

**Date:** 28.06.2020

**Time:** 6pm

**Service taken by:** Rev Gavino Fioretti

**Psalm:** Psalm 95:1-6

**Reading:** 1 Peter 2:11-12

**Outline: 1 Peter 2:11-12**

a) Introduction

1. Loved

2. Pilgrims

3. At war

4. Urged

5. Reminded

### **1 Peter 2:11-12**

- **Introduction**

**From the church:** We've seen instructions for relationships within the church – we've been called to love one another and to be free from malice, deceit and hypocrisy.

**Towards the world:** We see here instructions how to behave towards the world, how we are to be in relation to the world. The focus moves from within the church to outside the church.

Peter compares the church to Israel. We're the people of God because like Abraham, we believe and trust in God by faith. If we're the Israel of God, those who are outside of His people are called gentiles.

#### **1) Loved**

**By God:** A Christian above all else is loved by God. We might be persecuted and hated by others, but God has loved us with an everlasting love. Predestination is all about love – behind that choice and that foreknowledge is affection and love. The root of God's choice is His love. As His people, we are loved by God. As His children, we are loved. God's love is real, fatherly, intense love (John 3:16). We are loved by God – this is something that we often speak of, but so little enjoy. How often we doubt or forget the love of God. Yet we are reminded again and again that we are beloved. When other Christians love us; it's because God's placed that in them. He loves us because He loves us. The One who is eternal, glorious and holy loves us – this should really touch our hearts and impact our lives.

He has loved us, does love us and will continue to love us. The church is described as His bride. We are loved. When we realise His love, we will rejoice and be mighty instruments in His hand.

**By Peter:** Peter reminds the people that he loves them too. Paul often does this in his letters too. A minister should not look at a congregation as his audience, but his people who he loves and then serving people is not a burden – what's done is done out of love for them. We're brothers and sisters.

**By God's people:** Brotherly, Christian love is imperfect in this world, but we still experience it. We enjoy time together. We share one another's burdens as brothers and sisters in one family. When the people of God are aware of God's love for them and united in love for one another, this is a powerful weapon. The main aspect of the Christian church is to be a channel of God's love to others.

## **2) Pilgrims**

Pilgrims – those on a journey, away from their own home; alone in a place unfamiliar, in a place with different thinking. In a place that is not comfortable. Travelling was not comfortable.

**The reason for their sufferings:** As Christians, we have difficulties and we suffer because we don't belong to this world. We are surrounded by people who aren't our people – we feel different. We encounter hardship. As pilgrims, we are away from our family and all that was familiar and we suffer.

**The reason for their hope:** If we're at home in the world, we'd have the same destiny as the world. Being not of this world, we have a different destiny – an imperishable inheritance. As we belong to God's kingdom and people, we'll enjoy God's glory, blessing and inheritance. Whilst being exiles brings suffering as God's people, it brings much blessing. We suffer, but with an amazing hope and future ahead of us. We have hope because we are exiles. This world is not all there is – we hope for a better world, a better time because we are loved by God's and we are His.

## **3) At war**

In verse 11, we're reminded that there is a war inside and outside.

**Without:** We're amazed that the world doesn't like the church – we shouldn't be surprised by this. We will experience tribulation. Suffering can come in daily living, even within our own family. We're serving a different king from a different place. We're loved by God but will be hated by the world. We're at war because the world hates us. The world fights against the people of God. We're in a spiritual battle. When a soul is brought to Christ, a battle has been won. As God's people, we must obey our Commander and Captain. We're in a battle, so we can't be distracted. It's a serious business.

**Within:** The main reason behind our sin is our own wicked heart. Our spiritual battle is so often within ourselves – our lack of love for God, lack of time in prayer and in the Word of God, our coldness in spiritual things, our coldness towards Christ. Our heart is our greatest enemy, still fighting in us. The most dangerous enemies are those within as they not recognised as enemies. So

often we lose, because the battle is in us and we're fighting against our own desires and flesh. It's a dangerous thing to be at war, but that's our condition.

#### **4) Urged**

"Urged" is a stronger term than commanded; it involves passion and zeal. Peter implores the Christian.

**To abstain:** Urged to abstain from the passions of the flesh, worldly passions in opposition to God's will and kingdom. Don't follow your wicked, sinful heart. Abstain from what is sinful, temporal.

**To keep:** We're to keep God's commandments and have a way of living that's different from the world. As we abstain from what is sinful and die unto sin, then our conduct will be different and we're to keep our conduct different. We've a responsibility to be different. An obedient Christian is a mighty witness. Sadly so often what we do contradicts what we say; we're inconsistent. We can fill our mouths with the gospel, but if our actions contradict this, our witness goes nowhere. Our main responsibility is to be holy. We have a responsibility to the world to be different from the world. It's easy to be tired in the battle and to give up, but we're called to have a conduct that is pleasing to God.

#### **5) Reminded**

**God's sharing:** Reminded how to share God's truth. What persuades the world and shuts the mouths of unbelievers? It's more likely the good conduct of the people of God than apologetics. Why should people ask questions about the hope within us if they don't see any hope within us? If they see Christ in us, they will ask.

**God's glory:** The purpose of evangelism is not ultimately the salvation of sinners, but the glory of God; that to God alone be the glory. God's glory is the greatest motivation to everything that He does. The chief end of our evangelism is for God's glory to be revealed and acknowledged. The new Heaven and new earth shouts of God being glorified, sovereign, great and powerful. We should desire the growth of Evanton for the glory of God; that enemies of God will come to glorify God. We aim for God to have the glory.

**God's visitation:** This visitation of God can have two meanings:

- 1) The return of Jesus – when God will be glorified by everyone.
- 2) When God visits sinners in the gospel and opens our eyes and opens our hearts and grants repentance and faith. The response to God's grace when a soul is saved is to glorify God. He brought us into His family and kingdom. He redeemed us.

He visited us in salvation and will visit when He returns in glory. The glory of God is the heart of the Christian faith, the reformed faith. Our chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. May He work in us, allowing us to abstain from sin and keep our conduct honourable that God may be glorified.