

HOW TO EXCEL IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE OR QUIETING OUR CRITICS 1 PETER 2:11-15

Text:

Introduction:

Peter had a tender love for other Christians. Note how he addresses the hearers of this passage – Dearly Beloved. We too need this kind of love between believers today.

Peter had common ground with suffers for Christ. He knew the world was at odds with those who live for Christ.

How do we excel in the Christian Life and Silence Our Critics?

Note:

1. WE MUST BE CLEAN (VS. 11)

1 Peter 2:11

¹¹ *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

This is a war in which all believers find themselves.

It's as old as sin and is as up to date as today's temptations.

There are several battlegrounds in which this battle takes place.

- The Battlefield called the Lust of the Flesh
- The Battlefield called the Lust of the Eyes
- The Battlefield called the Pride of Life

1 John 2:16

¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

There have been many casualties in this battle on each of these battlefields.

Examples of those who lost on these battlefields:

- Samson succumbed to the deceit of Delilah
- David succumbed while on his roof watching Bathsheba bathe
- Peter succumbed when he followed afar off

Examples of those who experienced victories on these battlefields:

Joseph refused to yield to the advances of Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39)

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Daniel refused to defile themselves with the Kings Meat and wine

Stephen refused to compromise his preaching and though he was stoned to death, as far as I can tell he was the only individual who at his death received a standing ovation from the Lord Himself.

Acts 7:51-60

⁵¹ Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. ⁵² Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: ⁵³ Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. ⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. ⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, ⁵⁶ And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. ⁵⁷ Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran

upon him with one accord,⁵⁸ And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.⁶⁰ And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

God has made provision for us to win every time.

1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³ There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Not only must we be clean but also:

2. WE MUST BE CAREFUL (VS. 12)

1 Peter 2:12

¹² 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.

There are many critical spectators in this war.

Many are watching to see if our faith is real.

Many are hoping we will be defeated so that they can criticize.

Our lives are being continually inspected by others and unbelievers.

Why must we be so careful to be absolutely honest and moral?

- We represent Christ to the world

2 Corinthians 5:20

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

- We are to shine as light in a dark place

Philippians 2:15-16

¹⁵ That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; ¹⁶ Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

- Our light will glorify our Father in Heaven

Matthew 5:16

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see

your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

If we care for Christ and the souls of men, we will be careful.

Not only must we be clean and careful but also:

3. BE CONSISTENT (VS. 13-15)

1 Peter 2:13-15

¹³ Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; ¹⁴ Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. ¹⁵ For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

Peter calls for more than Sunday Christianity.

The Christian life encompasses every area of life.

- We have the unique privilege of being citizens of Heaven.

Philippians 3:20

²⁰ For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

- We also citizens of earth and are called to demonstrate we are different
- We are to submit ourselves to the laws of the land, obeying them for the Lord's sake.

Living above reproach will impact our world for Christ.

Close:

We silence our critics through clean, careful, consistent living.

We put to silence the Ignorance of Foolish men.

We may also many of them to trust the Lord.