"DOING GOD'S WILL IN A PAGAN WORLD"

I Peter 4:1-6

5-4-2022

INTRODUCTION:

***Fulfill God's desires, not the desires of the world!**

I. Do God's will and . . .
<u>BE ARMED</u> with Christ's <u>MINDSET</u> (v. 1)

II. Do God's will and . . .
<u>MAKE UP</u> for <u>LOST TIME</u> (v. 2-3a)

III. Do God's will and . . .
<u>DON'T WALK</u> the way of the <u>WORLD</u> (v. 3b)

IV. Do God's will and . . .
<u>SHOCK</u> the <u>PAGAN</u> world (v. 4)

V. Do God's will and . . .
<u>TRUST GOD</u> to <u>VINDICATE</u> you (v. 5-6)

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INTRODUCTION:

If you have ever traveled abroad, you know the feeling of being a "foreigner."

You realize this is not your people, language, culture.

We are in a world that speaks a different language, embraces a different philosophy, strives for different goals, and marches to a different beat.

EX: The story of a couple who returned back from serving the Lord for many years as missionaries and were greeted by nobody, whereas Teddy Roosevelt who was returning from a hunting trip was greeted by a multitude of people. The wife said, "This is not fair. . ." But the husband replied, "But, Honey, we're not home yet."

"This world is not my home, I'm just a passin' through. . .I can't feel at home in this world anymore."

***Fulfill God's desires, not the desires of the world!**

I. Do God's will and . . .
<u>BE ARMED</u> with Christ's <u>MINDSET</u> (v. 1)

"Forasmuch then" - Builds a practical conclusion on what was previously said; applies the suffering of Christ (3:18-22) to the lives of those who know and follow Him.

"Suffered for us" - (cp. v. 18) Christ's suffering was not in vain, it was *"for us"* (KJV). The substitute Lamb of God took our place and paid our penalty.

"Arm yourselves" - A military phrase, describing a soldier putting on protective equipment to shield himself from vulnerability from the attacks of the enemy.

What God is saying is this: "Since Christ suffered, you should be mentally armed and prepared to expect it also."

"The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." (Jn. 15:20)

The word ***"ceased"*** is either middle or passive voice. If passive, it means that the one who has suffered in the flesh has been released from sin by God. God does the "ceasing."

In other words, the fact that you suffered is evidence that you have been spiritually released from the penalty and power of sin.

The fact that you are called upon to suffer for Christ is proof that you are saved (SEE: 4:14).

Does this mean that we will cease from all sin *"in the flesh"* (v. 2)? No, it simply means that you will not be performing the old sins you used to do with the world. And because you have ceased from those sins, you suffer for it. They persecute you for righteousness sake.

If the verb is to be understood in the middle voice, it would mean that suffering gives us the ability to cease f rom sin. God may allow you to suffer for Christ so that you will cease doing what you used to do.

David gave this testimony: *"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word" (Ps. 119:67)*

It is because you decided to *"cease from sin"* that you will often have to face suffering from the unsaved world.

"If He suffered, being what He was, why shouldn't we?" (John Hus)_

Jesus, when contemplating the bitter cup of spiritual suffering He would drink for the sin of the world, said: *"Not my will but thine be done."*

II. Do God's will and . . .
<u>MAKE UP</u> for <u>LOST TIME</u> (v. 2-3a)

"The rest of his time" - the remainder of our lifetime.

Prior to coming to Christ, we gave enough of our time fulfilling the carnal desires and appetites of our unsaved, lost, misguided worldly friends, relatives, neighbors, associates, etc. Let's give the rest of our time for things that really matter -

--the eternal, not the temporal
--the Godly, not the worldly
--the spiritual, not the carnal

We are ***"in the flesh"*** (in mortal bodies) only for a brief moment (in light of eternity). Once we are in Heaven, we will never again have the opportunity to glorify God by resisting temptation, conquering sin, walking by faith, witnessing to a lost and dying world, etc.

We should live with a passion to fulfill ***"the will of God"*** (i.e. to carry out the desires and wishes of our Heavenly Father as revealed in His Word).

"Time past" (v. 3)	***"The rest of his time"*** (v. 2)
(Prior to conversion)	(After conversion)

"Suffice" - Sufficient; more than enough; far too much. What God is saying is this: "Far too much time has gone by for us to have accomplished the will of the Gentiles" (the worldly nations).

We wasted enough of our life feeding the coffers of the world, pouring our energies into vanities, investing our talents for filthy mammon and worldly glitter, spending our time on self-gratifying pleasures.

We should have "closed the book" on worldly lusts.

III. Do God's will and . . .
<u>DON'T WALK</u> the way of the <u>WORLD</u> (v. 3b)

"Walked" - we travelled the roads of Vanity Fair long enough.

What are some of the ways we walked before salvation?

1. ***"Lasciviousness"*** - unrestrained, excessive, unbridled living, no self-control (things that excite the disgust of the public.)

2. ***"Lusts" -*** ungodly appetites and passions, desires that were satisfied outside of the boundaries God established for our well-being.

3. ***"Excess of wine" -*** drunkenness

4) ***"Revelings" -*** late night revelling, carousing, wild, godless partying.

5. ***"Banquetings" -*** drinking parties

6. ***"Abominable idolatries" -*** unlawful to give worship and devotion to people, places, and things (to idolize the "stars" of Holy wood, the music industry or sports players).

IV. Do God's will and . . .
<u>SHOCK</u> the <u>PAGAN</u> world (v. 4)

The world may think you are strange (wierd, odd, different) when you don't run

together with them into their profuse deluge of wild and riotous entertainments.

"Non-Christians are amazed when one of their number turns from such attitudes and conduct to faith in Jesus Christ and begins to act contrary to the normal demands of the flesh. They themselves are prisoners of the lusts of the flesh and cannot understand why these one-time friends '*run not with them'*." (Anderson, p. 67)

"Riot" - lit. behavior that gives evidence that the one's participating have no salvation (*asotia*).

Interestingly, "they do not think it strange when people wreck their bodies, destroy their homes, and ruin their lives by running from one sin to another! But let a drunkard become sober, or an immoral person pure, and the family thinks he has lost his mind!" (Wiersbe, p. 420). He's gone fanatical!

The world is going to think you are strange when you. . .

--turn off certain TV programs (or that you don't own a TV)

--have a musical taste that is totally different from the rock, rap, and pop culture of our day

--ladies wear dresses and modest clothing and not the spandex and revealing attire of the day

--graciously excuse yourself from going to New Year's Eve parties, bachelor parties, retirement parties, wedding receptions, etc., where there will be carnal music and behavior, etc.

--go to church on Sundays rather than the beach

--courageously disapprove of sexual immorality, adultery, fornication, pornography, the gay and lesbian lifestyle, etc.

--say "No thank you" when offered wine on the airplane

It takes courage to not run with the crowd! To stand firm on your convictions, to not bend or bow before the idols of the world (EX: Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego - Dan. 3)

You don't have to: carry a big flag saying "Jesus Saves"
wrap yourself in a Bible
act like a freak
--Just live an authentic Christian life and you will shock the pagan crowd (Swindoll tape)

"Speaking evil of you" - lit. blaspheming you, defaming or injuring your reputation with false accusations.

To appease their guilty conscience, they will strike out at you. They will look for "specks" and inconsistencies in you so as to discredit you.

*They say, "It won't last!" (Hence, they are denying the power of God and blaspheming Him!)

The pagans sit up like a doberman pincher ready to pounce on you (eyes wide open).

It's good to have thick skin and a tender heart.

V. Do God's will and . . . <u>TRUST GOD</u> to <u>VINDICATE</u> you (v. 5-6)

They will give an account to God for the lies, slander, and unjust criticism they have hurled against God's people.

***"Give account"* -** lit. to pay back for the words they said against God's people.

***"To him"* =** Jesus Christ, who alone will judge (Jn. 5:22; Acts 10:42)

The ***"quick"*** - the living; the unsaved who are <u>living</u> when Christ returns for the Day of the Lord judgment.

The ***"dead"* -** the unsaved who have died and have been in hell's prison awaiting the trial of the Great White Throne Judgment to come after the Millennium (Rev. 20:11-15). To receive eternal sentencing to the Lake of fire.

"Their judgment is in <u>front</u> of them, ours is <u>behind</u> us" (Swindoll).

Our judgment for sin was accomplished at Calvary.

***"This cause"* -** the purpose for which God allowed those who were martyred for their faith to hear the Gospel was so that they might <u>live</u> by God's power in their spirit after death! (II Cor. 5:6, 8)

"The Gospel was preached to them that are dead" - Not speaking of a preaching to the unsaved who are dead (as if to give them a second chance); but speaking of a preaching to those who were <u>alive</u> when they heard the Gospel, but were killed for their faith and now from Peter's perspective are dead (same idea as 3:19).

Proof that they heard the Gospel while alive: ***"They were judged according to men <u>in the flesh</u>"*** (4:6b)

On the one hand, Godless men judged them worthy of death, but on the other hand, God would grant them eternal life.

Their flesh ended but their spirit lived on!

CONCLUSION:

Will you <u>invest</u> the rest of your time on earth doing God's will? Or will you <u>waste</u> the rest of your time on earth doing man's will?

Whose "will" will you do? The will of the world? Or the will of God?

--The will of the world rewards with pain, ruin, and death

--The will of God benefits us with *"abiding forever"* (I Jn. 2:17)

"To know God's will is life's greatest knowledge; to do God's will is life's greatest privilege."