

PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY: FIGHTING THE PASSIONS OF THE FLESH

Houses of Light Church • May 29, 2022 • Pastor Netz Gómez

1 Pet. 2:11

"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul."

I. INTRODUCTION: WHAT WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

- A. This time we are going to focus on seeing the relationship that exists between **being** and **doing** of the people of God. Peter reminds them that they are foreigners and sojourners in a vast empire of unbelief and sin and perhaps they felt very small, and he tells them: *I exhort you, as those who have their citizenship in heaven, to refrain from the passions of the flesh because they fight against his soul*, that is to say that those passions can destroy the soul if we yield to their domain and allow them to reign in our lives without any regret.
- B. **The first thing we saw in the previous passage [2:9] is what we are:** *"But you are a chosen race, [you are] a royal priesthood, [you are] a holy nation, [you are] a peculiar people, that you may proclaim the excellencies of He who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ ... You were not a people in the past, but now you are the people of God."* This is our nature, what we are by virtue of the new birth in Christ.
- C. **Because of what we are, then we are exhorted to abstain from the passions of the flesh.** Someone may ask: 'If we are already a new creature in Christ, shouldn't these kinds of commandments be necessary for us? It sounds very legalistic'; but what the text says is what we are and precisely for this reason we abstain from the passions that can destroy our soul. So the ones that do battle against our sins we show that we are that chosen race; this is the Bible pattern:
1 Cor. 5:7 *"Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."*
- D. **This is the message of the New Testament is about becoming what we are;** Jesus Himself spoke about who we are and the kind of results we produce:
Matt. 7:17-20 *"So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."*
- E. The function of the fruit is not to make the tree what it is. You don't become a good tree by bearing good fruit; you bear good fruit so that it can be recognized that you are a good tree. **When you refrain from the passions that war against your soul, you are not becoming a precious possession of God, rather you show that you are.**

II. WHY CAN THE PASSIONS OF THE FLESH DESTROY OUR SOUL?

- A. **Because your soul was made to behold and proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9).** You exist for

this. **The passions of the flesh by definition are all passions that stop you from marveling more at the light of God.**

- B. **This marveling at the wondrous light we have been brought into can be dimmed and destroyed and you must realize when this is happening to you.** When the passions are greater for other things then you are talking about a destructive passion that wages war against your soul.
- C. So the passions of the flesh are any passions that make you no longer thrilled at His excellences but now the passions of the flesh are making other things seem more excellent and worthwhile. This is why they destroy your soul because they deprive you of the ability to do precisely what God created you to do, that is, proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- D. People who are not proclaiming the excellences of God can be recognized because they are not amazed at Him because they have allowed these passions to dominate their lives; they love other things more than they love God.

III. TWO OPTIONS TO ABSTAIN FROM THE PASSIONS OF THE FLESH

- A. **One of them is to deny yourself; as Jesus said: “pluck out your eye and cut off your hand” (Matt. 5:29-30).** You feel the impulse of the flesh but God gives you the grace to at least not carry out the passion of the flesh; It's like if those fingers that want to run to the page or text the wrong conversation, you cut them off so you don't write what you know isn't going to take you to a right place and you plug out that eye so you don't see porn even though those desires are there. There are Christians who live in this place only and they become exhausted but there is a more excellent way.
- B. **You can replace those desires and passions, displacing them with other passions** and it was what Peter said:
1 Pet. 1:13 *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
1 Pet. 2:2-3 *“Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.*”
- C. **So thus you make war in favor of your soul by preserving the reason for which you were created, that is, to savor the excellence of God's goodness. There is a connection between the level that we abstain from those passions of the flesh in our lives and the level of conduct that we have.** It is very important to see the order in this passage: Who we are in Christ molds our affections and feelings, loves and passions in Christ that lead us to a kind of conduct that the world will then see and glorify God.
1 Pet. 1:14 *“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,”*
- D. As we have seen, ignorance leads us to sinful passions, because these passions flow from error and lies, which leads us to conform to those old passions; but if we

exchange our ignorance with the truth of the Word, this leads us to new passions that conquer what wants to destroy our soul.

- E. So the best way to not conform to these passions of the flesh is to kill them, get rid of them and replace them with new passions of love for God and others, **hoping fully in the grace that will be brought to us when Jesus Christ, wishing like newborn children spiritual milk because we have proven that the Lord is good and He is now our new passion (1 Pet. 1:13 al 2:3).**

IV. ENDING THE SLANDER OF THE WORLD

1 Pet. 2:12 *"Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.."*

- A. So now we move to the new level of behavior that brings us to the point of being seen by the world which can cause them to glorify God. This is the glorious sequence in these verses. Peter tells us: maintain your exemplary behavior among those who do not know God according to the new passions.
- B. The Greek word for honorable is *kalein* and means beautiful. You have a beautiful Savior so you align your life according to his beauty so that people can see it, meaning that the purpose of beautiful behavior is to reflect the beauty of Jesus.
- C. That is to say that those who do not know God speak ill of us but then they see something, which is our good deeds and they change their way of thinking, realizing that we are not evildoers but on the contrary we are benefactors and then they join with us to declare the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. As the next verse says:

1 Pet. 2:15 *"For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people."*

- D. **It is the ignorance of those who do not know God that makes them say that we are evildoers and God wants that to stop but the way is with good deeds.** A danger that must be avoided here is that we think: then I have to do whatever it takes so that they do not brand us as criminals, but that is not true; that is why Pedro emphasizes later:

1 Pet. 4:3-4 *"For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. 4 With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you."*

- E. **So we're not going to do those things anymore, no matter what they say.** When you see someone who slanders you because you don't walk in idolatry, in sexual passions, or you go to parties or drunkenness and they make fun of you and defame you, you don't say: since I don't want them to label you as religious or exaggerated, I'm going to go back to do the things from before. Many make this mistake to "win" others to Christ but that is not the strategy of the Word.
- F. **There are many things that Christians are going to do or not do that the world will think is bad, but we overcome that or at least part of it by doing good deeds.**

An example of this can be the pro-life movement; there are many 'pro-choice' people who can say you don't care about pregnant women or their reproductive rights, or about babies born in a difficult situation; you only care about your right wing agenda. We are being accused of being racist, indifferent and so on, **but when they see that there are thousands of crisis pregnancy centers that have sprung up to help young women or women in general who have unwanted pregnancies, as well as adoption movements, most run by Christians. Good deeds have silenced the ignorance of foolish men**

v.2:15 "For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people."

v.3:16 "having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame."

V. PREPARING THOSE AROUND US FOR THE VISITATION OF GOD

- A.** This is what the Lord expects our good deeds to produce to the point that now for them God is glorious and that will happen on the day of visitation. This may refer to the Second Coming of Jesus or it may be the day God visits them:

Acts. 15:14 "Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles [Acts. 10], to take from them a people for his name"

Lk. 1:68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people [First coming]."

VI. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1. How can the passions of the flesh affect or destroy your soul?**
- 2. How are you fighting the passions of the flesh?**
- 3. Do you consider that your good works are preparing those who do not know God for the day that He visits them?**

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The introductory course to the House of Prayer has already started but you can still register at www.nhop.la**
- The School for Parents starts this Wednesday June 1 at 7:00 pm. Please register at www.housesoflight.org**
- Corporate Prayer this Thursday June 2 at 7:00 p.m.**
- Baptisms Saturday and Sunday June 4 and 5 during our weekend services. The preparation class is June 3 at 7:00 p.m. by zoom. Please register at www.housesoflight.org**