

1 Peter 4:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

Analysis

Peter reminds of pre-conversion lifestyle to be abandoned. "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles" (arketos gar ho parelelythōs chronos to boulēma tōn ethnōn kateirgasthai). "Time past" (ho parelelythōs chronos) refers to pre-Christian life. "May suffice" (arketos) means enough, sufficient—you've spent enough time in paganism! "Will of the Gentiles" (boulēma tōn ethnōn) describes pagan lifestyle. The catalogue: "when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" (peporeumenous en aselgeiais, epithymiais, oinophylgiais, kōmois, potois, kai athemitois eidōlolatriais). Six vices characterizing pagan life: sensuality, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, idolatry. Peter's point: that life is over; don't return to it.

Historical Context

Gentile converts came from pagan culture celebrating behaviors Christianity condemned. Temple prostitution, drunken festivals honoring deities, sexual license—all common in Roman Empire. Peter lists typical pagan vices, reminding readers: you've left that behind through conversion. The phrase "time past may suffice" uses gentle irony—you've wasted enough life in paganism; don't return. Early church's moral purity starkly contrasted pagan debauchery, attracting those

disillusioned with empty pleasures while scandalizing those who resented Christian condemnation of their lifestyle. Persecution often stemmed from Christian refusal to participate in pagan religious/social activities.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Which specific sins from your pre-Christian 'time past' are you most tempted to return to, and how do you resist?
2. How does remembering that pre-conversion time was 'sufficient' help motivate ongoing holiness?

Interlinear Text

ἀρκετὸς γὰρ ἡμῖν ὁ παρεληλυθώς χρόνος τοῦ βίου
may suffice For us G3588 past the time G3588 of our life
G713 G1063 G2254 G3928 G5550 G979

τὸ θέλημα τῶν ἐθνῶν κατεργάσασθαι, πεπορευμένους
the will G3588 of the Gentiles G1484 to have wrought G2716 when we walked G4198
G3588 G2307 G3588 G1484 G2716 G4198

ἐν ἀσελγείαις ἐπιθυμίαις οίνοφλυγίαις κώμοις πότοις
in lasciviousness lusts excess of wine revellings banqueting
G1722 G766 G1939 G3632 G2970 G4224

καὶ ἀθεμίτοις εἰδωλολατρείαις.
and abominable idolatries
G2532 G111 G1495

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 6:11 (Parallel theme): And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Ephesians 5:18 (Parallel theme): And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

1 Thessalonians 4:5 (Parallel theme): Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

1 Peter 1:14 (Parallel theme): As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

Galatians 5:21 (Parallel theme): Envynings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19 (Parallel theme): Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Ezekiel 45:9 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the Lord GOD; Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord GOD.

Isaiah 28:7 (Parallel theme): But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

Acts 17:30 (Parallel theme): And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Ezekiel 44:6 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations,