

Learn Not the Way of the Heathen

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[0:00] It is called Jeremiah 10 verse 2. Jeremiah 10 verse 2.

Jeremiah 10 verse 2! Where do we stand as we guard the way of the heathen?

The ways of worldliness, the ways of carnality. One reason some have been led to this church is because we want to be amongst the popular crowd. Where we can have some recognition.

We want to be full of pride and puffed up. And we read that scripture this morning. That love is not puffed up. The way of the heathen, it's the way of popularity and the way of pride.

Would you rather choose God's way? I urge you to choose God's way. It's the way of humility, not popularity. The way of the cross is God's way. The way of crucifying the flesh, that's God's way.

[1:12] The way of humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God. And when we're trying to help a brother who's stumbling, watching ourselves lest we also are tempted. Watching ourselves lest we also think that we're above falling.

It's the way of humility. The heathen way. It's the way of popularity. The way of pride. It's the way of philosophies. Philosophies. The heathen way follows the worldly philosophies and fashions and thinking.

Colossians 2.8. Paul writes, he says, Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit. After the tradition of men. After the rudiments of the world and not after Christ.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy. Worldly philosophy, he writes in 1 Corinthians 7.31. Of the fashion of the world, he says, The fashion of this world passeth away.

Worldly philosophy and fashion. It spits in the face of our saviour. We need to discern what is the way of the heathen.

[2:17] As regards worldly wisdom and thinking, the mindset, the new age movement. It's moving into the church. It's moving into the church.

Centre stage. Self esteem. Success. Become a Christian and everything will be successful and prosperous for you.

I don't read that in here. Friends, it's the way of philosophies is intruding and obsessing the world and even sadly in the church.

The worldliness. The worldly wise will say, if it feels good, do it. Look out for number one. The world's philosophies. It wants to extend its tentacles and take you to itself.

The world is geared to entertain and amuse you. Worldly wisdom can be a barrier for you to trust in Christ. And the counsel and philosophies that we ought to seek are those which are caught with godliness and truth.

[3:21] That are caught with God. For example, we read that lovely psalm. Psalm 1. One we could do well to take to heart. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

He walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. He doesn't follow that philosophy, that way of thinking, that mindset. He doesn't adopt that way of sinners.

He doesn't sit in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. What is the way of the heathen?

The way of the heathen as regards fashion and culture. You know, if you were to adopt that which is the most trendy fashion, I'll put it to you women today, it's probably that which exposes the flesh.

That is the fashionable way. Dressed to show the flesh, to expose more and more, to allure. It's nakedness. It's to tempt.

[4:32] It's the way of the heathen. It's the way of the heathen. That's not to say, a Christian woman can't wear something that's fashionable.

But we need to be aware, what is the fashion of the world that's going to pass away?

What is driving the people who put out such things? And some are constantly caught up in, what's in fashion? I've just got to get the latest thing in my wardrobe.

You know, I like to wear nice ties and change my wardrobe. But it's not with a gearing for the world and its ways. It's not just to follow what's in fashion.

It's not what drives us as Christians. And we can think of this too, for example, on the music front. Music-wise, some follow the heathen way. The heathen way.

The fans and tastes of the world. We can tune in to that radio station to relish it, to get an appetite for it, to get in tune with it, such that it sometimes takes his place and it gives us an appetite for the things of the world.

[5:39] Even in the church of God. Church of God. Even in the worship of a holy God. We see the way of the heathen encroaching by stealth incrementally.

I was just talking to someone last week. They walked into a church service somewhere and he said he could scarcely tell the difference between it and a disco or some kind of rock concert.

And he said if he had been someone from another language, not knowing what the words were, that if you could scarcely, when you could scarcely hear them, a non-English speaker would not have known it was a church service.

It was more like a rock concert. And it's funny too, this last week, a local council complaint came my way. Someone was complaining about loud rock music.

Where was it coming from? A local church. A local church. The neighbours were complaining because the band was playing its thrashing, crashing, ungodly, heavy, crashing rock beat sound.

[6:51] And they were concerned as a neighbour. I don't think it was a godly sound that would have prompted them to complain about their neighbouring church.

Why is it that someone to adopt the way of the heathen? Why is that? Why need we? Ought we? Ought we not? Why is some obsessed with the rock beat?

It's funny enough that when you look through the Bible, there's all kinds of musical instruments mentioned but you can't scarcely find any reference to a drum. But there is a Hebrew word for drum.

It's tophet. You find it in Jeremiah 7.31, for example. Jeremiah 7.31. The sound of tophet.

T-O-P-H-E-T.

Tophet. The valley of slaughter. Tophet means drum. It's the heathen way. The Canaanite way. The valley of the drum.

[7:52] The valley of the drum was where the heathen Canaanites sacrificed their children by burning them alive in the heated up arms of the idol Moloch as part of the worship of the idol Moloch.

The beating of the drums was used in the valley of Tophet to drown the cries of the children. The sound of hell is the sound of the drum. Tophet.

Later the valley of Hinnom was known as Gehenna in the time of Christ. We know what Gehenna is. It's hell. Why would we want to spoil a godly sound with an ungodly sound?

Why would you want to do that? Why would you choose the way of the heathen, the way of the Canaanites? Why not rather choose the path of the godly? David tried a heathen way too one day. David tried the Philistine way when he moved the Ark of God one day. We heard about that Saturday night. David moved the Ark of God. He designed this high-tech, newfound car.

[9:00] It was the latest thing going. Had all the bells and whistles. But it wasn't God's way. It wasn't God's way. It was man's way. It was the way of the heathen.

And God showed his displeasure for that. Uzziah was killed. He was slain by the Spirit, like Adonai and Sapphira. Slain by God. Because something was wrong.

Something was wrong. Do we want to adopt the way of the heathen to mimic the way of the world, or will we be faithful and truly God-honouring? The way of the heathen.

It's the way of destruction. It's the way of slaughter. The way of the drum. Worldly philosophies.

Worldly culture. Often filled with foolishness and crudity and godless thinking.

Friends, wouldn't it be better rather that you choose God's word rather than worldly philosophies? Wouldn't it be better that you seek prayerfully to choose God's way, to choose what God's word says to do?

[10:02] It boils down to where do you place your affections? Colossians 3.2 it says, set your affection on things above. Things above. Not on things on the earth.

Where will you place your affection? Your love. Learn not the way of the heathen. We shouldn't even want to know about it. We don't want to be educated in such silly things, really. Silly things. Vain things. Avoid the broad way. The way of popularity. Choose rather the humble way. Instead of the popular way, choose to be an obscure, unrewarded, a person who walks after God.

Like Abraham did. To go against the flow. To go against the stream. To go against the crowd. Don't choose the way of popularity if it's not God's way. Don't choose the way of pride.

We can all be prideful. We can be prideful about our own church. That we think we've got it all together. We've got to avoid pride. We've got to humble ourselves. And be constantly searching our hearts.

[11:07] Constantly asking the Lord to change us. To mould us. To shape us. To become more like him. To choose not the way of pride. Of self. Of flesh. Of carnality.

To reject the way of philosophies. The worldly philosophies. The new age. New fad thinking that man will try to bring in and corrupt everything.

But rather choose God's pure way. To choose God's words way. And to reject the way of the ungodly. The way of the worldly. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. Let us pray. Heavenly Father. We thank you that you stir our hearts. Lord stir each one. Provoke us Lord to love and to good works.

Burn that searchlight of your Holy Spirit deep within Lord. That you might search our hearts. See if there be any wicked way in me. And lead me in a way everlasting.

[12:06] Help me Lord to reject that which is ungodly. In whatever fashion and form it takes. Lord in anything that is heathen.

That is pagan. That takes your place. To reject that pathway. Lord to turn from it. To repent. To turn around. Lord that we might be a spirit led people.

That your Holy Spirit would work in every life. Lord there's worldliness here this morning. Amen. There's the heathen way here today Lord. It's in hearts.

It's in minds. It's in homes. Lord it's something we need to search out. As your people searched out the yeast. They searched out the leaven. They searched it out Lord.

And they removed it. Help us to search out the leaven. That you might make us pure and holy. If there be any here Lord who know you're not. They've never banded their knee.

[13:07] They've never bowed their heart. Their will. They'll cry out Lord in mercy for your grace. Lord they'll cry out. Stir us Lord to cry out.

Stir us Lord to make changes. Where you search and point out things that need change in us. Let us not shy back. Let us not yield back Lord.

But let us yield to you. That you would be honoured in every life. Help us Lord not to learn the way of the heathen. But to learn your way. In every life we pray.

In Jesus name. Amen.