

## **HOPEFULLY**

*First Peter: Standing firm in the hope and encouragement of the grace of God!*

### **Lesson Title: The War Against the Soul!**

#### Introduction

The central section of Peter's letter (2:11-3:12) emphasizes **submission** in the life of the believer. Peter applies the theme of submission to the life of a believer as a citizen (2:11-17), a worker (2:18-25), a marriage partner (3:1-7), and a member of the Christian assembly (3:8-12).

#### **WAR AGAINST THE SOUL!**

- A. The bad news. (2:11)
  1. Our fleshly passions are at war within us.
  2. Their aim is to cripple you, harm you, and make you ineffective.
  3. Peter has two goals in these verses:
    - Know who your enemy is.
    - Fight the enemy.
- B. What are the passions of the flesh?
  1. Galatians 5:16-26 will help us understand.
  2. There was no struggle before you were saved because you were dead in sin.
  3. But after the new birth there is a war: the new creature at war with the old creature.
  4. So how do these passions of the flesh wage war against the soul?
- C. Strategy: **To keep you from doing that for which you were made.**
  1. Our identity is 2:4-10.
  2. Our passions of the flesh attempt to make God's naming of us untrue.

D. Strategy: **To shrink our soul to the size of smaller pleasures.**

1. To shrink our soul into base urges and animalistic instincts.
2. To hinder our understanding that all good gifts and pleasures come from God.
3. God made pleasures to serve our worship and usher us to Himself.

E. Strategy: **To cut us off from fellowship.**

1. To isolate us.
2. To erode our relationships.

F. Strategy: **Total Destruction! Total War!**

1. Our passions are fundamentally a god complex.
2. They want what God wants. God wants our heart, soul, mind, strength – all of us. God is not satisfied with second.
3. No one in this war is going to settle for a negotiated solution.

**HOW DO WE FIGHT BACK?**

A. **Believe in our identity – who we are.**

1. Peter begins by saying “***Beloved***”.
2. Before we begin fighting, we need to remember that we are loved.
3. Second, Peter calls us “***sojourners and exiles.***”
4. This means we are sojourners and exiles within the kingdom of men, but we are citizens of God’s new kingdom.
5. The idea is that we maintain our peculiarity and decline to adopt the culture of the kingdom we reside in as resident aliens – with a smile on our face.
6. We do not become God’s people by our abstinence – we confirm our identity as his people by our abstinence.

B. **What is sin aiming for?**

C. **Embrace total war.**

1. The flesh is aiming at total war and total victory. So, what should we be aiming for?
2. When Peter says, “*Abstain*”, you may see that as a weak word, but Peter is saying, “*Run! Put some distance between yourself and these passions.*”
3. Listen to how radical Jesus would have us to be in this war in Matthew 5:27-30.

D. **Develop a passion for better hopes and glories.**

1. Abstinence is saying NO to one thing to say YES to a better thing.
2. Self-denial is denying yourself, but in the end, it turns out to be the only way to authentically love yourself.
3. Taking up your cross and following Jesus is not about death in the end, but about resurrection. It is the defeat of death.

**1 PETER 2:21-25 SUBSTITUTION AND TRANSFORMATION!**

A. Two parts: **Substitution and Transformation.**

1. Jesus saves us – the just for the unjust.
2. Jesus’ suffering transforms us – the unjust becomes just.

B. **Jesus’ suffering saves us!**

1. He tells us why we need saving.
2. He tells us Jesus did not need saving.
3. He tells us how Jesus saved us.

Note: ***THE DEVIL WANTS YOU TO HAVE JESUS AS ANYTHING BUT A SUBSTITUTIONAL, SACRIFICIAL LAMB***

C. **Jesus’ suffering transforms us!**

1. ***“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.”*** (v.24)
2. This is substitution in order that it might be transformational.
3. Jesus’ substitution is meant to result in imitation. He provided an example of a whole way for us to be called and live. What is that example?
4. It looks like “cross bearing”.
5. The word that Peter uses for EXAMPLE means a PATTERN to be traced in order to learn.
6. Peter wants that cross shaped pattern of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, to be what our lives look like.

Conclusion: Nehemiah 8:10