

The Passion We Must Deny  
(1 Peter 2:11)

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I. We are Called to Abstain from Fleshly Lusts

- A. We are to restrain ourselves from satisfying inordinate desires.
- B. That means we are to restrain ourselves from satisfying natural desires outside of God's will:
  - 1. Natural desires - the basic desires of the body for food, sleep, or sex
  - 2. We are not to satisfy natural desires in ways that are disobedient to God (e.g. gluttony, oversleeping out of laziness, sex outside of God's will, etc.).
- C. That means we are to restrain ourselves from satisfying neutral desires outside of God's will:
  - 1. Neutral desires – all that I want to be, to have, to create, to do, or to experience where God has given man freedom of conscience to decide (e.g. to be an engineer, to have a nice home, to create a business or invention, to go fishing, to see a play, etc.).
  - 2. We are not to satisfy neutral desires in ways that are disobedient to God (i.e. being dishonest on an application to get the engineering job, spending more than you can afford to have a nice home, focusing so much on creating a business or invention that you neglect being a disciple or making disciples, or going fishing or seeing plays so often that you neglect going to church and serving others).
- D. That means we are to restrain ourselves from satisfying naughty desires:
  - 1. Naughty desires – all that I want to be, to have, to create, to do, or to experience that God would define as sin
  - 2. We are not to satisfy naughty desires at all (e.g. to define and be what I want according to my own rules and regulations apart from or outside of God's order or command, to live a life refusing to answer to anyone including God, to seek to control and possess any person that will satisfy all my agendas, to try to create a way of life, business, or situation whereby I can be autonomous from God and people, to do what I want apart from or outside of God's order or command, to try control my destiny, or to try control your destiny, etc.).
- E. This means we are to have mastery of our internal desires through the power of God.
- F. We do this understanding that we are loved by God.
- G. We do this understanding that we are not of this world which means we are not to participate in the values, customs, or lifestyle that contradict the values, customs, or lifestyle of our citizenship in heaven.

## II. Principles To Help Us Abstain from Fleshly Lust

- A. We must ask God to break us of our self-rule and self-indulgence – preoccupation with being our own boss, not having to answer to God or others; being able to care for, provide for and maintain ourselves apart from God and people; and living to please self in whatever capacity we choose. We must ask this believing that He will answer our prayer for this.
- B. We must ask God on a consistent basis to create in us a heart that embraces His rule over us; to create in us a heart that is desirous of Him and His will; to create in us a heart that is willingly submissive to Him, so that we will do what God has commanded without challenge, excuse, or delay. We must ask these things believing that He will answer our prayer for these things.
- C. We must evaluate the desires that consume our mind, time and energy to determine if they are *natural*, *neutral*, or *naughty* and allow God's word to dominate our thinking accordingly in relation to these desires.
- D. We must determine when we are most vulnerable to succumb to these desires (e.g. alone, tired, hungry, bored, in the morning/afternoon/night, in pressure situations, in painful moments, around men, women, or children, at home, or away from home, etc.) and begin to think through our exit plan to resist them.
- E. We must learn to say no to ourselves when seeking to satisfy *naughty* desires, or seeking to satisfy *natural* or *neutral* desires in the wrong way while enduring the pain of saying no.
- F. We must train ourselves on a daily basis to submit our minds and our bodies to the authority of God, resulting in living according to His commands on a daily basis while enduring the pain of being disciplined in submitting our minds and bodies to God.
- G. We must minimize the time we would normally spend thinking and acting on those inordinate desires by devoting ourselves to other activities at the moment those inordinate desire arises in our hearts (e.g. start to devote your attention to reading, responsibilities, relationships, or recreational matters that we should or could be attending to at that moment that would honor God and lead us into Christ-like character).

### Key Points to Consider:

1. We all have desires; these desires can be natural, neutral, or naughty in their existence.
2. We are commanded to keep ourselves from satisfying the natural and neutral desires in the wrong way.
3. We are commanded to keep ourselves from satisfying the naughty desires at all.
4. If we do not restrain ourselves accordingly, these desires will destroy us.

“There are few greater dangers in this fallen world than to listen to the myriad voices that tell us that somehow, someday, satisfaction of heart can be found in the possession of or experience of something in creation..... Things are not always what they seem. And in this world of deceit and danger there is no more dangerous lie than the one says that life can be found somewhere outside of the Creator.....It is always the sin of thought and desire in your heart that hooks you to the evil in the world in which you live...If your principle motive is that God would be pleased then you can liberally enjoy the variegated (variety) pleasures of the created world without rendering yourself fat, addicted, and in debt. ....It is only when you live for God that you have both grace-given desire and the power to say no to yourself, to exercise daily self-control, and to live as God has called you to live.... You cannot live in the way you were created to live and have a lifestyle that chases personal desires.... We all need to be rescued from ourselves by being spiritually awakened to something bigger than us. No life is more dangerous than the “me-ward” life that every sinner quests for. ....You simply cannot have yourself at the center and not end up with a life that is evil in the eyes of God.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Paul David Tripp, *Sex & Money: Pleasures That Leave You Empty and Grace That Satisfies* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), p. 151, 49, 62, 176, 178, 180.