

DECLARING GOD'S GLORY... HOW & WHERE?

2:11-17

Since we are to be “Declaring God’s Glory” (v.9) Peter describes How and Where!

Our Christian Conduct is a big part of our Witness (2:11-12)

Peter identifies with whom he is writing to in two ways here...

1. “Dear friends” or beloved family... very personal and points to their togetherness in Christ.
2. “I urge you, (compassionate appeal) as fellow aliens & strangers” He identifies himself as fellow alien, explaining that “we are in the world... but not of it.” Its values and passions are transitory, ours are eternal and wholesome. (Heb.13:14 1John 2:16-17)

Interesting Peter does not simply say... go out and do good deeds. His starting point (v.11) assumes that the battlefield starts within. If victory is not won here you cannot be effective out there.

The battles take place on two fronts... the battle within...and the battle out in the world.

1. V. 11-The battle of desires that wage war on the soul” This battle within can capture and overcome us. Sadly, we witnessed this last week the magnitude of a battle within and the tragic outcome that killed 150 people (Germanwings 9525).
 - a. The term here “strong desires” is neutral and can be good or bad. Desires themselves are not evil, they become evil when they get out of control and we allow them to rule us. When we try to fulfill them contrary to God’s will, we become slaves of them... captivated by them.
 - b. Flesh lust against the Spirit these are oppose and when given equal access, it can paralysis us. (Gal. 5:16-17)
2. V.12-The battle in the world of being misunderstood as aliens...
 - a. Our conduct (not preaching) attract the attention of the watchful eyes of pagans.
 - b. Their response to our wholesome conduct is...slandered and accusing us of being evil
 - c. Charges non-Christians made against Christians in Peter’s day.
 - i. Disloyalty to state and Caesar (John 19:12) Civil disobedience (Acts 5:29)
 - ii. Upsetting trade and magic... (Acts16:16-22ff; 19:23-26ff)
 - iii. Freedom to those who society has made slaves...(1Cor. 12:13; Gal.3:28)
 - iv. Not participating in festival or hatred toward mankind...(Col.2:16-17)
 - v. Antisocial values, and said to be atheist because they have no idols, (Acts 15:29)
 - d. The day of visitation, God bring an awareness on the day He visits us & them
 - i. Refer to Lord’s return? Yes, because at this time every knee will bow... but more likely...
 - ii. Awareness will come when God graciously visits us & them (in the situation) and show His mercy and salvation to those who have opposed us. They will then glorify God...on that day... day of salvation.

Christian Conduct as a Citizen (2:13-17)

Vv.13-17 Christian in society can demonstrate their Submission to God as they show their submission to authorities. Christians did not view their high position with God as somehow putting them above submission to authorities (Romans 13:5). Christ himself was subject to earthly authority, and yet it was said of him that all things were subject to Him.

1. V.13-14- Submission with reference to “every authority instituted among men” two are mentioned.

- a. King... supreme ruler
- b. Governor... one sent by the king to punish wrong... to praise right.
- c. The word instituted is literally "creation or creature". Could refer to structured government. However the structure here is not a democracy but a kingdom.
- d. The motivation is not avoiding punishment... but submission for "the Lord's sake"!

Question: What happens when human institution/laws conflict with God's law? (Acts 4:19) E.g.

Corrie Ten Boon lied to Nazi when they came asking if she/family were hiding Jews. Her answer and reasoning... No, there are not Jews here for you to kill!

- Render to Caesar what is Caesar's...Matt. 22:21
- Sell your coats and buy a sword...Luke 22:36
- Proper Interpretation- when a verse seems to apply to a situation...asked if this is an eternal principle. Let a clear core truth in scripture guide you in such situations. Romans 13:1-7

2. V.15- Silencing their accusations... is God's will. **Question: Why is it that God allows His people to get into situations where they look like the underdog?** Note: The organized persecution through Roman law had not started yet or had not reached these 5 provinces. Christians were facing lies and verbal abuse, no torture or death...However...
 - a. This was to be understood as "God's will" by you obeying civil authorities. And even while you are being slandered and having false charges brought against you.
 - b. God's will means...He controls the results and final outcome, not institutions of men.
 - c. How God's will is being accomplished... Our witness is not to try and silence them through argument, but through a credible life that shows the object of our faith...God (Titus 2:9-10)
 - d. The anticipated results... silence their ignorant talk. How? When Christians, who lives a credible life, are accused falsely, eventually the accuser reaction will be exposes as foolishness. Note: The tense is in the continual, we continue to silence them by living credibly lives before them.

3. V.16- Living as free people, was not political (outward), but liberty from being enslaved by what the culture was enslaved to. (**Question: Compare cultures view of freedom and God's view?**)
 - a. Don't let fear paralyse you from doing what is right, obeying authority is the will of God. Nowadays even doing right can be threatening to those who cheat, and are lazy.
 - b. This liberty Christians possess should not become an occasion to cover up the practice of resentment, hatred, and retribution. Being free God's way is not freedom from authority, but volunteer freedom to submit to civil authority, as God's servants.
 - c. Possibly, this could be a warning, for us to beware that some of laws/customs of culture, are endorsed as rights, but they violated the laws of God. (Social rights can violate God's rights)

4. V.17- Social Responsibilities of God's people, a Holy Nation, a His priesthood... Declaring Him by
 - a. Show proper respect to all people... all sorts under many conditions. Even ones that don't respect us, slander and accuse us. Their value come from baring God's image...lost souls in darkness, needing to see God's love and forgiveness.
 - b. Love the brothers & sister in the church, the entire body of Christ, not just those in our local church. Mark of maturity...how you live this out.
 - c. Fear God- a habit of awe and reverence, that encourages obedience in carrying out our duty.
 - d. Honor the king- respect! Evidently respect could be shown without approval.