New Year’s Desire

Main Scripture: 1 John 2: 16-17

“For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pride of life - is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away with it’s desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”

Poem

by Francis Ridley Havergal

With each New Year the world is passing away. Things in the world are changing eveyr day. Just from one day to the next could bring unexpected change. With each New Year, as the world is passing away, we have hope that the New Year will bring good changes and many blessings and all that is good.

At the end of each year before the beginning of the new, some people make resolutions, to be better, do better, lose weight, make more money, live healthier. And they often have the same resolutions each year. As the year goes on, they lose sight of their resolutions because of the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pride of life, as John tells us in 1 John 2:16-17. Time marches on in this world and the world keeps turning, but it is PASSING AWAY.

Every day people are passing away. Every day people are living in the pride of life, doing their own will and not asking God what His will is for their life. None of us know if this Year will be our last. God does not promise us tomorrow. But He does promise that whoever does His will, abides forever. We celebrate each New Year, when we should be celebrating each New Day. Every day that God wakes us up, we should make a resolution for that day who we are going to serve; the desires of the flesh or the Will of the Father. Joshua 24:15....choose ye this day whom ye will serve.” Let us desire to do God’s will more than we desire from the world. For the world is passing away. Things of this world will pass away. But the things of God are good and endureforever.

James 1:17 ”Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. ” As the world turns the sun is shining bright on one side of the earth, but the other side of the earth is shadowed from the sun. While it was New Year’s Eve, here in America, it was already New Years in other parts of the world. But God is the Father of Lights, where every good and perfect gift comes from. That light abides forever, but the world passes away. I want the gifts from God, not the ones from the world.

John says the world is passing away with it’s desires:

1) the desires of the flesh - is the will to do things for the pleasure or comfort of the physical body without regards to the soul. It refers to anything that seperates us from God. It is our sin nature, the weapon the enemy uses to attack us spiritually on a regular basis. examples of the desires of the flesh are:

\* sexual immorality

\* drunkeness, getting high

\* jealousy, envy, wanting something that belongs to someone else

\*anger, tantrums, rage

\*hostility, hate

\*idolatry

\*fortune telling, horoscopes, devination

\*enmity, strife, discord

\*stubborness

\*rebelion

\*disobedience

\*selfishness

and the list goes on and on.

The desire of the flesh is our inner desires that spring up from our sin nature. And the world is full of things that tempt those desires in us. When you see a commercial on new cars, it could be a Honda Civic but they are pulling up to some beautiful mansion with a cobblestone drive or driving along a beautiful beach or pulling up to some expensive hotel in a big city. WHY? Because of the desires of the flesh. Why is there so much sexual content in movies and revealing women in commercials and on the streets? Because sex sells. It tempts the desires of the flesh. Why are there jails and why are they always full? Because of the sin nature, the desires of the flesh. Why are families broken? Because of the desires of the flesh...adultry, addiction, selfishness....desires of the flesh.

The flesh is in conflict with the spirit. The flesh does not like to yeild to authority. The flesh does not like anything greater than it’s own wishes and desires. It does not like to depend on anything greater than its own power and control. The Catholic Standard .org says this:

**“The flesh does not grasp spiritual teachings.***[Jesus said,] The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life* (John 6:63).

Having heard Jesus’ teaching on the Eucharist, most of His listeners ridiculed it and will no longer take Him seriously. Jesus indicates that their hostility to the teaching is of the flesh. The flesh demands that everything be obvious to it on its own terms. The flesh demands to see physical proof for everything. It demands that it be able to “see” using its own power, and if it cannot see based on its own limited view it simply rejects spiritual truth out of hand. In effect, the flesh refuses to believe at all because what it really demands is something that will “force” it to accept something. Absolute proof takes things out of the realm of faith and trust. Faith is no longer necessary when something is absolutely proven and plainly visible to the eyes.” <https://cathstan.org/posts/what-does-scripture-mean-by-the-flesh>

2) The desires of the eyes - the desire to possess the things that have appeal to our eyes. This is mostly material things: the car you see that you just have to have, the dress that you would just die for, the watch you would give anything to have, the sexy model or actress that you would commit adultry or fornication with. The eyes are the primary avenue through wich temptations come. So be careful little eyes what you see. King David SAW Bathsheba bathing. He was captivated by what he saw, rather than looking away. Not only did what he see tempt him into committing adultry, he also committed murder, in order to possess what he saw that he desires. It cost him his first born son. However, It is not always what we see that is sinful, it is the desire that we have for what we see. A beautiful painting, a beautiful garden, a beautiful ocen view or mountain view is not sinful. Its the desire of what we see and how we act upon it that leads to sin.

3) pride of life - the arrogant desire to bring attention to oneself in comparison to others. Pride of life is the opposite of being humble. It often leads to bragging. When we have pride of life we step on others and do anything to make it to the top regardless if someone gets hurt. It is not just wanting to be the best, have the best, do the best; it’s wanting to be better than everyone else. It is seeing yourself as more valuable, more desirable, more capable, more accomplished, more intelligent THAN ANYONE ELSE. It is not wrong to be proud of yours or someone elses accomplishments. It is wrong when we exaggerate our view of self, when we do things for the attention, when what we do hurts others or when we hurt others in order to do or get what we want and when we do not give credit to whom it is due but rather take the credit for ourself. Pride of life can be being obsessed over something or over ourselves. It can be as simple as not asking for help or rejecting help. Pride is what caused Satan’s downfall and ultimately the downfall of mankind. It is the seed of temptation, the root of our sin nature and the leader of corruption, death and decay and hopelessness.

So, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pride of life - is not from the Father but is from the world. No wonder the world is passing away. I would rather live God’s will, have good and perfect gifts and abide forever. So this new year, every year, and every day may we walk in God’s will. We can do this by subdueing our sin nature, yeilding to the Holy Spirit, keeping our focus on our relationship with God. How do we focus on God and not be distracted by the desire of the flesh, desire of the eyes and pride of life? We change our hearts to desire Him above all. We pray to Him, read His Word, pay more attention to the things that are from Him, rather than the things from this world. Everythig you do, do it for God and for His Glory. Every day is a gift of life. Every day is a gift to choose. This New Year, I choose God and my hope is that we all choose to desire God, every day, rather than this world.