

2 Timothy 5

2 Timothy 2:20-26

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It's always important to remember when we are taking the Bible paragraph by paragraph that very often the connection with what has gone before would be more obvious if we had read the entirety of the chapter up to and through the text that we are going to consider this evening. For example, tonight "But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: The Lord knows who are his, and, 'Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.'" We mentioned last time that that was a very typical Biblical juxtaposition of the divine part and the human part, of the divine action and the human action in salvation. We'll mention that again, but it is immediately after that statement that our text begins for the evening in v. 20.

Text Comment

v.21 If you have ever been to a *great house*, you will have an even better idea of what Paul was talking about in v.20. For example, the Biltmore Estate near Asheville, North Carolina -- still the largest private home ever built in the United States, some four acres under roof or 175,000 square feet of floor space -- includes the separate bedrooms of the master and mistress of the estate, George and Edith Vanderbilt, a convention made necessary by the fact that the mistress had her maids and the master had his servants and it would have been thought deeply inappropriate for a maid to be in the master's bedroom or for a male servant to be in the mistress's bedroom. They are large and lavishly decorated and separated by a sitting room that makes any and every one of our living rooms seem a small hut in comparison. There are guest rooms as well, also of good size and beautifully appointed with magnificent artwork adorning the walls, but nothing as grand as the Vanderbilts' own bedrooms. Similarly, the sitting rooms for guests were large and beautiful, but were not so lavishly decorated as the master sitting room, with its furniture and artwork gathered from all over the world. Then, on the upper floors, are a great many bedrooms for the servants: neat, but small and simply appointed. The main dining room seats some thirty people at the main table, situated in a vaulted room, the ceiling two stories high, and dominated by a great fireplace at one end. The servants' dining room in the basement is considerable in its size but hardly as large or as fancy. And the table ware similarly. Beautiful china and sterling flatware for the family and the guests, but simple crockery for the staff. In other words, there were rooms and vessels for noble use and rooms and vessels for menial use. On special occasions, when the Vanderbilts were entertaining guests, the house would be at its very best and most beautiful. On more ordinary occasions simpler vessels and utensils would do and always the servants used still simpler items.

So what is Paul talking about? Well, almost certainly he is still talking about the church's *teachers*, his subject to this point in the chapter and, as we shall see, still the subject of his remarks as the chapter comes to a close. The term Paul uses here for "vessels" is used elsewhere of the ministers of the church. The Lord Jesus sent Ananias, you remember, to tell Paul that he was the Lord's chosen *vessel* or instrument to take the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15) and later Paul would speak of himself and his fellow-workers with the same term when, speaking of the gospel, he wrote, "we have this treasure in earthen *vessels*" (2 Cor. 4:7). So here in 2 Tim. 2 we don't have a contrast, as perhaps the illustration might suggest, between the best vessels and those that are only serviceable. Here the contrast is between good vessels and bad, honorable and dishonorable. He's still thinking of the contrast between true and false teachers, as in the immediately preceding verses. It is more like the use of the same term in Romans 9 where Paul speaks of God creating some vessels for honor and some for dishonor where the contrast is clearly between those who are saved and those who are not.

Obviously it is essential that any vessel or utensil to be used in your house *be clean!* What is required is that a good teacher separate himself from the false teachers, their teaching and their way of life. Such separation is required of us in many places in the New Testament *but only this kind of separation.* We are not to separate from Christians who disagree with us in some particular or who strike us as not as thoroughly committed as they should be. *That* kind of separation is never commanded in the Bible. We can't be of use to the Lord's people if we cut ourselves off from them. But heresy and living in defiance of God's laws are another thing altogether. As John Stott, summarizes the point of v. 21: "Purity then -- purity of doctrine and purity of life -- is the essential condition of being serviceable to Christ." [73] That is the point that Paul had made already in v. 19, immediately before his illustration of the two sorts of vessels to be found in a house.

- v.22 Now Timothy is no youngster. He was at least in his mid-thirties when he received the letter we know as Second Timothy. But in the Greco-Roman world there were only two recognized standards of age, young and old, and "young" could refer to anyone up to the age of forty!
- v.24 The warning against engaging in needless contention is repeated from earlier, vv. 14 and 16, and was the subject of our last sermon on this chapter.
- v. 25 No matter how impressive a false teacher can be, and they can be very impressive; no matter how intelligent they can be, how high an IQ, no matter how high sounding their motivations can be, if teachers do not understand the truth of God, then they don't really understand anything of any ultimate importance. And they can rightly be described as

unlearned or ignorant. The Day of Judgment is going to reveal a great company of men who were thought to be very wise when they lived in this world as complete and utter fools.

- v.26 As the Scripture teaches here and elsewhere, the truth will set people free not only when it is carefully and accurately taught, but when it is adorned, or made attractive by the way in which it is taught and by the example of the one who teaches it. You cannot effectively communicate a message of love and grace by being harsh, critical, arrogant, and testy! We've had so many examples of this in my lifetime in the American evangelical world. Men who had a lot to say who finally had no one left who would listen to them because they had alienated everyone by their behavior and especially by their treatment of others. Those of you who remember Francis Schaeffer will remember that his tremendous influence resulted as much from the way he spoke as from what he said. He was a master, with his late wife Edith, of communicating a real interest in and concern for people. A great many people who found Christ at L'Abri did so not because of the strength of the argument presented for the Christian faith but because it was the first time in their life that somebody actually sat and listened to them and cared about what they had to say. The Schaeffers took objections to the Christian faith seriously; they never dismissed them out of hand. They were almost always unfailingly patient and kind in their personal dealings with others. So far our text this evening.

There is a great deal that happens in our lives below the level of our conscious reflection. The Holy Spirit is at work in us, but invisibly, imperceptively. We have little to no idea of what grace comes to us, for example, through the worship of the Lord's house on the Sabbath day, through the preaching of the Word, through the sacrament. There is no way we can tell what sort of Christians we would be if somehow all of those influences were to be removed or a half of them or even a quarter of them. But I guarantee you would be a shadow of the Christian you are today. What we see and what we do lies on the surface; the great depths of spiritual reality lie below and out of sight. The foundations of the spiritual life and of spiritual development or sanctification -- growth in grace and holiness of life -- lie not only out of sight, but often out of mind, as they do in our natural lives. Imagine if it were necessary for you to superintend all the essential activities of your body. You had to instruct your heart to beat, your lungs to breathe, your other organs to function according to their purpose. There would be nothing left of your time or energy to live. But the Lord is able to superintend both all of the processes of your natural life *and* of your spiritual life, and does so largely with you completely unaware. In all that happens in your life and mine, he is tending and pruning his vines. We must never forget this. God is at work in our lives every moment of every day through every single experience molding and shaping and preserving us in faith and in his grace. Our preservation and our growth in grace depends more upon *his* work, so much of which we cannot see, than it depends upon our work, distracted, half-hearted, fitful and intermittent as it often is.

But, at the same time, no one can read the Bible without realizing that to be a Christian is to be committed to make an effort every day to *change*, to grow in that grace in which we now stand, to grow in its experience and its practice, to become less like what we were by nature and more and more like what we have been made to be in Christ, to transform *the principles* of our new lives into the *actual pattern of our thought, speech, and behavior*. We live between two worlds -- the world of sin and unbelief and the world of righteousness and love -- we have left the former and entered the latter -- but the remnants of the old cling to our thoughts, words, and deeds, and the new is still strange and, God forgive us, unwelcome to us. So again and again in the Bible we are told to turn away from sin and turn to righteousness, to mortify our sins and to vivify our new life in Christ; to deny ourselves and to follow Christ; to crucify our flesh; and to walk in the Spirit. Whatever else we are about, whatever else we must do, *this* double calling is to be our occupation, our intention every day we live as Christians in the world.

This interplay between the divine work within us and our own labor -- turning from sin and practicing righteousness -- the relationship between the divine and the human in the formation of Christian holiness and a believer's growth in grace is *the* problem both theologically and practically. In one way or another it is getting the divine and human side of sanctification right and keeping them properly in view and in a correct relationship to one another that has bedeviled Christian *thinking about sanctification* through the ages and that bedevils *our pursuit of sanctification* every day we live.

You can find this problem among the great as well as in the daily life of Christians like you and me. One of the great works on sanctification in the Reformed tradition is the 19th century work of the Scottish divine James Fraser on the sixth and seventh chapters and early part of the eighth chapter of Romans published under the title *The Scripture Doctrine of Sanctification*. It is a great work by all accounts and faithful to the biblical teaching. But in his own preaching Fraser so concentrated on man's duty that many of his people simply sank under it, missing the encouraging note, the divine side and the Holy Spirit's work in a Christian's heart and life, so much so that numbers of them began to attend a nearby parish where they were more likely to find what one observer referred to as "healing for their wounds." [John Kennedy, *Days of the Fathers in Ross-Shire*, 42]

On the other hand, often and certainly notably in our own day, we face the opposite problem. We live in an antinomian age, permissive, indulgent, highly subjective, and we expect the Lord to do for us whatever it is that needs to be done. We are impatient when told that we have sacred obligations that we are required to meet come wind, come weather, that we are responsible for the development of our Christian characters and for the improvement of our behavior -- for repentance and for obedience -- and that we will be held accountable for the result. Passages like the one we read this evening run off the American evangelical back like water off a duck.

Where are the righteousness, faith, love, and peace in so many Christian lives today? No wonder no one pays attention to the Christian message in our culture. We are not adorning it. We are not forcing people to pay attention by the fact that Christian lives are so obviously different and better! We are not clean vessels! Or not clean enough. Let me give you an example of this.

I was informed by a fellow Tacoma pastor the other day that some area pastors are proposing to introduce in Tacoma churches a program designed to strengthen Christian marriages. The reason for this is that these churches have experienced so many divorces. So many Christian marriages are breaking up. Something has to be done. It has to be done for the sake of the Christian husbands and wives and children, of course, but it has to be done as well for the church's testimony. If a Christian husband and wife can't get along -- people who loved one another sufficiently to get married in the first place -- then what really do we Christians have to offer our culture? If Christians don't make more faithful and happier husbands and wives, why should anyone believe that the gospel actually works? But, you see, long gone are the days when Christian husbands and wives did not get divorces *because it was forbidden in the Word of God, because it offended God, and because it was inconsistent with a profession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.*

I read, not so long ago, a fascinating biography of James Garfield, the American president who served for only four months before he was shot on a train station platform, lingered for almost three months with the country in an agony of concern, and finally died not from the wound but from inept doctors who in their treatments continued to insert infection into his body. It was his doctor who prevented his body from shaking off what should have been a non-life-threatening injury. Garfield was an admirable man in so many ways and one cannot help but wonder how he would be remembered had he served eight years as president instead of four months. He was, if you remember, a Disciples of Christ minister, a self-made scholar, a civil war hero, rising to the rank of General and winning an important battle, a famous orator in a day known for its oratory, and a very likeable personality, kind, generous, and blessed with ready laughter.

But he had married a woman who was so much more reserved than himself, who had great difficulty expressing affection, and about whose love Garfield was not sure even when they married after a long and difficult courtship. He admired his wife more than he loved her. When he served in the congress as a representative from Ohio, they were apart for long periods of time. The result was perhaps all too predictable. Garfield had an affair with a pretty young widow, a reporter for the *New York Tribune*, for whom he felt the kind of attraction he had never felt for his wife.

But Garfield was a Christian man of Christian principle. After a month with this other woman his conscience could not stand it any longer so he went home to Ohio and confessed everything to

his wife. Angry and heartbroken, she forgave him but, understandably, required that he end the relationship immediately. Garfield agreed, even though he thought at the time that he was probably giving up his one chance at real love. He was ashamed of his infidelity. He wrote, "I believe after all I had rather be respected than loved if I can't be both." And with a noble humility he told his wife, "I hope when you...balance up the whole of my wayward self, you will still find, after the many proper and heavy deductions are made, a small balance left on which you can base some respect and affection." Repentance is a noble and beautiful thing, is it not? Would that we saw more of it.

Garfield worried that there would be little left of their marriage after his confession, but instead his own feelings began to change. Her bravery in enduring the pain he had caused her helped him to see her in a new light. Slowly he began to fall in love with his wife. In a short while they had the marriage they had both hoped for at its beginning. He wrote to her from Washington, "We no longer love because we ought to, but because we do. The tyranny of our love is sweet. We waited long for his coming, but he has come to stay." They enjoyed a great romance for the rest of their life together. [C. Millard, *Destiny of the Republic*, 98-103] *But, of course, that only happened because a Christian man knew his duty and did it. He fled youthful passions and pursued righteous.* Something that far too few Christians are doing today.

That is precisely our problem. Our churches should be full not of Christian husbands and wives who are divorcing but rather of stories like these, of faithful men and women who surmount their temptations out of a fierce and uncompromising loyalty to Jesus Christ. We should be hearing stories like this again and again. Christian children should grow up in a community where it is incomprehensible that Christians should betray the Lord in such a public and objective way. But instead there are far too many professing Christians who are willing to disobey the law of God, are willing to fail to adorn the gospel with their lives, and are willing to bring discredit to the Lord's name and cause. Christians *must not* do this; but they are doing it in droves. They do not take the obligation of holiness and grace seriously as Paul teaches us to do here. They are not radical about fleeing and pursuing as Paul commands us to be. Why? Because they want to be happy. They confuse happiness with the fulfillment of their own subjective and immediate desires, they figure it is more important for them to be happy than holy, and that because they have been allowed to think that God will not care and will forgive them anyway. *C'est son métier!* It is his job. And, taking their entire view of the faith together, a faith denatured by American hedonism and subjectivism, they conclude that if God wanted them to remain in their marriage, he should have made it easier for them to do so. In fact, though they would probably not say this out loud, or even think it out loud to themselves, their divorce is really his fault.

The perennial problem in the Christian life is one-sidedness that emphasizes one element -- either the divine or the human -- at the expense of the other. Holiness, higher-life, and quietist movements have emphasized the divine work at the expense of the human. Antinomian

movements like that those that control the contemporary American church are a species of that concentration on the divine side at the expense of the human. God will do it so far as he cares to; I need not. But others, especially people like us who emphasize the law of God and the importance of obedience, can so emphasize our responsibility that the late Rousas Rushdoony could even say on one occasion that while justification is by faith, sanctification is by works, as if in the matter of holiness of life or growth in grace we are on our own. Sanctification certainly involves the embrace of our duty, involves our work, our labor, our effort, our intention; but it depends upon the work of the Holy Spirit. We must work out our salvation precisely because it is God who is in us both to will and to work according to his good pleasure. We can do nothing without Christ inside us, with us, to enable us. The Bible everywhere impresses upon us this double-action in sanctification, this cooperation between the divine and the human, by speaking about sanctification sometimes as if it were solely a divine work and sometimes as if it were solely a human work. Each is emphasized; each is made essential to the outcome. We are not allowed to forget the one or the other. Only from time to time are they brought together, as they were in v. 19, the verse immediately before the section we read this evening and clearly the introduction to it. The Lord knows -- and, of course, in the Bible “know” means much, much more than “know about; it means to love and to care for -- the Lord knows those who are his, but every Christian must depart from iniquity. Keeping both together in mind and heart is our constant challenge: to work and to strive and to obey while all the time looking up, trusting in the Lord’s presence, and depending upon his help.

The text we read this evening, clearly, is an exposition of the human side of sanctification. The chapter may have begun “You then...be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus” but it continues and concludes with a series of calls to action. What we have here, in fact, is an entirely typical presentation of the Christian life. And, so it seems, given how often the Bible does this, it is good to be reminded again and again of what we Christians are to be about in our daily lives; how this life is to be lived; and how, by God’s grace, we are to make a success of our service on Christ’s behalf (and we are all to judge our lives first and foremost not by how *happy* we are as Christians but by how *useful* we are to Christ and his kingdom!). So take note of these familiar emphases.

1. *First, the practice of the Christian life is like the double motion of the lungs; there is action in two directions, a positive and a negative dimension.*

Here we read that we are both to shun or to flee youthful passions *and* to pursue righteousness. We are to run *from* some things and run *toward* others. However you describe the Christian’s relationship to sin and temptation, there remains a lot of “fleeing” in the Bible’s account of the Christian life. Paul said the same thing to Timothy in 1 Tim. 6:11, “But as for you, O man of God, *flee* these things.” Paul’s “flee youthful passions”, along with a great many other like texts, is the end of all thinking, thinking that somehow continues to reappear in the Christian church,

that sin has somehow been conquered and is no longer a power to be feared, an enemy to be resisted, or a serious problem to be faced. Temptation, as every Christian learns soon enough, is a phoenix that returns to life no matter how many times it has been killed. The Christian never gets beyond the problem of sinful desire in this life, never gets to the point, never gets close to the point where he or she is not susceptible to temptations, all manner of temptations. They say that baseball is a game of failure, because if you are a good enough hitter to reach the Hall of Fame, you still fail at least and usually more than two-thirds of the time. Well the Christian life is a life of failure and how a man or woman continues to strive, to serve, and to obey in the teeth of that failure is what determines the holiness and usefulness and, ultimately, the happiness of his or her life.

There are teachers of the Christian life still today who understand Paul's remark that in Christ we are dead to sin as meaning that we are now unresponsive to it. As one famous illustration put it Sin is like a dead dog lying in a gutter. Poke it with your foot and it won't move. Kick it and it still won't respond. But the problem with all such interpretations is that they are neither true to the experience of Christian life nor the teaching of the Bible. If you poke *that* dog in the gutter, it's very likely to bite you in the leg. If you have to flee youthful passions, if you have to run for your life from temptation, then obviously sin is not a dead dog that can't be stirred even with a strong kick.

And so it is everywhere. We Christians are told to put our sins to death, not that they have already been put to death, But that we must put them to death, which is another way of saying "flee youthful passions." They represent a real and present danger. We are to be afraid of what sin can do in our lives and run hard in the other direction. Think of Joseph in Potiphar's house, fleeing his master's house, leaving his cloak behind him in order to avoid the temptations of Potiphar's wife. As Spurgeon summed up the lesson: sometimes the best answer to temptation is a good pair of legs and the King's Highway! But don't simply nod your heads. The point is that this is to be your daily philosophy of life. You are to recognize when you wake up that there will be some running required of you today, some sins you will have to flee. Prepare yourself to run. Think of your life as constant running in one direction or the other. What running have you done today; what will you do tomorrow? From what temptation will you run and how fast will you run from it?

But not simply to run from temptation but to run toward something, to *pursue* what is right and pleasing to God. Again, in 1 Tim. 6:11 Paul said a similar thing. After telling Timothy to flee some things, he told him, "Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness," and so on. This word "pursue" is the same word Paul uses to speak of his own *pressing on* after holiness in Philippians 3:12 and 14. We are talking about hot pursuit. Just as we must see our day, each day, as requiring running away, so we must see it as requiring running after. Dr. Gross gave me a great illustration of this this afternoon though it reflects very badly on his moral character! I'm

going to use is anyway because great illustrations are hard to find and when you find them you use them. He was present at a famous Indianapolis 500, the reason I say it reflects poorly on Dr. Gross is that all of us know that the Indianapolis 500 is run on what day of the week? Sunday. Exactly. So you can ask Dr. Gross yourself what he was doing at the Indianapolis 500 on a Sunday. But I'm glad he was there because he gave me a great illustration. And it is this: that was a race in which the last number of laps were run with two cars in close proximity to one another and one car, the one behind, very slowly catching up. Every time they came around to the grandstand, Jordan Johncock was a little closer to Rick Mears. Every lap, you know a lap at that track is 2.5 miles, which takes about 30 seconds for them to traverse, you could tell the one was getting closer, every time around closer still, until finally they were virtually neck and neck and you couldn't tell who won until they came around the next lap and Jordan Johncock was waving to the crowd. Well apply that picture to your Christian life. Are you getting closer every lap that you run? Let's consider a week of your life a lap. Are you closing in on what you are pursuing, what you are chasing? That's the idea. How and after what am I going to run today? What am I chasing after and how will I chase it?

2. *Second, we are to pursue, to put on, to practice fundamental virtues.*

Here we find in another way the Bible's ethical uniqueness. Most religions, most human philosophies of life, in fact all of them but one, reduce obligation to specific acts, to a list of do's and don't's. But the Bible requires us to demonstrate fundamental commitments of the heart. Look at the list here: righteousness, faith, love, and peace. Now all of those virtues can be and must be expressed in specific acts, but no list of acts can possibly comprehend all of that beautiful goodness. The point is that whatever we say and do must be righteous -- that is it must conform to God's will --; must be faith -- that is it must partake of our confidence in the Lord, our dependence upon him, and our faithfulness to him; must be love -- the denial of ourselves for the sake of the Lord and others -- and must be peace -- the effort to live in peace and bring *shalom*, wholeness of life, to those around us.

You can perform a set of acts and there be little or no righteousness, faith, love, or peace in them. But to live pursuing righteousness, faith, love, and peace must produce not only godly *acts* but godly *motives* and a *godly spirit and manner* together with them. Bonhoeffer put this extraordinarily well in respect to one of the "youthful passions" from which we are to flee, namely sexual temptation.

"The essence of chastity is not the suppression of lust, but the total orientation of one's life towards a goal. Without such a goal, chastity is bound to become ridiculous. Chastity is the *sine qua non* of lucidity and concentration." [Cited in Metaxas, 486]

Do you get his point? A Christian must be determined not to sin, but not simply for the purpose of avoiding wrong. You don't exhale simply to empty your lungs. You exhale so as to be able to fill your lungs with fresh air. Similarly a Christian's purpose must be positive, higher than simply the avoidance of what is forbidden. We must wish to be and commit ourselves to be righteous, faithful, loving, peaceful spreading the aroma of Christ wherever we go, whatever we do. We must intend to put on Christ in our thinking and speaking and behavior. The suppression of lust means nothing if it is not a means to this higher, nobler, and more beautiful end. A young woman or man who is committed to chastity for its own sake becomes very often a brittle and unattractive person. But a young woman or man who is committed to righteousness, faith, love and peace will be chaste but never becomes unattractive, never brittle, and certainly never ridiculous.

No one has to get out a ruler to measure the length of the skirt when its wearer is not simply fleeing youthful passions but is following hard after righteousness, faith, love, and peace. The use of the ruler is virtually the proof of a deadly one-sidedness. But the same is true of every other part of godliness: not just chastity but purity, honesty, diligence, charity, humility and all the rest. As Paul reminds us here, the Christian's witness to an unbeliever is far more likely to be impressive and fruitful if it proceeds not simply from the fear of failing to share one's faith but much more from the desire to see others saved, to foster their peace with God, to honor the Lord for his grace and mercy in your life by sharing the Good News with others.

3. *Finally, this pursuit of Christ-likeness by both fleeing and pursuing is to be done in company.*

As Paul mentions in the last part of v. 22, we are to flee and to pursue "along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." Just as bad company ruins good morals (1 Cor. 15:33), so good company is a spur to all that is holy. The practice of the Christian life, growth in grace, maturing in holiness is a family affair as much as it is the concentration of an individual mind and heart.

You know, because you read the Bible, in how many ways this community can spur us on and help us in the fight of faith and in growth in holiness. We are to encourage one another. Speaking of the Second Coming and the end of our lives, Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "Encourage one another with these words." To the Ephesians he says that we are to forgive one another as Christ forgave us. The Lord Jesus and his apostles commanded us to rebuke one another when that was necessary and confront one another if that should be necessary. We are to instruct one another in the faith. We are to help one another up if he or she has fallen. We are to protect one another's reputation. We are to set an example for one another as Christ set an example for us.

I don't think I could begin to calculate it, but I suspect that the influence of others upon my Christian life has been so immense that I would scarcely recognize myself as a Christian were

they to have been removed. So many have shaped my life, inspired me, and instructed me. I am a shadow of the Christian I ought to be, I know that well enough, but it is absolutely horrifying to contemplate what I might be if it weren't for others and for many of you.

Once again, the Christian life as we learn it in so many places of the Word of God: fleeing and pursuing while all the while depending upon the Holy Spirit to help us, to make our weak actions powerful to effect real change; aspiring not to mere conformity to a list of rules, but to the higher goal of a life that is genuinely, deeply, comprehensively righteous, faithful, loving, and peaceful, a life like that of the Lord's own, aspiring to that life and practicing it, contenting ourselves with nothing less; and, finally, recognizing our weakness, making common cause in this great commitment with other like-minded followers of Jesus, helping and being helped. *That* is everywhere in the Bible the recipe for a life that pleases God, that matters in this world, and that adorns the gospel and makes it attractive to those who do not yet believe. Is that not the life you want? It is the life I want!

Read that verse 22 once again. Every day, all day, "flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."