

November 13, 2022

1 Peter 2:10-11

by Ken Weliever

Do you ever feel like we're living in a world where everything is upside down?

We live in a world where what used to be wrong, is now called right. Where evil is called good. And good is called evil.

We live in a world where we're pressured not just to tolerate, but to endorse and celebrate every deviate lifestyle imaginable. Where the abnormal is considered normal. And now normal is outdated and called bigoted. Where boys can become girls, and girls can change into boys. And where the most basic understanding of human biology is now questioned, and hijacked with new pronouns.

No doubt that's the feeling for many of us of my generation and older. However, it's actually nothing new. What was once hyped as the new morality, as nothing more than an old immorality dressed up in 21st century attire.

Christianity was birthed in a culture that had forgotten God, turned from principles of righteousness and lived for satisfying every fleshly desire. Thus, Peter would offer this exhortation.

"Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation."

This text provides 5 reasons for right living in a mixed up, messed up, upside

down world.

#1 Remember, You are Beloved of God.

"Beloved" is a term of endearment. God called Jesus His "beloved Son." It describes those who are in a relationship with the Lord. It speaks of His acceptance of and affection for us.

When we feel unimportant, alienated and ostracized in this world, we can know that God loves us. That we are a part of His family. That He provides for us. Cares for us. And will protect us. That's a powerful incentive for right living.

#2 Realize, You're a Legal Alien in a Foreign Land.

Two terms are used in this text that describe our temporary status. We're sojourners in this world. Strangers. Foreigners. Aliens. A Pilgrim is an exile. One who is temporarily dwelling in a place that is not his home.

Wordsworth's lament that "the world is too much with us," is too often true as we become absorbed in material ambitions to the exclusion of our spiritual responsibilities and eternal aspirations.

Paul reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). The lyrics of an old hymn ought to provide an incentive to right living in a world gone wrong.

This world is not my home
I'm just a-passing through
My treasures are laid up
Somewhere beyond the blue

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

#3 Recognize, You're in a War You Can't Afford to Lose.

Indeed "fleshly lusts war against the soul." It's a spiritual, not a carnal war (2 Cor. 10:3-5). It's Satan's assault against the soul. To steal our birthright. To forfeit our citizenship. To lose our reward.

Like Peter, when he denied Jesus, there may be times when we lose a battle, but we must arise from defeat and return to the battlefield. Right living requires putting on the Christian's armor (Eph. 6:10-17) and fighting "the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12).

Furthermore, it may well be to recognize, as Warren Wiersbe wrote, "Our real battle is not with the people around us, but with the passions within us."

#4 Repudiate, Your Critics by Honorable Living.

In fact, Peter says you can silence your critics. How? By honorable living.

The NASU translates this "keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles." The NIV renders this "live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds."

When we practice what we preach, our actions will speak even louder than our words. Christ-like character and Christian conduct will ultimately quell the critics, if not completely silence them.

#5 Regard Your Critics as Possible, Future Christians.

Yes, it's possible that you may actually convert those who were once opponents of your faith. I think of godly wives, whose influence won the heart of the most defiant husband to accept Jesus.

Your friends, neighbors, relatives, and co-workers may obey the gospel as they see you fighting the battle, speaking the truth in love, and living for Jesus.

Ironically the Gospel, just as in Paul's day, will "turn the world upside down" (Ax 17). When we live right in an upside down world we can turn it right side up. We can bring light into a world of darkness. Freedom

into a world of bondage. Life into a world of death. And love into a world of hate.

May we each hear and heed Peter's plea to "live honorably in a world of evil-doers." A. B. Simpson was right, "If we walk in righteousness He will carry us through."

{used with permission from thepreachersword.com}

Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing treatments to strengthen his immune system. He is having some tests run for his lungs.

Karen Hallmark has improved but continues to struggle and could use our prayers.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is home and still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

John Miller (Dyanne Turner's brother) is under treatment for cancer.

Elaine Kersch is having tests run to diagnose problems with her lungs.

Randall Vanaman is having difficulties with his feet.

Remember those who have been sick with covid and may still be recovering.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

Evangelist

Darrell Trammel
512-756-4493 Office
Darrell@
oakswestchurchofChrist.com

Elders

George Gresham
Jim Johnson
Darrell Trammel

Contact Us

Address:
P.O. Box 675
Burnet, TX 78611

Call:
(512) 756-4493

E-Mail:
oakswestchurch@gmail.com

Website:
oakswestchurchofchrist.com