit of excitement, even making the local news. The usual home for snowy owls is around the Arctic Circle, but every four years or so the lemming population, which is a primary food source for these owls, seems to explode and so do the number of snowy owls that are born. Since the resulting competition for food the next year is fierce, many snowy owls are forced to fly south to find other things to feed on. This fellow, a stranger in a strange land, found himself surrounded by concrete and traffic. The sad result was a collision with a car and an injured wing. He could still fly, but only short distances. Hounded by curious onlookers, his well-being was in danger. But happily, he was captured and sent to a rehabilitation center until he would be able to fly home to safety. His story is the story of all who have put their faith in Jesus. We have been declared righteous, pure, and acceptable to God by the work of Jesus. We are seen by God as white as snow even though we are far from white. We can now fly, but our flight is impaired by crippled wings. When the pressing crowds scrutinize us, they can plainly see our weaknesses and injuries even as we seek to turn their eyes from us to the Master of the country we long to fly home to. We are, like this owl, strangers in a strange country. And so, dear Christian, fly where you can with the strength you now have. Let the world see whatever whiteness you have been given. Your wings will one day be healed and you will be awakened in a country far better than you can imagine. This world is not your home. Please don't act like it is. - John