

"The Believer's Duty"

Part 1

1 Peter 2:11-3:12

Introduction: Tonight in our study of 1 Peter we have come to the second section of the letter. The first section which we looked at covered 1:1-2:10 and the focus was on the believer's salvation. Now Peter is going to move on and address the believer's duty. This section will focus upon SUBMISSION.

We have been reminded many times in all of our services that our responsibility is to glorify God in all that we do. This thought is not directly commanded in the section we are going to step into, but the thought certainly runs through the verses that are before us.

Notice 1 Peter 2:9

Here in this verse we looked at several titles that apply to the believer as we are in Christ. We are part of the bride of Christ as the church, we are royalty as children of God, we are a people who are to be set apart as a holy nation, and we are a peculiar people which means we are NOT COMMON. As we move on in Peter's letter, we shall see how all of these titles are to be manifest within our lives.

I. Abstaining from Sinful Desires

Notice 1 Peter 2:11

There is much to consider within this verse.

a. We are strangers and pilgrims.

Peter reminds his readers again that they this world is not their home.

1 Peter 1:1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

This thought was so important for the believers which Peter was writing to. They needed to be reminded that this world was not their home. They were strangers and pilgrims in this world. For this reason they needed to guard against getting rooted in. They were to live in such a way that others could see that they were not living for this world.

Life is far too short to live for this world. Our lives need to be lived in righteousness for the glory of God.

1 Peter 4:1-2

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

² That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

Lot was a man who was also to live as a pilgrim and a stranger. He however settled down in Sodom and when he did, he lost his testimony.

Genesis 19:12-15

¹² And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:

¹³ For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

¹⁴ And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

¹⁵ And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

Lot was not consecrated unto the Lord and when it came time to warn his sons in law, he had no testimony. This happens to many believers today also. They live for this world and finally one day they begin to realize it was an empty life. It is then that they try to witness to their loved ones, but they will not hear for they watched how he had lived and his life spoke louder than his words.

Jesus gave a warning concerning Lot's wife.

Luke 17:28-32

²⁸ Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

²⁹ But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

³⁰ Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

³¹ *In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.*

³² *Remember Lot's wife.*

Why did Jesus say this? He was warning those His listeners about getting rooted into this world.

Genesis 19:24-26

²⁴ *Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;*

²⁵ *And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.*

²⁶ *But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*

This seems to have been a unique judgment upon Lot's wife because she disobeyed the angels who had said to not look back. It was her love for the world that caused her to be disobedient.

This is exactly what believers need to guard against today. A love for the world and the things in the world will cause you to live in disobedience to the will of God. A believer's love for this world will keep them from living for the Lord because they will be reluctant to separate from what the world offers.

Example: I see it all the time when people do not want to attend church, (which God has commanded and ordained), because they do not want to give up the living for the world and the here and now.

Hebrews 2:14-15

¹⁴ *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*

¹⁵ *And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

To follow the Lord is to trust Him for everything.

Luke 9:57-62

⁵⁷ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

⁵⁸ And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

⁵⁹ And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

⁶⁰ Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

⁶¹ And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

⁶² And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Getting back to Peter's words, we are pilgrims and strangers in this world. Let us be willing to turn our back upon this world and live for the promises of God.

b. We are commanded to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Notice 1 Peter 1:11 again.

This is a command for the believer. This is not a suggestion. This is not an option. We are commanded to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Let us understand that God never commands us to do something which we have no power to do. We have the power to forsake the lusts of the flesh. God has given to us the power.

2 Peter 1:3-4

³ According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

God has provided to each believer the power to overcome the fleshly lusts. To escape we need not go through therapy programs, nor addiction classes. God plainly tells us to ABSTAIN which means we are to stop. Let me show you another command to stop sinning.

Ephesians 4:25-28

²⁵ Wherefore putting away lying, speaking every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

²⁶ Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

²⁷ Neither give place to the devil.

²⁸ Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

There are two commands here. The one who lies is to stop and speak the truth and the one who stole is to stop stealing and work for his needs. Paul does not say to ask the Lord to take away the sin and neither does Peter. They both simply say, "STOP". Whatever the habitual sin is that the believer wrestles with he or she is commanded to just stop.

Romans 6:1-6, 11-13

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

² *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

³ *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

⁴ *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

⁵ *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

⁶ *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

¹¹ *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

¹² *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

¹³ Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

We are to reckon ourselves to be dead to sin and alive unto God.

James 4:7

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Let me show you what the word "ABSTAIN" looks like in action.

Job 1:1

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil [turned away from].

Here in Job's life we see the meaning. It means "turn away from". When Job was faced with temptation he "turned away". This is exactly what we are to do when faced with the lusts of the flesh. Don't give in! Don't feed his desires!

Now Peter will tell us one reason why the fleshly lusts must be avoided.

c. Fleshly lusts war against the soul.

For a believer to entertain the lusts of the flesh will bring nothing but misery in the individual's life.

2 Peter 2:6-8

⁶ And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

⁷ And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

⁸ (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Conclusion:

Indulging in fleshly lusts will cause many problems in the life of the believer:

1. It will sear the conscience.
2. It will rob you of inner peace.
3. It will break your fellowship with the Lord.
4. It will hinder your prayer life.
5. It will take you away from the Word of God.

