

The Pilgrim's Pathway

I Peter 2:11-20

Introduction:

- Since it is true that believers have a new life principle (chosen generation), a new access to God (royal priesthood), a new government (holy nation), and a new owner (His own special people), it will affect the way the believer lives life. That effect is described in the following verses.
 - From this section to the end of the book, Peter will be dealing with the believer's relationships
 - We are strangers and pilgrims
 - Like we often sing, "This World Is Not My Home"
 - Someone has said:
 - A fugitive is one who is running from home.
 - A vagabond is one who has no home.
 - A stranger is one away from home.
 - And a pilgrim is on his way home.
 - Follow the example of Abraham, Hebrews 11:8-10
- I. The path of fleshly lusts- v. 11-12
- a. Abstain from the path of fleshly lusts
 - i. To be a Christian means to fight against the lusts of the flesh, and the battle continues as long as we live in this flesh.
 - ii. Often sin affects our bodies (disease, addiction, etc.)
 - iii. Ultimately sin affects our very soul which is worse!
 - iv. Gal 5:17- There is a battle raging within us!
 - v. We can indulge our worst enemy, our own flesh- immorality, materialism, pleasure-junkie, laziness, food, etc.
 - b. V. 12- An honest conversation- conduct, lifestyle
 - i. We must have a lifestyle that is above reproach (blameless, good report)
 - ii. Our testimony is our influence- and we cannot afford to lose that in trying to win the lost
 - iii. Guzik's commentary- Christians were falsely accused of great crimes in the early church. Pagans said that at communion Christians ate the flesh and drank the

blood of a baby in a cannibalistic ritual. They said that Christian “agape feasts” were wild orgies. They said that Christians were antisocial because they did not participate in society’s immoral entertainment. They said that Christians were atheists because they did not worship idols.

iv. But over time, it was clear that Christians were not immoral people – and it was shown by their lives. “The striking fact of history is that by their lives the Christians actually did defeat the slanders of the heathen...” (William Barclay)

c. Day of visitation- any time the Lord draws near either in grace or in judgment

i. Two interpretations- Messiah had come in love and mercy and they didn’t even know it (Luke 19:41-44). The day of grace when the lost are saved

ii. The day of judgment- they will be compelled to glorify God- they rejected the gospel preached to them and lived out before them (relatives, friends)

II. The path of submission

a. Every ordinance which does not contradict God! (Acts 4:19)

b. Submission to human government

i. God ordained the family, the church, and government. Its purpose: to protect its citizens and maintain order

ii. God is a God of order

iii. Sadly, governments can be corrupt! It appears, according to Scripture that any government is better than no government

iv. Peter wrote this in the days of the Roman Empire, which was not a democracy and no special friend to Christians (Nero had become emperor!). Yet he still recognized the legitimate authority of the Roman government.

v. Applic.- I have a problem with most of our government leaders but I still have to respect them. I respect President Trump, but I have a problem with his pride, the immoral things he says- he is not a saved man. But I do respect and pray for him. We cannot agree with people who want to resist and say “Not my president!” It was an electric voting season last year and it has carried over this year too. The Bible says “Honor the king.”

vi. J. Vernon Mcgee said oftentimes as Christians here in the US our vote is not necessarily *for* a person but *against* the other candidate. And in this day and age

a strong leader that wants to emphasize national security is very much needed!

Not to mention the important moral issues!

- vii. V. 14- As unto them who are sent by him: Peter also insisted that rulers are sent by him; that is, sent by God. Governments are sent by God (Romans 13:1-7)
- viii. I believe God gives us the leaders we deserve
- ix. I believe we must be good citizens, and prayerfully participate in our government and elect people who will help uphold our Christian principles and convictions!
- x. v. 15- That by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: Peter knew that our conduct is a way to defend the gospel. He knew that those who never read the Bible will read our lives. We must follow the practical commands in v. 17 also
- c. v. 18- Submission to employers (all authorities placed over us)
 - i. We must first realize we are bondservants of God- v. 16
 - ii. The command to submit to masters isn't just to those who work for masters that are good and gentle, but also to those who are harsh.
 - iii. Regarding slavery: The Bible does not specifically outlaw the practice of slavery. Apparently many early Christians were slaves. It gives instructions on how slaves should be treated (Eph. 6:5-9). Many see this as the Bible condoning all forms of slavery. What many fail to understand is that slavery in biblical times was very different from the slavery that was practiced in the past few centuries in many parts of the world. The slavery in the Bible was not based exclusively on race. People were not enslaved because of their nationality or the color of their skin. In Bible times, slavery was based more on economics; it was a matter of social status. People sold themselves as slaves when they could not pay their debts or provide for their families. In New Testament times, sometimes doctors, lawyers, and even politicians were slaves of someone else. Some people actually chose to be slaves so as to have all their needs provided for by their masters.
 - iv. The Bible also condemns "men-stealing" which the African slave trade was all about.

- v. Another key point is that the purpose of the Bible is to point the way to salvation, not to reform society. The Bible often approaches issues from the inside out. (Abolitionists)
- vi. Illustr- Paul and Onesimus, eventually would be received as a brother
- d. V. 13- For the Lord's sake- the heart of submission

III. THE PATH OF PATIENCE – V. 19-20

- a. Endure grief and suffering-
 - i. James 1:2-3
 - ii. Wrongfully* Sometimes we are treated unfairly in life- Job
- b. This is thankworthy and acceptable with God
- c. The Apostles like Peter, James, John, Paul, etc. are a great example- Jesus is our greatest example!

Conclusion:

- Pilgrim's Progress written by John Bunyan in the 1670's while he was in jail for preaching without a license from the Church of England. The book is a great allegory. The pilgrim is named "Christian," who takes a fascinating journey from his hometown, the "City of Destruction" (representing this world), to the "Celestial City" atop Mt. Zion (representing heaven).
- Christian is weighed down by a great burden, the knowledge of his sin, which came from his reading the Bible.
- This burden, which would cause him to sink into hell, is so unbearable that Christian must seek deliverance. And thank God he does find deliverance. It is a great story about navigating through this world as a Pilgrim on his way to Heaven!