

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Flee These Things

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Flee youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace...” This is the exhortation to the evangelist Timothy from Paul in 2 Tim. 2:22. This concept of fleeing is often found in the New Testament and should be consistently exemplified in our lives.

Flight is a strategic instinct that we as humans have when we are faced with danger or feel intimidated. We instinctually recognize the potential harm of a situation and try to remove ourselves as far as possible. The word flee actually means “to hurry or run away, to leave swiftly.” We can readily identify this with physical danger, but this is also a concept we should implement in our spiritual lives.

Paul instructs the Corinthian brethren in 1 Cor. 10:14 to “...flee from idolatry.” In 1 Cor. 10 Paul tells the Corinthians that the Israelites were examples to be learned from (1 Cor. 10:6, 11). When discussing idolatry in verse 7 Paul does not quote a passage telling of the Israelites directly worshipping an idol, rather he provides Ex. 32:6: “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood to play,”

thereby illustrating idolatry as a lifestyle, not just a singular action. In this same context Paul warns the Corinthians to take heed lest they fall. Paul is conveying the truth that any object or activity that has preeminence above God is an idol. Idolatry does not necessarily require one to bow down to a graven image, rather all it took was for one to place God in an inferior position to something else. This is what Paul told the Corinthians to flee.

Also in the Corinthian letter Paul exhorts the brethren to “Flee fornication” (1 Cor. 6:18). Fornication is unlawful sexual activity or sexual immorality. Christians are supposed to “run away” and “leave swiftly” from this temptation. There should be no room for sexual immorality in the Christian’s life. We must not try to push the line, or surround ourselves with influences that promote such ungodly activity. We may easily recognize the danger of sexual immorality, but do we flee from it when it besets our televisions, our personal relationships, or perhaps the topic of our conversation? We would do well to remember the exhortation in 2 Tim. 2:22!

In 1 Tim. 6:11, Paul instructs

Timothy to flee from the love of money. Materialism and greed constantly affront us in our society, but we should not try to compromise, befriend, or give place to this in our lives. We must hurry and run away from materialism and greed. Do we find our lives tied up in our physical possessions or the pursuit of wealth? We must flee from these things!

With all this fleeing and running away, where as Christians are we to run to? James writes “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). The word “submit” means to place under obedience or total subjection. We are to conform our lives in every way to the will of God our Father. We must draw close to God while fleeing everything counter to His will.

We take hope that in our fleeing from sin we can overcome by placing our lives in obedience and subjection to God’s will. Then Satan will flee from us for we stand immovable and steadfast with our Lord!