

Good Advice for Weary Pilgrims
1 Peter 2:11

1 Peter 2:11 (ESV) ¹¹ *Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.*

I. Present circumstances and the need for this word

A. Thanksgiving Holiday: Memories of Pilgrims

B. Personal disappointments

1. The cry for faith-building
 - a. Experiences
 - (1) Broken Relationships
 - (2) Unexpected Illness
 - (3) Social Obstacles
 - b. The cry for understanding
2. The question being asked:
 - a. How to succeed as a weary pilgrim?
 - b. **How do we continue to be faithful and faith-filled when life gets hard?**

II. Four Words of Guidance for Weary Pilgrims

A. ¹¹ Beloved,

1. Start by knowing you are dearly loved by God
2. How can you know
 - a. You can know on the basis of the cross and the death of Jesus
 - (1) **Romans 5:8 (ESV) ⁸ *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.***
 - (2) The cross is the definitive expression of God's love for you
 - (a) The cross is not dependent on your conduct
 - (b) The cross is not dependent on your choice
 - (c) The cross is not dependent on you but on Christ and Christ alone
 - (3) You can know on the basis of Christ's death on the cross on your behalf that you are dearly loved.
 - b. You can know on the basis of God's plan for your salvation
 - (1) **Romans 8:29-30 (ESV) ²⁹ *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.***
 - (2) Look at the tenses of the verbs in v. 30
 - (a) Past tense
 - (b) Accomplished in eternity experienced in time.
 - (3) You can know on the basis of God's plan for your salvation that you are dearly loved.

- c. You can know on the basis of God's integrity
 - (1) **2 Corinthians 1:20 (ESV)** ²⁰ *For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*
 - (2) If you trust God at all then you must trust that He is who He says He is
 - (a) that He is true and trustworthy
 - (b) If He is not true and trustworthy, then by definition, He cannot be God
 - i) "Let God be true and every man a liar"
 - ii) Jesus: "I am the way, the truth, and the life"
 - (3) You can know on the basis of God's integrity that you are dearly loved.

3. Weary pilgrim, take heart, you are dearly loved by God!

B. I urge you as sojourners and exiles

- 1. This world is not your permanent home
- 2. Sojourners and exiles
 - a. NIV: "aliens and strangers"
 - b. ASV/KJV: sojourners/strangers and pilgrims
 - c. **Lev. 25:23** *"The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me."*
- 3. Don't look for permanent solutions in a temporary dwelling
 - a. Haiti: as a traveler, I cannot provide a permanent fix to national problems
 - b. I can, however, do what good I can to alleviate the distress of those who live with those problems
 - (1) Through the preaching of gospel
 - (2) Through the living of the gospel

C. to abstain from the passions of the flesh,

- 1. Dick Fregeau -
 - a. the right tool for the right job
 - b. The flesh is not the right tool for spiritual victory!
- 2. What do we mean "passions of the flesh"
 - a. Not primarily sexual (though lust is not excluded)
 - b. Examples
 - (1) Revenge
 - (2) Self-exaltation
 - (3) Jealousy
 - (4) Self-reliance (if God won't help me in this I'll do it myself)
 - (5) Doubt
 - (6) Unnecessary grief (faithlessness)
- 3. Frustration comes from engaging the flesh as a weapon in a spiritual battle
 - a. **2 Corinthians 10:4 (ESV)** ⁴ *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.*
 - b. Once you were slaves, powerless and without hope, but not now

D. which wage war against your soul.

1. Care for the condition of your soul as primary importance!
 - a. **Matthew 10:28 (ESV)** ²⁸ *And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*
 - (1) The soul is permanent and headed toward a permanent home, either in heaven or in hell
 - (2) Care for what is permanent more than what is temporary
 - b. The condition of your soul should be your daily primary focus
2. The strategy of war
 - a. is to focus you off the permanent and onto the temporary,
 - b. thus stealing your joy in the eternal and adding the burden of doubt in the present
3. You have the tools for excellent soul care
 - a. Worship
 - b. Fellowship
 - c. Service

III. What weary pilgrims need to know

A. Four Words

1. Know you are dearly loved
2. Know you are not home
3. Know your self and the passions that rage
4. Know your options for good soul care

B. How will you face today?

1. With grace
2. With confidence
3. With eager expectation
4. With the knowledge of God's infinite love and wisdom for your and His glory