

Romans 8:12-13 — “Practical Helps on Putting Sin To Death In Your Life”

INTRO-

Introductory Illustration

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING —

1. Mowing weeds in your lawn -- you cut the surface & it'll grow back
 2. You have internal bleeding in your brain -- it does no good to put a bandage on the head & cover up some bruises.
- The problem? You haven't dealt with the real *ROOT* issue.
 - One little beloved sin will make a way for more. Just as one little thief can open the door to more.
 - Another man says this:
Paul is describing a way of life where *Christians seek to strangle sin and crush it from their lives, sapping it of its strength, rooting it out, and depriving it of its influence.* That is what it means to mortify sin (John MacArthur).
 - Mortifying is so important!***
 - **Ephesians 5:1-5** – the solution is *giving thanks!*
 - How do you see your sin, find your sin, increase in hatred toward your sin, get to the root of your sin, behead that sin, throw out that sin in the trash truck & ensure it never rises up again? ***How?***

Background to Rom 8:12-13

- Summary of Romans 8 (see the flow)
 - V.1 – chant: *NO condemnation for those 'in Christ'*
 - V.2-3 – reasons there's no condemnation [Trinity's work]
 - V.4 – you walk according to the Spirit *not* the flesh
 - V.5-8 – 2 ways: either walking *in the flesh* or in the *Spirit*
 - V.9-11 – believers cannot be condemned b/c of the Spirit's work
 - V.12ff – ***Now, in light of that, YOU have an obligation (duty!)***

****READ THE TEXT****

Romans 8:12-13 (NASB1995)

¹² So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³ for if you are living according to the flesh, you ^umust die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

THESIS—Today I want to practically help you learn: **How you must mortify sin.** 5 essential ingredients.

NOW, 2 things must be stated:

1. holiness is **not** achieved in our OWN effort (moralism/legalism)
2. holiness is **not** achieved by the Spirit alone (let go//let God)

Both must go together! They harmonize!

Then the following questions are in order to ask:

I. Why You Should Mortify Sin

We need to hear John Owen say this: **You must trample on the neck of your sins --- kill them, squash them, suffocate them, Choke them, starve them.** why? Be killing sin or sin will be killing you!

II. How You Must Mortify Sin

This is actually very common. *Imagine* if a robber showed up to your front door. *You wouldn't open the door, find out who he is & say 'hey, don't come in here...just wait right here while I think of what I should do to you'!* Of course not!

You slam the door in his face; you lock it; you call 911. Perhaps you go to Home Depot & buy a new lock, perhaps an additional lock; perhaps a security system. Why? To ensure that it doesn't happen again—and be worse the next time!

That's essentially the same idea...

5 essential ingredients to mortify sin

- a. **Examination**—*devote time to examination & reflection.*
 - i. look & examine your life (devote time to this)
 - ii. sit, meditate, ponder, go through the moments of your day, the words of your mouth, the objects of your viewing, the subjects you laughed at, the thoughts of your heart, the motives of your deeds.
 - iii. When he was 19 & 20 years old, *Jonathan Edwards* penned his 70 resolutions. He really took advantage of the opportunity to *pause & reflect* on the type of person he wanted to be & the way in which he wanted to live his life. He prefaces his resolutions with an exhortation to himself to “remember to read over these resolutions once a week”.
 - iv. Resolution #40: Edwards wrote: “*To inquire every night, before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could, with respect to eating & drinking*”.
 - v. ***Do you have time in your day or in your week to reflect, think, consider?*** Without text interruptions, Facebook message alerts, checking the latest scores, allowing your mind to wander? ***Examine & reflect your life, words, deeds, thoughts, images viewed, places gone, entertainments you enjoyed, etc.***
- b. **Excavation**—*dig deep till you get to the source/core.*
 - i. ***Jimmy & Paula had what many called: “A typical marriage”***—but little did anyone really know what went on behind closed doors.
 1. ***They came in for counseling & each pointed the finger at the other person.*** But till they dug deep & went under the surface did they find the real sin problem to deal with!

- ii. Jonathan Edwards: Resolution #24: “*Resolved: whenever I do any conspicuously evil action, to trace it back till I come to the original cause; and then both carefully endeavor to do it no more & to fight & pray with all my might against the original [cause] of it*”
- iii. dig deep, under the surface till you get to the CORE (dig deep)
 - 1. ***you may call it anxiety or OCD***—but keep digging, ***GOD*** calls it a lack of trust in His sovereignty & an endeavor on your part to take the role of ‘God’.
 - 2. ***You may call it a bad temper***—but keep digging, ***GOD*** calls it pride, a love of self, a self-serving refusal to allow anything to get in the way of *your* plans.
 - 3. ***You may call it a ‘desire to be liked’ & ‘welcomed by many’***—but keep digging, ***GOD*** calls it “the fear of man” & a craving in your heart to be liked by others, welcomed by others which is a worship of *them* and *self* and not a worship of God.
 - 4. ***You may call it ‘a constant working through issues’***—but keep digging, ***GOD*** calls a refusal to forgive, a refusal to move on, *never* bring that issue up again, & a pattern of bringing up past faults, sins, failures, ***GOD*** calls it unforgiveness, sin, arrogance, hard-heartedness & it is the most UN-Christlike thing to do!
- c. **Extermination**—*decapitate it; destroy it; devastate it, demolish it.*
 - i. the killing, the slaughtering, the violent beheading (decapitate it)
 - ii. ***If the bear*** is sleeping—you may be safe walking by it for a moment. But when that bear awakes—you *will most surely die*.
 - iii. ***Or consider:*** A lion confined within the grates—is a lion still, though he cannot go about to devour his prey; ***similarly***, though men are restrained from acting out those sins to which they are tempted, yet the restraint of sin is not to be seen as the mortifying of sin.
 - 1. A man may for a time lay a curb and restraint upon his lusts, so that they do not come forth into action, even without the powers of mortifying grace.
 - 2. A man may bridle a lust for many years, and yet the lust remains unmortified.
 - 3. **Therefore, I say, do not count the restraining of a sin to be the mortifying of a sin.** Don’t let sin sleep—you must slaughter that sin. Don’t cover it under the rug; but the axe to the root. Don’t cover it; but kill it!
 - iv. ***You may be able*** to put a very thin rope around the neck of a baby *Great Dane* when it’s born; but when this dog—the ***King of Dogs***—grows older & gets larger & towers well over 120+ pounds, that little thin rope is gonna snap at the *Great Dane*’s powerful force. ***So it is with sin---Putting a rope around a sin does not ‘do the job’—when it grows, and grows it’ll come back alive & stronger than ever.***
- d. **Extraction**—*discard it; dispose of it.*
 - i. **get it out, pluck it out, remove it (discard it)**

- ii. **Matt 5:29-30** – pluck it out & **throw it** from you & then **Mark 9:43-48**.
 - 1. Real iniquity requires radical amputation.
 - 2. a believer’s sins requires brutal slaughtering.
 - 3. **Your eye**—what you see; look at.
 - 4. **Your hands**—what you do.
 - 5. **Your feet**—where you go.
- iii. It may mean for some: *driving a different route to work*, refusing to go out with those friends again, abstaining from movie theaters for a while, canceling the cable, trashing the video games, giving the laptop to a friend, canceling the internet service on the cell phone, not going to ‘that’ place anymore.
- iv. **And again**, simply refuse to accommodate fleshly lusts. **If you struggle with gluttony**, stop loading up on junk food when you shop at the market. **If you are tempted with sexual desire**, refrain from filling your mind with images that feed your lust. **If** you do not want to fall, do not walk where it is slippery. **Refuse** to furnish your mind with the means to entertain evil thoughts. **Make** no preparations for the possibility of sin (John MacArthur).
 - 1. If a hiker chopped off the head of a rattlesnake, **that snake** can still bite even up to an hour after its death. **Similarly, don’t mess with sin when you think it’s ‘dead’**.
- v. Learn from Joshua—took Achan & his family & not only killed him by stoning; **then** they burned him & his family & **then** they covered it with a huge heap of stones!
- vi. Learn from Samuel—took Agag, the wicked king of the Amalekites, & didn’t just *thrust a sword in him* but hacked him up in pieces.
 - 1. Discard so you are not tempted with it again!
- e. **Exchange**—*develop replacements, new habits*
 - i. replace that sin with a Godly deed (holiness, righteousness) (develop replacements)
 - ii. Jonathan Edwards, resolution #58 said: “*Resolved, not only to refrain from an air of dislike, fretfulness & anger in conversation, but to exhibit an air of love, cheerfulness & peacefulness.*”
 - iii. Pray, memorize, worship, accountability, corporate fellowship
 - iv. Meditating on God’s Word crowds out sin & starves the flesh.
 - v. “Sin can’t breathe in an atmosphere of fear and reverence before God. It suffocates. Can you imagine your lust cheery and prosperous when you are on your face before a holy God?”
 - vi. **Psalm 119:9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 20, 24, 30, 37-39, 59-61, 63, 80, 97, 105, 118, 133, 164-65**

1 Pet 2:11 -- abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

FIGHT...

- 1. read the Word
- 2. apply the Word

3. hear the Word

4. speak the Word

5. proclaim the Word

6. pray the Word

You bathe yourself in the Word each day & the bathtub filled w/ all the lusts & allurements & cravings of the world will have NO attraction to you!

*it's about the **WORD**; it's the **Sword of the Spirit**.

The only offensive weapon in your arsenal—**sword (Word of God!)**

- **How do you know when you're killing sin?**
 - *when you are tempted with that particular sin in the future & you have access to 'do it' – but you refuse; it has no attraction to you whatsoever. Jesus Christ reigns preeminent in your heart & mind & desires!*
 - **This happens when new habits are formed; new mindsets are established; new desires & ambitions arise & God-glorifying delights are far more alluring than the flesh-indulging lusts.**

But let me remind you again of **THE most essential empowering to overcome sin...**

Rom 8:13 – “*By the Spirit*”

The Spirit works *in* the Word, *through* the Word, *conforming* to Christ, bringing *edification & order* and *fixing your heart on God's glory*.

Let me show you how GOD works in YOUR working

1. Phil 2:12-13
2. Hebrews 13:20-23. Bear with (put up with, endure, listen to, obey).
3. 1 Thess 5:21-24
4. 2 Thess 2:13-15
5. Col 1:28-29

Does God work? **Yes!** Do you work? **Yes!** Does it depend on God? **Yes!**

Does it depend on You? **Yes!** They're not mutually exclusive they go together & are 2 sides to 1 coin.

Some concluding thought on *What To Do* while Fighting Sin.

- Avoid flirting with temptation!
- Carefully construct a plan of attack!
- Never—*ever!* —drop your guard!
- Remember the goal is not a *process* but a **Person!** It's not *Twelve Steps* but a Triumphant Savior upon which to meditate, live by, love & follow!
 - It is crushing the lust of sin *with a conquering* love for the Savior.
 - Expel sin's affectionate embrace for God's empowering grace!

CONCL-

Concluding Illustration

- There is no death of sin without the death of Christ (John Owen).
- **One writer so helpfully puts it:** “The goal of the Christian life is not external conformity or mindless action, but a passionate love for God informed by the mind and embraced by the will. So the path forward is not to decrease one’s affections but rather to enlarge them and fill them with “heavenly things.”
 - This love for God is centered on Christ & empowered by the Spirit. *A believer is not to shun his desires in life but to enlarge them & put them on the RIGHT object—fill them with ‘Jesus Christ & Him crucified’.*
 - If your heart & mind is daily possessed & taken up **by a lostness** in the beauty of the gospel, **the wondrous** glory of God, **the unspeakable** loveliness of Christ, **the eternal** security promised by the Spirit—*do you think sin could really have open access to our souls?*
 - Do not seek to empty your cup as a way to avoid sin, but rather seek to fill it up with the Spirit of life, so there is no longer room for sin.