

DESIRE, LUST (EPITHYMIA)
Biblical Words
Banska Bystrica, 23rd May 2021

Ὡς πάντα ἡμῖν τῆς θείας δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ τὰ πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν δεδωρημένης διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ, ⁴ δι' ὧν τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως ἀποφυγόντες τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθοράς.

2 Peter 1:3-4 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Gal 5:17 ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός, ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκειται, ἵνα μὴ ἂ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε.

Gal 5:17 For 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.

Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ¹² παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, ¹³ προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ¹⁴ ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρῃ ἑαυτῶ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

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0. INTRODUCTION

- Past topics: (1) Scripture; (2) Law; (3) Gospel; (4) Sin; (5) Repentance; (6) Faith; (7) Hope; (8) Love; (9) Kingdom of God; (10) Church; (11) Covenant; (12) "The LORD" [Yahweh]; (13) Hell; (14) Redemption; (15) the World; (16) Judgment; (17) Offence; (18) Wisdom; (19) Lust/Desire [→ holiness → joy → shalom → forgiveness?]
- the problem of *lusting* → advertising; imagination; addiction...

0.1. ABBOTT-SMITH

ἐπιθυμία, -ας, ἡ (< ἐπιθυμέω), [in LXX chiefly for תַּיִשָּׁה, תַּיִשָּׁה; also for תַּיִשָּׁה, etc.]; desire, longing: Lk 22¹⁵ (v.s. ἐπιθυμέω), Phl 1²³, I Th 2¹⁷, Re 18¹⁴; pl., Mk 4¹⁹; esp. with ref. to forbidden things, desire, lust (Vg., concupiscentia): Ro 7^{7,8}, Ja 1^{14,15}, II Pe 1⁴; pl., Ga 5²⁴, I Ti 6⁹, II Ti 2²² 4³, I Pe 1¹⁴ 4²; πάθος ἐπιθυμίας, I Th 4⁵; ἐ. κακή, Col 3⁵; c. gen., μiasμοῦ, II Pe 2¹⁰ (v. Mayor, in l.); τ. καρδιῶν, Ro 1²⁴; τ. κόσμον (aroused by the world), I Jo 2¹⁷; τ. σώματος, Ro 6¹²; τ. ἀπάτης, Eph 4²² (v. ICC, in l.); τ. σαρκός, I Jo 2¹⁶, II Pe 2¹⁸ (without art.), Ga 5¹⁶; τ. ὀφθαλμῶν, I Jo 2¹⁶; σαρκικαὶ ἐ., I Pe 2¹¹ (cf. IV Mac 1³²); κοσμικαί, Tit 2¹²; εἰς ἐπιθυμίας, Ro 13¹⁴; ποιεῖν τὰς ἐ., Jo 8⁴⁴; ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐ., Ro 6¹²; δουλεύειν, ἄγεσθαι, ἐπιθυμίας, Tit 3³, II Ti 3⁶; πορεύεσθαι ἐν ἐ., I Pe 4³; κατά, Ju 1^{6,18}, II Pe 3³; ἀναστρέφεσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἐ., Eph 2³.†
S.V.: πάθος (q.v.), ὄρεξις.

0.2. USAGE

- the word has to be interpreted in its immediate context! (the dangers of etymology)
- (1) normal → **1 Thessalonians 2:17** But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire (τὸ πρόσωπον ὑμῶν ἰδεῖν ἐν πολλῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ) to see you face to face
- (2) good → (Gal 5:17); **Luke 22:14-15** And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired (ἐπιθυμία ἐπεθύμησα τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα φαγεῖν μεθ' ὑμῶν) to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.
 - **Philippians 1:23** I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart (τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων) and be with Christ, for that is far better.
- (3) evil → **Romans 1:24-25** Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts (ἐπιθυμίαις τῶν καρδιῶν αὐτῶν) to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen
- **1 Peter 2:11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul (Ἀγαπητοί, παρακαλῶ ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν σαρκικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν αἵτινες στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς)

1. SERIOUSNESS

1.1. SATANIC ORIGINS

- **John 8:44** You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires (τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν). He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

1.2. REBELLION

- → death
- **Romans 7:7-8** What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet (ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ἤδειν) if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the

commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness (κατειργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν). Apart from the law, sin lies dead.

1.3. CORRUPTION

- → the wrath of God
- the essence of worldly life: **Ephesians 2:1-3** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh (ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς), carrying out the desires (θελήματα) of the body and the mind (τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν), and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
- **Titus 3:3** For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures (δουλεύοντες ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ἡδοναῖς ποικίλαις,), passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another
- **2 Peter 2:9-10** ...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion (τοὺς ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ μωσαίου πορευομένους) and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, [μωσαῖός, (μαίνω), the act of defiling, defilement, pollution]
- → 2Pt 1:4

2. ANALYSIS

2.1. TYPES OR "LEVELS"

- **1 John 2:15-17** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world (1) the desires of the flesh (ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς) and (2) the desires of the eyes (ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν) and (3) pride in possessions (ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου) - is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires (ὁ κόσμος παράγεται καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ), but whoever does the will of God abides forever.
- → Eden: **Genesis 3:6** So when the woman (1) saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a (2) delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be (3) desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.
- → Christ in the wilderness: **Matthew 4:1-11** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, **(1)** "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written, "' Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, **(2)** "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "' He will command his angels concerning you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to him, **(3)** "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "' You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him

2.2. PROCESS

- **James 1:13-15** Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire (έκαστος δὲ πειράζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας ἐξεκόμενος καὶ δελεάζόμενος). ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived (ἐπιθυμία συλλαβοῦσα) gives birth to sin (τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν), and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death (ἡ δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκίει θάνατον)

3. CONSEQUENCES

- → Achan in Jericho! **Joshua 7:20-21** And Achan answered Joshua, "Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I did: ²¹ when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them (ἐδῆθησα) and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath.

3.1. DULLNESS OF MIND

- **2 Timothy 3:6-7** For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions (ἀγόμενα ἐπιθυμίαις ποικίλαις), ⁷ always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

3.2. FRUITLESS (CHRISTIAN?) LIFE

- **Matthew 13:22** As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful (ὁ δὲ εἰς τὰς ἀκαίθας σπαρείς, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων, καὶ ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλοῦτου συμπίπτει τὸν λόγον καὶ ἄκαρπος γίνεται)
- **1 Timothy 6:9** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare (εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα), into many senseless and harmful desires (ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ἀνοήτους καὶ βλαβεράς,) that plunge people into ruin and destruction [**βλαβερός**, (βλάπτω), *hurtful, injurious*]

4. CHRISTIAN DEALING WITH LUST

4.1. THE CROSS OF CHRIST (SPIRITUAL)

- **Galatians 5:24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις)
- **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire (ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν), and covetousness, which is idolatry

4.2. AVOID (RATIONAL)

- **2 Timothy 2:22** So flee youthful passions (τὰς δὲ νεωτερικὰς ἐπιθυμίας φεῦγε) and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart
- **Romans 13:14** But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires (καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιήσθε εἰς ἐπιθυμίας)

4.3. DENY (DISCIPLINE)

- **Ephesians 4:22** put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires (ἀποθέσθαι ὑμᾶς κατὰ τὴν προτέραν ἀναστροφὴν τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν φθειρόμενον κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τῆς ἀπάτης)
- Disobey!: **Romans 6:12** Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions (Μὴ οὖν βασιλεύτω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ)
- **Titus 2:12** ...renounce ungodliness and worldly passions (ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας)

5. TO REMEMBER

- Worldliness and rebellion against God is epitomized in the lusts and passions of the flesh and mind.
- Worldly desires and passions can effectively make your Christian life unfruitful.
- The only way to overcome lusts is to apply the power of the Cross of Christ in love.