

1Pet 2.11-12—Keep your heart and keep watch over your life

A Call to Duty

- I. Abstain from the passions of the flesh.
 - A. Peter's certainly thinking of sexual sins (cf. Rom 13.13-14). But he's also thinking more generally of *all* those desires which are out of accord with what God commands and with who we are as God's people (cf. Rom 6.2, 6), because these corrupt desires are against the work of the Spirit who now indwells us, Gal 5.17
 - B. We're to abstain not simply from *doing*, but from *desiring*, so that desires never lead to deeds, cf. Gal 5.16-21
 - C. Moreover, we're to do more than not entertain them. We're to put them to death, Col 3.5-10. Sinful desires are right hands to be cut off, Mk 9.43-45. They can't be regulated or moderated.
- II. Keep your conduct among outsiders honorable.
 - A. The word means honest or clean. It's the idea of being morally beautiful and lovely, the kind of life which commands esteem and reverence.
 - B. The world cannot receive the things of God (1Cor 2.14), but it can easily understand a different life. The clean, honest life of a Christian shines into the darkness of the world like the noonday sun (Eph 4.1; 5.1), and that's how we're to live.

The Motives Unto It

- I. You are beloved by God.
 - A. God has shown and given and brought His love *to you*. Though it cost Him His Son, He chose to love *you*, Rom 5.8
 - B. What kind of a return do we make on such an amazing love when we lodge evil thoughts and desires in our hearts? Jer 4.14
 - C. Is it loving to entertain the *body of sin* for which Christ died, Rom 6.6; 8.2-3? Would you embrace your husband's murderers?
 - D. The only suitable return for love is love, 1Jn 4.19
- II. You are sojourners and exiles in this world, Heb 11.8-16
 - A. This is not your home—not even by a long shot. Your time here is a drop compared to an ocean of eternity that you'll spend elsewhere
 - B. Why, then, would you value and pursue and embrace the things of this world as if you could keep them—as if this were your home?
 - C. Our great object is to pass through this wilderness world uninjured and uninfluenced on our way to glory (cf. Pilgrim's Progress).

- III. The passions of your flesh wage war against your soul, Gal 5.17
 - A. The desires of your flesh don't just oppose your soul, they wage war against it, unceasingly striving to destroy your peace with God and make you unfit for any spiritual good.
 - B. Why in the world would you entertain sinful desires? Would you open your home to a pyromaniac?
- IV. Live honorably so that men may see your good deeds and glorify God, cf. Mt 5.16
 - A. This is how we proclaim the excellencies of Him who called us (v.9): by living our lives for His glory in this world. God often makes way for the conversion of sinners by the holy conversation of saints.
 - B. It's a reminder that we not only live before the eyes of God, but we also live before the eyes of men; and we should do everything in our power to see that our lives commend not only Christianity, but Christ Himself.
 - C. We're to live in such a way that the world will know that God is our Father and Christ is our Lord, Acts 4.13. And if it pleases Him, God will use this to bring them to salvation, cf. Acts 16.27-31

Conclusion

- I. These two duties are the very basics of Christianity. In fact, they're so important and essential that we if we have no care to give ourselves to them then we have no basis to call ourselves Christians. Let us pray, then, for the grace to live out our faith and show ourselves in this world to be God's people by the way we live.
- II. Do we not see the great damage our own sinful desires do to our lives? When we entertain sinful desires we undermine our own spiritual resistances and make ourselves prey to sin. We've got to put to death our earthly desires and shore up all those desires of the Spirit which give us the will and power to do good, Phil 2.12-13
- III. God has made us guardians of His honor on earth. How we live reflects upon Him. So often we think of how our actions reflect upon our own profession; but do you ever think how your actions reflect back on Him, whose you are? Let us live in a way that proclaims His excellencies to a dying world and draw all men after Him, Zech 8.23