

YOUTHFUL LUSTS

The Pastoral Epistles contain Paul's last testimony and will regarding his apostolic ministry that he is leaving in the hands of Timothy and Titus.

"Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you." (2 Tim.1:14; 1 Tim.6:20)

We will examine our lesson text by the following three homiletical points.

Flee	(pheugo / p.a.impv.2ps)	Vices of youthful lusts
Follow	(dioko / p.a.impv.2ps)	Virtues of righteousness, faith, love, and peace
Faithful	(ton epikaleo / p.a.ptc.gplm)	Victors with pure hearts

This lesson will study five aspects of what Paul meant when he commanded Timothy to flee Youthful Lusts.

1. When Paul commanded Timothy to flee youthful lusts, many believe Timothy was actually in his late 30's or early 40's.

The Greek word for youthful is neoterikos (neoterios).

- This word was used to describe marriageable widows (1 Tim.5:11-14).
- This word was used to describe Paul's age when climbing the political ladder of the Pharisaical system (Acts 26:4).
- This same word was used to describe young men of leadership age in the church (Titus 2:6-8).

2. Based on the study of the Pastoral Epistles, I believe Paul's reference to youthful lusts pertains to Full Time Christian Service (FTCS) ministry issues rather than to the Old Sin Nature (OSN) (1 Cor.6:18-20).

Have you considered that your lust and sin problems may be connected to your spiritual gifted ministry?

- Remember the John Mark and Paul conflict on the first missionary trip (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39).
- Remember the conflict between Euodia and Syntyche on the Pauline missionary team (Phil4:2-3).
- Remember the conflict between Peter and Jesus regarding the crucifixion (Matt.16:21-23).

Timothy was part of the Pauline team whose faith had suffered shipwreck (1 Tim.1:18-20). "In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following." (1 Tim.4:6, 12-16; Eph.4:13-15).

Timothy was also part of the Pauline team who deserted Paul and grace teachings (2 Tim.1:15; 2:16-18; 4:14-17). "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim.1:13)

3. Paul issued two commands to Timothy who was already engaged in Full Time Christian Service (FTCS)

The commands to flee and pursue are actually two sides of the same issue like head and tail of a coin. There is a negative side (flee) and a positive side (pursue).

When these two commands work in conjunction with each other the result is positive volition in application of the faith cycle (Heb.11:1).

The Faith Cycle

Hearing
(Rom.10:17)

Completion
(James 2:22)

Believing
(Heb.4:2)

Application
(2 Cor.5:7)

4. The combination of flee and pursue is the exercise of putting off old man thinking and putting on new man thinking.

Old man thinking – flee – youthful lusts (Eph.4:22; 1 Tim.6:11-12)

Paul named names like Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim.1:18-20; 6:20-21) and Phygelus and Hermogenes (2 Tim.4:14-15) and Philetus (2 Tim.2:17-18) and Demas (2 Tim.4:10).

New man thinking – pursue – righteousness, faith, love, and peace (Eph.4:23-24)

Paul named names like Onesiphorus (2 Tim.1:16-18) and Crescens and Titus (2 Tim.4:10) and Luke and Mark and Tychicus (2 Tim.4:11-13) and Prisca and Aquila and Eratus and Trophimus and Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia (2 Tim.4:19-21).

5. Paul's third point to Timothy was to run with like-minded, spiritual, bible believing Christians.

“Pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”
(2 Tim.2:22b; Rom.14:16-19) [The Fruit of the Filling of The Holy Spirit]

Run with the faith crowd rather than the fast crowd (Prov.1:8-19).

“Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity show yourself an example of those who believe.” (1 Tim.4:12; Titus 1:15-16)

Run with those young people who have a pure of heart for Christ (katharos) [chaste, cleansed, and blameless].

“Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.” (1 Pet.1:22)

Jeremiah said that God was the **friend of the youth** (Jer.3:4). Job and David agreed:

“For Thou art my hope; O Lord God, Thou art my confidence from my youth.” (Ps.71:5; Job 29:4)