

Confessing that We are Pilgrims

Hebrews 11:13-16

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- “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”

What Is A Pilgrim?

- Pilgrim comes from Latin peregrinus; it is a traveler (literally one who has come from a distance) who is on a journey to a holy place.
- In early Celtic Christianity were the Peregrinari Pro Christae, (Pilgrims for Christ), or “white martyrs.”
- The Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca is obligatory for every able bodied Muslim.
- Contemporary cultural pilgrimage, which includes historic sites of national or cultural importance, or the location of a pivotal event, or an iconic destination.
- Secular pilgrims also exist under communist regimes
- “Pilgrim Fathers” of American history

What Is A Pilgrim?

- The difference between pilgrims of this world and pilgrims in this world
 - Pilgrims of this world travel about in this world to destinations in this world *seeking for spiritual fulfillment from places in this world.*
 - Pilgrims in this world live in this world without traveling to destinations in this world because they know that spiritual fulfillment is not to be found in this world. They know that *life in this world is the journey and that their destination is heaven.*

Bible Pilgrim And Pilgrimage Defined

- Pilgrim - “One who journeys in alien lands; wayfarer” (*Webster's 7th New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 641*)
- Pilgrim - Parepidemos - “an alien alongside, a resident foreigner, stranger” (*Strong's*)
 - Heb. 11:13 - “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”
 - 1Peter 1:1 - “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia”

Bible Pilgrim And Pilgrimage Defined

- “Used metaphorically of those to whom Heaven is their own country, and who are sojourners in earth” (*Vine 's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, p. 865*)
- “One who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives; hence stranger; sojourning in a strange place” (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 488*)
- Strangers - “Xenos - foreign, literally alien, a guest, stranger” (*Strong's*)

Bible Pilgrim And Pilgrimage Defined

- Abraham
 - Gen. 12:1 - “Now the LORD had said to Abram: Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.”

Bible Pilgrim And Pilgrimage Defined

- Gen. 23:1-6 - “Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. 2 So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. 3 Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, 4 I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. Give me property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. 5 And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, 6 Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead.”

Bible Pilgrim And Pilgrimage Defined

- Pilgrimage - “The journey of a pilgrim; the course of life on earth” (*Tyndale’s Bible Dictionary*)
- Magur (Hebrew) - “The sense of lodging; a temporary abode; in contrast to a permanent residence; a dwelling where one may sojourn as a stranger” (*Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary, p. 61*)
- Sojourn - mowshab - “a site, a session, an abode for a place or a time” (*Strongs*)

Bible Pilgrim And Pilgrimage Defined

- Ex. 6:1-4 - “Then the LORD said to Moses, Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand he will let them go, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land. 2 And God spoke to Moses and said to him: I am the LORD. 3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name LORD I was not known to them. 4 I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers.”
- Ex. 12:40 - “Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.”

Our Life Is To Be A Pilgrimage

- We are not to look upon our life on this earth as the totality of our existence. It is but a brief, transitory period that takes us from our birth to our death and then on to our ultimate destiny
 - James 4:13-14 - “Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”

Our Life Is To Be A Pilgrimage

- In the anonymous Epistle to Diognetus in the second century, the following is written concerning Christians: “They inhabit their own country, but as sojourners; they take part in all things as citizens, and endure all things, as aliens; every foreign country is theirs, and every country is foreigner” (*Wuest’s Word Studies in the New Testament*, p. 523)

This Life Is Temporary

- The physical body is but an earthly tent
 - 2Peter 1:13-15 - “Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.”
 - Psalm 90:10 - “The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.”

This Life Is Temporary

- Skene - “a tent, booth, tabernacle” (*Vine, 1126*)
- Phil. 1:23 - “For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”
- The word he uses for “to depart” is *analuein* - “...striking camp, loosening the tent ropes, pulling up the tent pins and moving on. Paul's human body was the tent in which he was living. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived in tents. A tent speaks of a pilgrim's journey. They were looking for a permanent place of abode” (*Wuest, V. III, p. 39*)

This Life Is Temporary

- John 1:14 - “The word became flesh and dwelt among us”
- Dwelt (eskenosen) means “to pitch a tent, to encamp” (*Strong's*)

Conditions Of Being A Pilgrim

- Separation or alienation from the world. The Christian must view himself as a foreigner in the world and among its citizens. We must live in the world without becoming part of it.
- John 17:11-16

Conditions Of Being A Pilgrim

- John 17:11-16 - “Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”

Conditions Of Being A Pilgrim

- We must be subject to the law without being overcome by it
 - Phil. 3:20 - “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ”
 - Acts 4:18-20 - “And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”
 - Acts 5:29 - “But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: We ought to obey God rather than men.”

Conditions Of Being A Pilgrim

- We must pass our time here in fear
 - 1Peter 1:17 - “And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear”
 - 1Peter 2:11-12 - “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.”

Conditions Of Being A Pilgrim

- Realize the brevity of life
 - 2Cor. 6:2 - “...Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”
 - Rom. 13:11-12 - “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.”

Conditions Of Being A Pilgrim

- Focus completely on the end of the journey
 - Col. 3:1-4 - “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

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- Rev. 21:1-3 - “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”