

# 7th & 10th Commandments

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[ 0 : 00 ] Colossians chapter 3, verse 5 through 11, and if you are going to use a pew Bible, it's page 1169. We're just going to look at three verses here this morning as we continue looking at the book of Colossians.

Beginning in verse 5, this is the word of the Lord. Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

On account of these, the wrath of God is coming. In these, you too once walked when you were living in them. Let's pray. Father, I pray that you would help us understand your word.

I pray that you would help us to grasp what it is that is being said here, what you meant for Paul to write, what you meant for his readers to understand.

That we would understand it. That we would see how to apply it. And that you, by your spirit, would empower us to live it out. And we pray this in Christ's name.

[ 1 : 11 ] Amen. There was a father who got tired of listening to his children yelling at each other when they would get angry. And they would yell at each other, shut up.

That was not a very nice thing to say. I was raised that you don't say the S word, shut up. It's hard to even say it as I'm doing this illustration. But the father was very tired of listening to his children say this.

So, he told them, what's going to happen is that every time you say this word to one another in this anger like this, you're going to put a quarter in the jar. And at the end of the week, however much money we have, we're going to take that money and the family's going to go eat ice cream on this. Or something like that. So, first week comes along and there was plenty of money for them to go eat ice cream. Second week, there began to be a lot less money.

There was only four or five quarters there in the jar. The third week, maybe just one quarter in the jar. And the father thought to himself, I've solved it. I have fixed the problem.

[ 2 : 20 ] Until he heard one of his children go, be quiet. The problem is, is that we instinctually know that there's more to the problem than just the words and the tone of voice.

There's something deeper going on. There's a deeper problem that's going on. And when we want to see real change, real change in our lives, real change in the lives of those around us, it requires us to fight against our sin.

It requires us to fight against our sin. And the kind of message that we're going to look at here today, looking at what it means to put to death, what is of earth in you still, is not something I grew up hearing.

And a lot of churches will take these verses, mix them with the last ten verses of this chapter, and do one big sermon over all that, instead of diving deeper into it.

Because this is where the rubber meets the road for you as a Christian. Half of your Christian life, or maybe I should say a third, is to fight against sin.

[ 3 : 34 ] Like, yeah, you're saved, you trusted Jesus, you've got your ticket to go to heaven, but what are you supposed to do between now and then? Part of that is to fight against sin.

And so I want us to understand this fight by looking at two things. The first is, what is it we need to be fighting? When we say fight our sin, what do we mean by that?

What does it look like to fight our sin? And the second thing we want to look at is why. What's the motivation for fighting against our sin? Let's pick up the first one, then. What do we need to fight?

This all comes from verse 5. And I want you to notice that the first thing that I need to say is that we're fighting sins as defined by the Ten Commandments.

We're fighting sins as defined by the Ten Commandments. You can see the seventh commandment in the words sexual immorality, impurity, passion, and evil desire.

[ 4 : 35 ] You can see the tenth commandment in the word covetousness. And if you keep looking in verses 8 through 11, you're going to see the sixth commandment in anger, wrath, and malice.

And you're going to see the ninth commandment in the word slander. The point is that Paul is not just grabbing a bunch of words out here and a bunch of things that he thinks are sin, throwing them down on Christians to give them something beyond what God has already given.

No, Paul is leaning upon the Ten Commandments and saying you need to put to death your disobedience of the Ten Commandments. And so the sin that we need to fight is the sin that is defined by the Ten Commandments.

And the reason that's important is because there's a lot of people who want to tell you that you have sin in your life for things that you have done that God has never said is sin.

We let God be the one to define what sin is, not the world. Not the world. Secondly, we are to fight sin that has external expressions.

[ 5 : 42 ] Okay, so sin has this external expression. We see the external expression in the word sexual immorality. This particular Greek word is one of the broadest Greek words for sexual immorality in the New Testament.

It covers a wide variety of sexual sins. It's used in lots of places for it. Sometimes it's to point out adultery.

Sometimes to point out premarital sex. Sometimes to even point out the lust of the flesh that's there as Jesus talks about it. That would involve things related to pornography and then also into the issue of homosexuality.

It's a wide word. It covers a lot of sexual sin. But the point is that it's all the external things that are happening. The third thing is that when we fight this sin, we are fighting not just an external expression, but we're fighting an internal origin of the sin.

Now just let that sit with you for a second. You have an external expression of sin that has an internal origin. You sin outside of yourself towards someone else because it started in your heart.

[ 7 : 03 ] It started in your heart. We see that through several of these words that Paul is mentioning here because all of these words have to do with what's going on on the inside.

For example, impurity. Impurity is this idea of something that's unclean and corrupt. It's like making brownies with mud. Those brownies are corrupt now and nobody wants to eat them.

When we have impurity in our minds, it means that what is there is mixed with something else. It's not pure. The word passion. This word passion is the idea of pleasure from toying with sinful thoughts.

So if you have a thought, you have an image, you have a desire, then brooding over that image, brooding over that desire is the idea of passion.

It's the idea of passion. I've already told you that one of the struggles that I have is I struggle with my anger. And over the years, one of the things that has happened periodically is a conversation from 20 years ago will come back and I will brood over that conversation because I think to myself there should have been a better way for me to answer it.

[ 8 : 23 ] There should have been a more angry way or something like that. The point is that when you have this image in your head, when you have this sinful thought in your head and you brood over it, that's that passion.

Then he uses the word evil desire. It's two Greek words. Evil is this real basic idea of bad. It's about the worst word you can use for bad in the New Testament.

And the word desire, though, this word desire can be desiring for good things, not just bad things.

Let me show you an example. 1 Thessalonians 2.17. Paul says, But since we are torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person, not in heart, we endeavored more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face.

So this word desire can be for good things. The problem that Paul puts to this is that it's a desire for bad things. It's this innermost basic aspect of the human person in their desire.

Sometimes we desire good. Sometimes we desire bad. When we desire bad, this is this evil desirings. You see, temptation to sin is external to us and only latches on to something inside of us that we were already craving.

[ 9 : 53 ] Let me give you an example. If I'm hungry, or if I'm hangry, as some people call it, if I'm hungry and I'm craving food, then somebody offering me a plate of food is very tempting.

If I happen to be hungry and I come by your house at an opportune moment and you say, Would you like to stay for lunch? The temptation to do so is great because in me is already a desire and a craving to not be hungry anymore but to have food.

But if I have just eaten and my stomach is full and you offer me a plate of food, there's nothing inside of me that that external temptation latches on to.

The point is, is that we as sinners have desires. Those desires are evil and when temptation is presented to us, it latches on to what's inside of us.

We also see this internal origin in the word covetousness, which Paul says is idolatry. This word covetousness is another word for this desire, but it's this idea that I want something and it's a changeable thing depending upon what somebody says to me or what I perceive about something.

[11:11] So think about Eve for just a second. Right in the garden? You got Eve, she's been walking around, we don't know how long, in the garden. There was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and before Satan ever came into the picture, she was fine walking by this tree.

But then when he said, when he said, look, this tree is good, all of a sudden that temptation latched on to something already inside of her and now the desire for the tree had grown.

The point is, is that we have in us internal origins of all sin. And sometimes it gets an external expression.

We're supposed to fight against not just watch your mouth, but watch your heart. Not just control your anger, but control your thoughts.

That's what it is to fight against sin. Paul says we are to put to death these things. So how do we do that? This is the place where I'm going to throw in a pretty practical section.

[12:24] Usually I would say this at the end of the sermon, but I'm going to put it right here in the middle of the sermon. So if you fall asleep, you've got the good practical stuff. Okay? So wake up. How do you put to death what's earthly in you?

How do you fight your sin? How do you kill it? Let me give you four things, and I put this on the sermon handout in case you can't keep up with me as I go here.

The first is you have to remember who you are. You have to remember who you are. That's why back on Easter Sunday, we talked about Colossians 3, 1 through 4.

Because Paul says, if you've been raised with Christ, then do this. Because we belong to the King. We've been united to Christ.

We're united with Him in His death. We're united with Him in His resurrection. And the power that raised Christ from the dead is the power that works in us. We're no longer in Adam.

[13:26] We are in Christ. And you cannot start fighting sin from any other foundation. You can't try to fight your sin on your own because you just think you're a nice person and you want people to think well of you.

You don't want people to think you're a gossip, so you try to control your gossip. You don't want people to think that you're an angry person, so you try to control your anger. If that's the foundation of where you are, you will fail.

Maybe not in men's eyes, but absolutely in God's eyes. Because you have done it on your own, in your own strength, in your own power, apart from Him.

You cannot try to fight sin apart from Christ. If you do, it is sin. You've got to remember who you are. Secondly, you must know what it is you're trying to kill. You are trying to kill the internal and external. You're trying to put to death the internal and the external.

[14:32] So many people are willing and fine with just stopping the external. It's like the father who thought that everything was fine because he had gotten his children to stop saying, shut up, instead of, and then he sees the internal is the problem because now they're saying, be quiet.

It's like when people say, well, I can look so long as I don't touch. Well, that's a lie from the pit of hell. You believe anything like that, or you believe something like boys will be boys, or any of these other things, these things are a lie, right?

You have to fight the internal and the external. My anger comes from where? It comes from you, right?

You make me mad. Is that correct? No. No, it comes from within my own heart. And if you can't call, if you can't call it sin, then you're not going to be able to kill it.

Third thing. You have to starve it. You have to refuse it. You have to reject it. You have to expose it. You have to starve it.

[ 15 : 42 ] You have to refuse it. You have to reject it. You have to expose it. There are some things that cannot stand light. Sin is one of them.

You must bring your sin to light and let it be exposed. It's kind of like this. I have told you, I don't know how many times that I struggle with anger.

Now, why have I done that? Because I've exposed it to about 50 people in this community who are going to be praying for me and holding me accountable. Because if I ever have a moment where all of a sudden I'm angry and you see me, you're going to be like, oh, he told us that that was that. And you have permission to look at me and say, Pastor, you know, anger is a sin. Now, I might not like it, but you have the permission to do it.

And why would I do that? Why would I do that? Am I just sort of a glutton for punishment? No, it's because I know that I can't fight sin on my own. I need you. And you can't fight sin on your own.

[ 16 : 42 ] You have to expose it. You've got to starve it. You can't let it have life. You can't toy with it. You can't act like it's something that's sort of, you know, a trivial little thing that doesn't matter.

And therefore, it's okay if I keep it here. I've got this little pet sin. You know, the big things I don't do, but this little thing, it's kind of like throwing a baby rattle in the crib with your grandbaby. You wouldn't even think twice about that.

Yet, what do you do? You hang on to your little pet sin thinking it's okay. No, your life is just as valuable as that little one and that sin is worse than a rattlesnake. So you need to starve it, refuse it, reject it.

You need to expose it. And the fourth thing you need to do is you need to be motivated to fight. You need to be motivated to fight and that is going to be point number two in just a second.

So, I'll come back to that in just a little bit. But let's, let's kind of end this point by thinking of a couple of things that we need to think of. What I'm saying in all of this is that you can't be passive.

[ 17 : 43 ] You can't be passive. The Christian life, you know, you look at a student who goes to school and they're studying chemistry and they're kind of, you know, not doing very well and they, they, they make the joke about studying by osmosis, right?

You lay your head on the book and fall asleep on it and you hope the material gets into your brain, right? I think that's the way we look at our Christian life and our sin is that we're just so passive about it.

We don't actively pursue finding the sin in us and trying to kill it. Instead, we just kind of go like, well, that was one mistake. I, I just don't do that very often, so it's okay.

We cannot, we cannot be passive. I mean, think about this. The Colossians were being taught that to get rid of their sin, they needed to go sacrifice more animals.

They were being taught they needed to get in touch with angels and worship them. They were being taught that they needed to fast. They were being taught all kinds of things to fight against their sin and Paul is going like, no, no, no, no, no.

[ 18 : 45 ] You've got Christ. He's all you need. So just starve it. Don't, don't, don't become passive.

Do not think to yourself that you're okay because of the place that you live. I mean, listen, this conservative community here is a breath of fresh air.

It is a gift from the Lord, but do not do as the Israelites did when you, when you think about this place. What did the Israelites do? He gave them this warning in Deuteronomy chapter 8.

He says, take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His rules and His statutes which I command you today lest when you've eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied then your heart be lifted up and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

In other words, He was telling them, listen, don't go passive and think that because things feel blessed that you're off the hook and there's nothing to fight. No, this is the best time to fight in your life because the world hasn't encroached yet.

[ 20 : 08 ] so fight the sin. Fight the sin. And if you're not a Christian, you're not going to be able to fight the sin.

You're going to have to turn and repent and turn to the Lord and ask Him for forgiveness and become one of His children. Then you will be able to fight your sin.

Well, then why do we need to fight? Why do we need to fight? This is what happens. Paul, verse 5, tells us what to fight and in verse 6 and 7 he tells us why.

He gives us two reasons why and in verse 6 the reason is this. God's wrath is coming. Whew! Okay, so this is going to get heavy for just a second.

So you're just going to have to hang on. What do we mean when we say God's wrath? Here's your good definition of God's wrath. God's wrath is His subtle hatred of all sin and disobedience.

[ 21 : 19 ] God's wrath is His settled hatred of all sin and disobedience. I want to read to you a few verses that bring God's wrath to the forefront and kind of bring these things together.

In John 3, verse 36, 20 verses after verse 16, it says this, Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life and whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Romans 1, 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Romans 2, 8. But for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. Revelation 6, verse 16 and 17.

The people were calling to the mountains and rocks, saying, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. From the wrath of Jesus.

[ 22 : 30 ] Verse 17. For the great day of their wrath has come and who can stand? Revelation 19, verse 15. From his mouth, this is the mouth of Jesus, comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron.

He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. God's wrath is his settled hatred of all sin and disobedience.

And God's wrath is coming for those who break his law. We saw disobedience all through those passages. And that's what our passage here in Colossians is about.

It's about breaking these ten commandments and God's wrath is what is coming for those who do that. And when we do those things from which we have been rescued, see, if you're a Christian, you were rescued from the penalty of your sin.

You had broken God's law, Christ died to pay the penalty for you and you were rescued and when you go back and sin it's like you're stepping back under wrath again.

[ 23 : 49 ] Think about the Israelites. They were rescued from Egypt. They went across the Red Sea and when they turned their back on God it's like they were crossing the Red Sea again to go back into slavery.

As Baptists we like to use the phrase once saved always saved. I always think that that's a terrible way of saying that. I think it's a terrible way of saying it because there's a lot of people that that gives them some sort of license to sin.

Really we should say it the way the Bible says it and this is the way the Bible says it as we think about how it is that we're saved. Hebrews chapter 3 says this, take care brothers lest there be in any of you an evil unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the living God but exhort one another every day as long as it is called today that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin for we have come to share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

You're in Christ but it also has to be held firm to the end. You see it's not how you start your Christian life but it's how you end the Christian life that's important.

Are you still believing? Are you still holding on? Are you still trusting in him? Can you lose your salvation? No. No. But if you have salvation in Christ then you're to be fighting against that sin because if you don't it's like you're stepping back under God's wrath all over again.

[ 25 : 27 ] And so Paul's using this to motivate them to fight and to put to death their sin. The second reason he gives is in verse 7 and it's the idea that you've been changed.

You're not the same that you once were. Verse 7 he says in these two you once walked when you were living in them. The truth of this is just he's just making a statement of fact and that is that your life was marked by this but now it's not.

this once was your nature but now it's not. This once was exactly what you would do but now it's not because you've been saved. You used to live in it when you walked in it.

You walked in it when you lived in it. It was your nature but your nature has changed. You've heard the fable of the scorpion and the frog haven't you?

The scorpion comes up to the frog and says can you give me a ride across the stream? And the frog says no I can't give you a ride across the stream. We'll get halfway over and you'll sting me and then I'll get paralyzed and we'll both drown and die.

[ 26 : 40 ] And the scorpion says no no I don't want to die I want to get to the other side. After convincing the frog the frog finally agrees and the scorpion climbs upon the back of the frog and they're going halfway across the stream and you guessed it the scorpion stings the frog and the frog says what are you doing?

He says I can't help it it's my nature. You see it was your nature to sin. It was your nature to do what it was that you were doing in breaking of God's law.

What would it take? What would it take for a scorpion to not sting the frog? For the scorpion to be a frog?

And how would you turn a scorpion into a frog? By a miracle. Your nature was that of sin.

You lived in it. You walked in it. You broke God's law. And for that nature to change took a miracle. And that miracle was what Christ did upon the cross.

[ 27 : 50 ] Your nature has changed. Christ. So stop acting like the lost person that you once were. Christians, we have every reason in the world to fight against our sin.

And the real question is, will you take up and fight against your sin? Will you actually do it? You see, as a Christian, your life really should be about three things.

It should be about knowing God better, talking about Jesus, and walking by the Spirit. Those three broad categories covers everything in your life, including your family, your job, everything.

You know God better, walk by the Spirit, talk about Jesus. When we walk by the Spirit, part of what we have to do, half of what we have to do in that, is fight against our sin.

We're going to look at it again next week in verses 8-11, and then we're going to jump over to the next part, and that's the positive side. This is the fighting against the sin, this is the putting off, now we need to talk about the putting on.

[ 29 : 03 ] But, we've got to start by having a commitment that says, I hate my sin. I'm tired of sinning, and I want it to stop.

Well then, it starts with this, that if you will confess your sins, he is faithful and just to forgive. And so today, right where you sit, confess your sins to him, and ask him to forgive you.

He is faithful and just to forgive you. And for those who've never trusted Christ, they need to understand that they're still under the wrath of God.

God is a holy God who will by no means clear the guilty. He does not wink at our sin. And say, you've done enough. There is no such thing as good enough.

Psalms 15 shows us that the Lord is the one who is holy. It says, O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

[ 30 : 08 ] And the answer is, he who walks blameless, blamelessly, and does what is right, and speaks truth in his heart, who does not slander with his tongue, and does no evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend.

In other words, somebody who acts perfectly righteous. In order for us to be with God forever, we must have law-perfect righteousness.

Without that law-perfect righteousness, we can never be in the presence of God. And every single one of us fail to have this law-perfect righteousness.

That's why Jesus came. He came to obey his father, to die upon the cross, so that when we trust in him, his righteousness counts for us.

When you trust in Christ, you are covered with his law-perfect righteousness. And that is how you and I will be able to get in to heaven to be with him forever.

[ 31 : 15 ] But unless you repent of your sin, unless you turn from being the boss of your own life and trust in Christ, then you will never have this righteousness. All this that I've talked about, fighting sin for Christians will mean nothing for you unless you turn to him first as your boss, as your king, as your savior, as your substitute, as your sacrifice, and as your joy.

May the Lord grant us what we cannot do ourselves. Let's pray.