

1 **A Passion that Purifies**

2 **“Tell me something good”**

- How my last boss began all His conference calls with his team
- Can you tell me something good about God that you are seeing in your life right now?

3 **1 Peter 2:11-12**

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

4 **Remember your divine character**

- The preceding verses remind us who we are in Christ – our BEING
 - *But ye ARE a chosen generation, [ARE] a royal priesthood, [ARE] an holy nation, [ARE] a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but ARE now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*
- Verse 11 follows this passage with an implied “Therefore”

5 **Being and doing**

- You ARE all those things
 - Some wrongly say that we are not yet all the things that 1 Peter 2:9-10 says we are.
- Now ABSTAIN (imperative) from the passions of the flesh that war against your soul.
 - Some wrongly say that such commands as the one in verse 11 are unnecessary for us since we ARE already redeemed.
- There is no conflict here.
 - Verses 9-10 discuss our BEING (our position).
 - Verse 11 says our DOING (our practice) needs to line up with our BEING.

6 **1 Corinthians 5:6-7**

- Your glorifying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, AS YE ARE unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. KJV
- Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough? Clean out the old leaven in order that you may be a new batch of dough, JUST AS YOU ARE unleavened. For Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

7 **You ARE... so ACT like it!**

- Matthew 7:17-20
 - *Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring*

forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

- The fruit's purpose
 - is not to make the tree a tree
 - is to reveal that the tree is good

- 8 **Actions demonstrate character**
 - When you abstain from passions of the flesh, you are not doing so in order to become God's chosen possession, His royal priesthood, His peculiar people.
 - When you abstain from passions of the flesh, you are DEMONSTRATING that you ARE these things.
 - What we do is more of a testimony than what we say. Truth is more CAUGHT than taught.

- 9 **Ralph Waldo Emerson**
 - Often misquoted as "What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."
 - Actual quote is:

- 10 **Recall your designated citizenship**
 - "Beloved" (*agapetoî*) – bound together by God's love for us.
 - "Aliens" in this world (*paroikous*)
 - People living in a place that is not their home
 - A foreigner dwelling in a strange land
 - "Strangers" in this world (*parepidēmos*) – temporary visitor who isn't settling in a country permanently
 - Psalm 39:12 -- *Hear my prayer, O LORD, And give ear unto my cry; Hold not thy peace at my tears: For I am a stranger with thee, And a sojourner, as all my fathers were.* (Same Greek words in LXX)

- 11 **Remember your purpose**
 - *... that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light*
 - *...that you may proclaim the excellencies (ESV)*
 - *...that you may proclaim the virtues (LEB)*
 - Literally "that you might evangelize (*euangelleite*) the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"

- 12 **Our purpose is to praise Him**
 - Our purpose is to evangelize the world by praising God's virtue and character.
 - We best fulfill this purpose when our WALK matches our TALK.
 - How do we show the world the wonderful virtues of God?
 - By demonstrating those virtues in our life
 - By putting godly character on display for the world to see

- 13 **I'd rather see a sermon**

*I'd rather see a sermon
than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me
than merely tell the way.
The eye's a better pupil
and more willing than the ear,
Fine counsel is confusing,
but example's always clear;*

14 **I'd rather see a sermon (2)**

*And the best of all preachers
are the men who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action
is what everybody needs.
I soon can learn to do it
if you'll let me see it done;
I can watch your hands in action,
but your tongue too fast may run.*

15 **I'd rather see a sermon (3)**

*And the lecture you deliver
may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lessons
by observing what you do;
For I might misunderstand you
and the high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding
how you act and how you live.*

16 **Recognize the dangerous enemy**

- *Fleshly lusts or passions of the flesh war against the soul*
- What are these fleshly lusts or passions?
 - These passions of the flesh include anything and everything that causes you to stop marveling the most at God's marvelous light.
 - Fleshly passions dim and destroy the marvelous light you have in Christ.
- They make other things look brighter and more beautiful than God.

17 **Galatians 5:19-21**

- *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, 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.*

- N.B. "They which do such things" is a present tense verb in Greek which indicates continuous action.

18 **How to tell you're losing the war**

- You are losing the war when:
 - You are more attracted to other things or people than you are God
 - You begin to lose the marveling at the grace of God and the beauty of Christ
 - You would rather spend time in something other than His Word or in prayer or in praise and worship of Him
 - Christ no longer predominates your thoughts
 - You are no longer thrilled with the excellencies and virtues of Christ
 - You find "other excellencies" at which to marvel

19 **So, how do we "abstain"?**

20 **Resist distracting passions**

- How do you "abstain" from these fleshly lusts?
 - Matthew 5:29-30 -- *And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*
 - Jesus is NOT teaching bodily mutilation.
 - You feel the desires, but deny them by God's grace. You act as though the offending hand or eye is not there.

21 **Replace lusts with hope and grace**

- 1 Peter 1:13 (KJV) *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*
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- 1 Peter 1:13 (LEB) *Therefore, when you have prepared your minds for action by being self-controlled, put your hope completely in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

22 **Where do wrong passions originate?**

- 1 Peter 1:14
 - KJV -- *As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your IGNORANCE*
 - LEB -- *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former desires you used to conform to in your IGNORANCE*
- So, quit being ignorant.
- Confess and forsake your sins. Don't hide them.

23 **Where ignorance leads**

- Ignorance → fleshly passions → conformity to worldly and fleshly passions →

damage to our soul

24 **Where truth leads**

- Truth → passionate marveling at Christ → not being conformed to fleshly passions

25 **Rekindle your appetite for truth**

- 1 Peter 2:2-3 (KJV) -- *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*
- 1 Peter 2:2-3 (LEB) -- *Like newborn infants long for the unadulterated spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up to salvation, if you have tasted that the Lord is kind.*
 - Spend time in the Word.
 - Use a notebook to record where God slaps you in the face with truth and pray it back to Him.
 - Be accountable to someone to stay in the Word.

26 **Epictetus (A.D. 55- 135)**

- SUSTAIN yourself in God's Word and the praise of His virtues
- ABSTAIN from passions that distract you from God.