

## 1 Peter 2:11-12

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from the desires of the flesh, which war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Conduct yourselves with such honor among the Gentiles that, though they slander you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.

Berean Study Bible

<sup>11</sup> You, whom I love, I urge you, as foreigners and visitors,  
to replace the desires of the flesh, which war against the soul.  
<sup>12</sup> Conduct yourselves with so much honour among the Gentiles  
that, although they slander you as evildoers,  
they may witness your honourable deeds,  
and glorify God on the day He assesses us.

My own translation

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1

### I feel like I don't belong. 1 Peter 2:11-12

I actually don't belong here. 2:11a

My attitude to my fellow believers. 11a "I love, I urge"

My attitude to myself. 11a "foreigners and visitors"

Things don't belong in me. 2:11b

I am saved but not yet sanctified. 11b "desires of the flesh"

I am a winner but I've not yet won. 11b "war against the soul"

The world says I don't belong. 2:12

The world refuses to see the true me. 12a "slander you as evildoers"

The world will be forced to see the true me. 12b "witness your good"

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2

### Winning the war. 1 Peter 2:11-12

Winning the internal battles. 2:11

An invitation to me. 11a "I urge you"

An invasion against me. 11b "war against the soul"

Winning the external battles. 2:12

An attack against me. 12a “they slander you”

An assessment of me. 12b “He assesses us”

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3

### **Remember to win. 1 Peter 2:11-12**

I need to remember who I am. 11a

I am here as an outsider. 11a “foreigners”

I am here temporarily. 11a “visitors”

I need to remember who I fight. 11b

The enemy is within me. 11b “desires of the flesh”

The war is against me. 11b “war against the soul”

I need to remember how I live. 12

Always be the best. 12a “so much honour”

Always do the best. 12b “witness your good deeds”

I need to remember who is judge. 12b

There are those who pass judgement. 12a “they slander you”

There is only One who is The Judge. 12b “God... assesses us”

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4

### **What can you hear amid the noise? 1 Peter 2:11-12**

Listen to the cry from above. 2:11a

I am loved. 11a “whom I love”

I am to listen. 11a “I urge you”

Listen to the clamour from within. 2:11b

I have desires to replace. 11b “replace the desires”

I have desires to relinquish. 11b “war against the soul”

Listen to the call to love. 2:12a

Not everyone is lovable. 12a “they slander you”

Everyone can be loved. 12a “with so much honour”

Listen to the commitment to truth. 2:12b

God will be glorified by everyone. 12b “they... glorify God”

God will assess everyone. 12b “He assesses us”

**Everything is connected to everything. 1 Peter 2:11-12**

Remember everything you are. 2:11a

We are resident aliens. 11a "foreigners"

We are temporary visitors. 11a "visitors"

Replace everything unhelpful. 2:11b

We have attitudes to overcome. 11b "the desires of the flesh"

We have attacks to overcome. 11b "war against the soul"

Respect everyone around you. 12a

We must control our actions. 12a "Conduct yourselves"

We must control our attitudes. 12a "so much honour"

Reward every word and deed. 12b

We face a last day. 12b "on the day"

We face a fair Judge. 12b "He assesses us"

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**Why do you live like you do? 1 Peter 2:11-12**

There are good reasons for my lifestyle choices. 2:11a

I am loved. 11a "Beloved"

I am free to choose. 11a "I urge you"

I am here temporarily. 11a "foreigners and visitors"

There are tough decisions for my lifestyle choices. 2:11b-12a

I am changing my desires. 11b "replace the desires"

I am winning my inner war. 11b "war against the soul"

I am living honourably. 12a "Conduct... with so much honour"

There are unpleasant consequences of my lifestyle choices. 12b

I will be unpopular with some people. 12b "they slander you"

I commit to maintain my direction. 12b "good deeds"

I answer to a higher authority. 12b "He assesses us"

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## **Our world is at war. Let's win that war! 1 Peter 2:11-12**

We are fighting for home soil. 2:11a

We are not conscripts but volunteers. 11a "I love you; I urge you"

We are to reconquer our lost homeland. 11a "as foreigners and exiles"

Cut the enemy's supply line. 2:11b

Redirect your supply lines. 11b "replace the desires of the flesh"

Reinforce your front line. 11b "desires... which war against the soul"

Win their hearts and minds. 2:12a

Serve with honour. 12a "Conduct... with so much honour"

Serve with integrity. 12a "although they slander you"

Proudly wear your medals. 2:12b

The enemy evaluates us. 12b "witness your good deeds"

Our commander rewards us. 12b "He assesses us"

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## **Winning the war within. 1 Peter 2:11-12**

Choose where you fight. 2:11

Fight the battles over there. 11a "as foreigners and exiles"

Fight the battles over here. 11b "war against the soul"

Choose whom you fight. 2:11b

The enemy is an insurgent. 11b "the desires of the flesh"

The enemy is within us. 11b "war against the soul"

Choose how you fight. 2:12a

Serve with honour. 12a "Conduct... with so much honour"

Serve with honesty. 12a "although they slander you"

Choose how you exit. 2:12b

Don't make it personal. 12b "glorify God"

Do make it positive. 12b "He assesses us"

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## **I just want some peace, perfect peace! 1 Peter 2:11-12**

I just want peace in my soul. 2:11

Remember the attitude of others to me. 11a "You whom I love"

Realise the place I have here. 11a "foreigners and visitors"

Replace the attitudes within my heart. 11b “desires of the flesh”  
Rise up against the real enemy. 11b “war against the soul”

I just want peace in my surroundings. 2:12

I conduct myself with honour. 12a “Conduct yourselves with... honour”

I cannot control others’ slander. 12a “although they slander you”

I commit to others’ wellbeing. 12b “witness your good deeds”

I concede to God’s assessment. 12b “He assesses us”

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10

### **Winning the war within – with fruit! 1 Peter 2:11-12**

“replace the desires of the flesh” 11b

The works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, idolatry and sorcery; hatred, discord, jealousy, and rage; rivalries, divisions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:19-21

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

I replace my desires from a new source

I replace my desires putting the old to death. Galatians 5:24

I replace my desires in a new direction. Galatians 5:16

I replace my desires with new decisions. Galatians 5:17

I replace my desires to a new destination

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### **Other possible titles**

Strange people in an even stranger land.

Facing reality: we are the moral minority.

Just passing through.

I’m a tourist on planet earth.

Living among liars.

Witnessing in the real world.

The battle for my soul.

A fight to the death.

Aliens are among us. Aliens are us!

Number One, with a bullet.

Heart transplant for believers.

## Quotes and illustrations

Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Matthew 26:41

I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. Romans 7:18

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:6

The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Romans 8:7

If you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. Romans 8:13

Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Galatians 3:3

Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. Galatians 5:16

The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. Galatians 5:17

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Galatians 5:24

The flesh has to die so the Spirit can live.

The central problem of our age is not liberalism or modernism, nor the old Roman Catholicism or the new Roman Catholicism, nor the threat of communism, nor even the threat of rationalism and the monolithic consensus which surrounds us. All these are dangerous but not the primary threat. The real problem is this: the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, individually corporately, tending to do the Lord's work in the power of the flesh rather than of the Spirit. The central problem is always in the midst of the people of God, not in the circumstances surrounding them. Francis A. Schaeffer

When all is said and done, the life of faith is nothing if not an unending struggle of the spirit with every available weapon against the flesh. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

No flesh, not even that of the true believer, is so completely under the influence of the Spirit that it will not bite or devour, or at least neglect, the commandment of love. Martin Luther

Although, the flesh is weak, the Spirit of God is always willing, and He makes us able. Monica Johnson

A faith that can't be tested, can't be trusted. Adrian Rogers

My own flesh is waging a military campaign against my soul.

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## Commentary

“...to **abstain** from the desires of the flesh” v11. This word, ἀπέχω, (Strong's 568) is a combination word made up of (Strong's 575) meaning 'away from', plus (Strong's 2192) meaning 'have'. Hence, 'to have one thing by being separate from another thing'.

This is a verb with 19 occurrences in the New Testament, but with a variety of translations:

I say to you, **they have** their reward. Matthew 6:2, 6:5, 6:16,  
the land **being** tossed by. Matthew 14:24  
their heart is **far away** from Me. Matthew 15:8, Mark 7:6  
take your rest. **It is enough** has come the. Mark 14:41  
to you who are rich, for **you are receiving** your comfort. Luke 6:24  
not far **being distant** from the Luke 7:6  
was yet a great way **off**, his father. Luke 15:20  
Emmaus, a village **being distant** sixty furlongs. Luke 24:13  
to them to **abstain** from the pollutions. Acts 15:20  
to **abstain** from things sacrificed to idols. Acts 15:29  
But **I have received** everything in full. Philippians 4:18  
sanctification of you to **abstain** you from. 1 Thessalonians 4:3  
form of evil, **abstain**. 1 Thessalonians 5:22  
forbidding to marry [bidding] to **abstain** from foods. 1 Timothy 4:3  
from you] for a while, that **you would have him back** forever, Philemon 1:15  
to **abstain** from the desires of the flesh, 1 Peter 2:11

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## Music and songs

Songs for foreigners and exiles

I am a stranger here... H 736

Songs about the war against the soul

Am I a soldier of the cross? H 518

A mighty fortress is our God. H 84

Destined to win.

Fight the good fight with all thy might. H 519

He who would valiant be. H 530 / H 531

Onward Christian soldiers. H 520

Soldiers of Christ arise. H 521

Stand up, stand up for Jesus. C 308, H 522

The battle belongs to the Lord. SiS 630

True-hearted, whole-hearted. H 541

Victory chant (Hail Jesus). SiS 650

Victory song (Through our God]. SiS 320

Songs about our conduct before the world

Be bold. Be strong. 465

Before You I kneel / A worker's prayer.

Fear not. SiS 505

Go forth in His name (Kendrick). 72

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### **Discussion starters for personal reflection or group discussion**

1. In the opening words of 1 Peter 2:11 what attitudes and emotions are being expressed? Why are those the most appropriate feelings when you consider what is said in the second half of that verse?
  2. How is it possible for our own desires to be at war against our own soul?
  3. This verse indicates we cannot avoid that inner conflict; so what are we told to do in order to move towards inner peace?
  4. Imagine someone asked you how they replace (literal translation) their inner desires. What advice would you give them?
  5. We are told, in 1 Peter 2:12 to conduct ourselves with honour. What does honourable conduct look like, in practice?
  6. On the day when God finally assesses our lives, what do you think will be the things that please Him, or disappoint Him?
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