

# We Are At War

June 20, 2021

<sup>11</sup> *Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.*

## WHAT is Our Fight?

We are war. Ready or not, like it or not, believe it or not. There are still present in this body of death as Paul describes sinful desires that are waging war with our soul.

Paul described the believers old way of life this way in Ephesians 2:3:

<sup>3</sup> *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh<sup>Ⓜ</sup> and following its desires and thoughts.*

As such, there is this constant battle between the new you, the real you, and this body of death that is still speaking to us. In fact, this body of death is able even now to go from bad to worse. In other words, it can gain strength over us if we allow it to be corrupted further. Listen to what Paul says in Ephesians 4:

<sup>20</sup> *That, however, is not the way of life you learned<sup>21</sup> when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.* <sup>22</sup> *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;* <sup>23</sup> *to be made new in the attitude of your minds;* <sup>24</sup> *and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

A lot in this passage, but I want you to see this phrase in verse 22:

*Which IS being corrupted by its deceitful desires...*

This has the capacity to go from bad to worse. Even as a believer. Your flesh has the capacity to go from bad to worse. When we are irresponsible in our pursuit of holiness. For whatever the reason... we got tired. We got discouraged. We got lazy. We don't like this whole waging war thing. Let's just see how bad it gets before we engage, huh?

Listen, ***when you stop fighting, your flesh starts winning.***

## WHY Should We Fight?

Because when we stop fighting, our flesh starts winning. But why else? Let's look to the passage itself again. Verse 11...

<sup>11</sup> *Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.*

Peter has just said to them in verse 9-10:

<sup>9</sup> *... you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.* <sup>10</sup> *Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

THEREFORE... Peter doesn't actually use this actual word but there is a very definite shift in focus here. In view of the fact that you ARE a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, this is how you should live.

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- You are CHOSEN
- You are ROYAL
- You are a PRIESTHOOD
- You are a HOLY NATION
- You are GOD'S SPECIAL POSSESSION
- You are AMBASSADORS

## **HOW Do We Fight?**

I'm going to seek to answer this question from two passages, one is from this verse 11 and another from the Ephesians 4 passage we looked at earlier.

First, verse 11:

*<sup>11</sup> Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.*

To abstain from sinful desires. This means to separate yourself from it. You don't try to hang onto this AND pursue holiness. You abstain. You hold back. You don't pursue. You don't allow yourself to enjoy.

You know the word for "abstain" from your evil desires is an interesting word. It means, "to refrain from holding onto something, in order to hold onto something else." To have separated yourself from something in order to united to something else.

Think of both hands. Physically, we often try to hang on to something in this hand while holding on to something else in the other hand. It doesn't that way spiritually. It is a two-handed grab.

- You cannot hang on to lust, and enjoy intimacy.
- You cannot indulge in entertainment and experience true rest for your soul.
- You cannot hold onto greed and covetousness and enjoy contentment.
- You cannot hold onto control and enjoy peace
- You cannot hold onto bitterness and experience His joy.
- You cannot hold onto Self and enjoy Jesus.

### **"Surrender"**

- What do I need to STOP?
- What do I need to START?

### **"Spirit of the Living God"**

- Luke 11—Just Ask.