

# Colossians 3:5-11

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you are new this morning, we're so glad you're here. Actually, before the service, I met somebody from Puerto Rico. Flew all the way here for church. That's pretty awesome. It's actually up here. Juan's up here on a contract job, but we're thankful to have him. So anybody else that's here, welcome.

We have been in the book of Colossians for a little while now. And if you don't have a Bible, there's Bibles in the back. They are bookmarked to today's passage, which is Colossians 3, 5 through 11. So if you could turn there right now.

So for those that don't know me, my name is Mike Lusa, and I help serve on the music team and also lead in a small group. And you may or may not have noticed, but over the course of the summer especially, I wasn't really around quite as much.

That's because I was quite busy on a project at work that recently finished up. And my wife can tell you, but some of my home responsibilities kind of suffered because of that and other things as well. And one of those being yard work. Now, I actually do enjoy yard work. I found it, like, really soothing and therapeutic. But because work was keeping me so busy, I just I didn't have as much time to devote to it.

[ 1 : 13 ] And project got done a couple weeks ago and I was mowing the yard and kind of saw in the backyard this really mangy looking tree. Small tree, you know, like four or five feet high.

As I got close to it, I saw that almost every single branch on that tree had vines that had wrapped themselves all around it. And just all of the tree.

And I spent like, I don't know, 45 minutes just like peeling back the vines, trying to get them at their roots and yank them out. It's a good back workout if you haven't pulled roots out before. And really, the whole backyard and the side and everywhere, it's been, the few times that I've worked on it this summer, it's just been a constant struggle of keeping these weeds away.

And I think, I think, you know, for those of you that have done this before, but fighting back these weeds and these vines in the yard, it's a continual battle, right? And it requires ruthlessness and it requires a thoroughness and strength and diligence and all of this to maintain your garden or yard or whatever it is.

And you can't just pull the stems, pull the branches, and then, you know, leave them for a while. You've got to dig them out at the root, right? And if you leave them unattended, they're just going to gain that ground right back.

[ 2 : 27 ] They're just going to keep going and they're not going to stop. They're going to keep pushing forward. They're going to become more and more destructive. I think you know where this is going right now, right? This is just like the sin that exists in our lives.

It's always trying to gain ground. It's trying to push forward. It's trying to take more and it's destructive. And that's exactly what we're going to talk about. We're going to talk about putting that sin to death that exists in us.

So the main point, the big idea for today that we're going to tackle is this. That by the Spirit, through the Word, through prayer, and with faith, Christians continually put to death the sin nature that battles within them.

So let me say that one more time. By the Spirit, through the Word, through prayer, and with faith, Christians continually put to death the sin nature that battles within them.

So let's dig into Colossians chapter 3. We're going to be focusing in on 5 through 11, but let's start back from verse 1. Jordan preached on 1 through 4 last week.

[ 3 : 29 ] Read this with me. If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on

things that are on the earth.

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. 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, but now you must put them all away. Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave-free, but Christ is all and in all. This is the word of the Lord.

[ 4 : 37 ] Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, we do boldly approach your throne right now, that we have an intercessor who forever stands at your side, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

And he's there before us now, speaking righteousness because of his blood, because of the work that he has done. And we come before you confidently, God. We ask that by your spirit today, God, that you would give victory over sin.

God, that sin that's held its roots for so long in our lives would be rooted out today and put to death. God, we pray that you would convict us, that you would challenge us. God, that you would change us.

Lord, there is power from you. There is power in your word. And God, we call that here this morning. Lord, I know that Mike Luce's words can do nothing, Lord.

I can, as servants, we can only plant, we can water. But Lord, it's you that gives the increase. It's you that brings the growth and the life. And so we are utterly and completely dependent on you, Father, this morning.

[ 5 : 38 ] And that's why we come before you. Lord, we are expectant, though. We are confident. Because you promise things. You promise to help us defeat sin.

You promise to give us victory. You promise to replace those things with life and with peace and joy and grace, Lord. And we claim those things this morning. So, Father, be here. Be present.

Be moving, powerfully, God. We pray this in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. So, looking back at verse 5, then. It starts, Paul starts this section, Now, if you've been around for a little while, we've taught that that therefore is meant to point back to something.

It's connecting with thought, right? Therefore. So, what are we pointing back to? I want us to draw our attention to verse 1 of chapter 3 again, which Jordan preached on last week.

It says, If, or since, you've been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above. If, or since, you've been raised with Christ. And so, what Paul has already shown us, if you look back in chapter 1, verse 21 and 22, And you who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.

[ 6 : 58 ] Then if you flip to chapter 2, verses 13 and 14, And you who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. So, we see here that if you are in Christ, you have been raised with Christ. Your sin is defeated. You are already righteous before God.

You're already righteous. And that's the first point that I'm going to make today. Christians are already righteous through Christ's blood. It's only after being made alive are we called to live out the Christian life.

You see, it's not doing that brings salvation. It's believing in what Christ has already done and already won. In our community group, we've been going through Romans. I know you've heard Matt and I talk about it quite a bit.

But after about two chapters of Paul basically defending and arguing for why, why everybody is sinful and everybody is under God's wrath and nobody can be righteous.

[ 8 : 07 ] After all of that, Romans 3. This great passage, Romans 3, 21 and 22. We don't have to turn there. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it.

The righteousness of God through what? Through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Amen? And see, Paul has laid this out. He's laid this out in chapters 1 and 2 of Colossians. He's saying that now that you've been made alive by the blood of Jesus, then here's how you ought to live.

Right? In light of the fact that you are raised with Christ. That he is your very life. In light of that fact, now your pursuits are for heaven.

That's who you are in Christ. Right? So here's how you ought to act. This is huge. Right? This is saying that the foundation for Christian living, the foundation is the person and the work of the preeminent divine Savior Jesus Christ.

[ 9 : 15 ] Paul's been driving this point home to the church at Colossae. Right? They had some dangerous teaching that had infiltrated their church. And it was leading them away from dependence on Christ. And Paul's just been driving this home.

It's all about Christ. It's all about Christ. And so there's a way that we say this. It's that the imperative of the gospel follows the indicative of the gospel.

What that means, the imperative is how we live out our lives. Right? The indicative is who we are. The imperative follows the indicative. Who we are in Christ produces and it gives indication of how we are to live.

Right? And we cannot flip this around. We can't flip this around. Otherwise, we're in danger of being just like the Pharisees that Jesus had strong words for of trying to work for our salvation. Piper put it this way.

He's not giving a prescription for how to get yourself right with God. He's describing the inevitable life of those who are right with God by faith alone, who have come home to God.

[ 10 : 18 ] And being at home with God are no longer at home with sin, but are at odds with sin. Let's be what we're called to be in Jesus Christ. The first point. Christians are already righteous through Christ's blood.

So, we've established this. Paul is talking to believers, right? Who have been made righteous, who were dead, but are now made alive in Christ. And yet, there's still a command here, right? The command is put to death what is earthly in you.

That's verse 5. Verse 8, he says, you must put them all away. Talking about these different sins that we struggle with. And down in verse 9, he says, put off the old self with its practices and put on the new self, right?

So, he's making an implication here that Christians still struggle with sin. Anybody, would anyone here deny that today? Go ahead and raise your hand, right? Would anyone's spouse or roommate or coworker deny that about themselves?

Why don't you turn to your neighbor and say, do I still struggle with sin? Go ahead. Ask your neighbor. See what they say. I think it's pretty clear. I don't think anybody can deny that we struggle with sin, right?

[ 11 : 26 ] Even as believers. And lest we view our sin wrongly, look down at verses 6 and 7. Paul says, on account of these, the wrath of God is coming.

And these you too, talking to believers, and these you too once walked when you were living in them. You see, before Christ, these things, these sins were the pattern of our lives, right?

Before you received salvation by faith and repentance, this was your lifestyle, these sins. And it's because of that sin that you walked in, you were deserving of God's wrath, right?

Now, sin is serious. Sin is an affront to God. It's a rebellion against God. It's a rebellion of what he made to be good. It's a distortion, a destroying, a twisting of his good creation.

And so, two warnings, I think, here. To those who claim to be a Christian but still walk habitually in sin. The pattern of your life is still sin.

[ 12 : 32 ] But you claim to be a Christian. You're in a dangerous place. You're in a dangerous place. Now, nobody can judge your heart. That's for the Lord to do. But the warning is clear, is that if you struggle with habitual, embedded sin that is your lifestyle, it's dangerous.

And the evidence of salvation is walking in the newness of life. That's the evidence. You bear fruit for God. That's who you are as a believer. So, a caution to those who claim to be Christian but walk in habitual sin.

And if you're here this morning and you don't claim to be a Christian, you know that you can't resonate with verse 1 that says, if you've been raised with Christ. First, I just want you to know, God loves you with an undying love.

He wants you to be his child today. He wants that for you. But the problem is, if you keep persisting in your sin without repentance, Romans 1 talks about how God will give you over to your sin.

He'll say, okay, this is what you want. Go for it. It's all yours. And while at first I might not seem so bad, it's an eternal thing. And so, I plead with you, if you are here this morning and you don't follow Christ, the wrath of God is on you, but he wants you to be free from that.

[13:49] And we have freedom in Christ. Amen? For believers, we know we just, we first saw in grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all of our sin.

We know that if we are in Christ, our sin is taken care of. It is no longer condemning us. And I think Paul has this in here. You too, what you once walked in this.

Don't judge other people who are still walking in sin. Think their response instead ought to be evangelism, right? With compassion, we see that other people are in a state they can't get themselves out of.

Romans 6 talks about how slave is a master over you, right? So we ought to respond with compassion and evangelism. That should be our response. And the warning certainly is also here because as believers who still struggle with sin, we certainly should not take our sin lightly.

But there's still a tension here that we haven't actually gotten to yet. Namely that God freed us from our sin, but we are still commanded to put away our former sins. So to dig into this a little more, I want us to turn to Romans chapter 6.

[14:59] So please flip back to Romans 6. We're going to spend just a little bit of time here. Look with me at verses 6 and 7 of Romans 6.

Right? So we were before Christ.

We were slaves of sin. We could do nothing to get ourselves out from under it. But now we're slaves to another. Further down, Paul talks about how we're slaves to righteousness. And we bear fruit for God. And yet still command is given.

Verse 12 of Romans 6. Let not, the command, let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies to make you obey its passions. Command, do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness.

So what's going on here? Sin is not, it's not our master. And yet we're told to not let it reign in our lives. Our old sinful nature is dead. And yet we're commanded to put it to death.

[16:11] Paul goes into even more detail here. Romans 7. We're going to read this section.

Romans 7, 15 through 24. This is Paul speaking now about himself.

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law that it is good.

So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

[17:12] Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? You see, there is a war that is raging on, and it is not a war on terror, it is not a war on atheism, it is not even a war against Satan, it is a war against ourselves.

Right? That is the war that Paul is talking about here, and as long as we live on earth in these unglorified bodies, this war is going to battle on between our new, spirit-led, redeemed nature and our old, self-serving nature.

Right? So, in light of what Paul is saying then, Christians make war on that sin nature that fights within them. We make war on it. And so this is where we are going to spend the majority of the rest of our time here.

So just summarizing so far, point one was that Christians are already righteous through Christ's blood. Point two is that Christians still struggle with sin, and now Christians make war on the sin nature.

So jumping back to Colossians 3. Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you.

[18:25] So that phrase, what is earthly in you, is literally your bodily members of the earth. And the idea here is that it's every part of our being that still lives, as Paul said in Colossians 2, according to the elemental principles of the world, that still is contrary to who we are in Christ.

Paul uses similar words in Romans 8.13. He says, For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

So now in both of these passages, he's referring to both outward actions and also the inward attitudes that produce these outward actions. On James chapter 1, James says that each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire, then desire, when it is conceived, gives birth to sin.

One commentator said, Desires lead to deeds, and appetites lead to actions. So he's talking about both of these things. But let's get specific here, because Paul gets specific, and God gets specific in his word, and we can't put something to death if we don't know what it is that we're putting to death. We've got to name our sin. We've got to identify it. We've got to call it out. And so we're going to look through here. Look there at verse 5. Paul says, Put to death therefore what is earthly in you, sexual immorality.

[19:47] This idea here is illicit sexual intercourse in general, but I see Jesus talks about how if you even look at a woman lustfully, you've committed adultery with her in your heart. There's certainly other types of sexual sin, pornography, masturbation.

Paul wants us to put this to death, right? Impurity. The idea is an uncleanness in a moral sense. It's the uncleanness of lustful, luxurious, wasteful living.

That's what Paul's talking about. Passion. Now then we think passion is a good thing, right? I'm passionate about my work. I'm passionate about the bears. I'm passionate about whatever. No, this is not the passion Paul's talking about.

This is depraved, excessive passion and affection. It's just taking what we want without control. No control. Evil desire. That one needs little explaining.

It's wicked cravings that we have for things that are not of God. Covetousness. It's a greedy desire to have more, never being satisfied with what we already have, glass half empty type of living, wanting what other people have.

[20:52] And Paul says here, covetousness, which is idolatry. Now idolatry is, it's a worship of false gods, right? And he's saying that covetousness is idolatry because it's putting other things in the place that God should be.

So this first group of sins here, some people refer to it as the sensual sins, the sins of our senses. And then Paul keeps going down in verse 8, but you must put them all away.

Anger and wrath. Now anger there, the word is more of an abiding, settled, habitual type of anger that includes revenge in it.

It's just wanting to get back at people. That kind of anger comes out in driving quite a bit. Wrath. The boiling agitation of the feelings, a sudden violent anger, is what that type of wrath is.

Malice. It's a malignity. It's an ill will towards other people, you know, rejoicing in someone else's destruction and being sad when somebody else succeeds. Slander.

[22:01] Speech injuring other people, bringing people down. This often comes out when we're gossiping on other people. We're slandering their name, right? Obscene talk.

It's foul speaking. It's coarse, crude speech, filthy communication. And then Paul says lying. Speaking falsehoods. Trying to deceive people.

This list here, these are the earthly impulses that still exist in us. Those who are in Christ. These things still exist in battle for control within us.

These are the earthly things that don't match up with our new lives in Christ, right? And also, this isn't comprehensive. There's certainly other lists of sin in the Bible, and also we're really creative human beings that come up with all sorts of ways to sin.

It's not comprehensive. But what Paul is talking about, he's talking about killing every impulse of pride, of lust, of selfishness, of greed. He's talking about killing all addictions to sex, pornography, alcohol, money, fame, security, entertainment.

[23:13] He's talking about killing outbursts of anger and of abuse and of slander and of gossip and of violence. So my question for you this morning, what are the earthly impulses and addictions?

What are the sinful desires and behavior that still fights for control in your life? I'd even encourage you as we're continuing on to write it down.

You have to name it. Name the sin. Identify it. The only way we can kill sin is to first identify it. A few weeks ago, my wife and I got to go to Acadia National Park up in Maine, which is beautiful and a beautiful time of year to go.

If you've got a free weekend, you should go up there. I don't know if you've been to Maine a whole lot. Maine's gorgeous, but their drivers are really slow. I guess that's the way life should be or something.

But they just take their sweet little time. And so we had gotten up. It was Columbus Day weekend, and the only nice day was Saturday. So we decided, all right, we're going to go to Acadia on Saturday because it's nice out.

[ 24 : 16 ] And we leave from where we were staying and it just takes forever because it's all one-lane highways. You're behind a slow main driver the whole time. And I was getting kind of frustrated.

Brittany was sleeping. Bless her heart. But I was getting a little frustrated and irritated. And then we start getting onto the Mount Desert Island and realized that I hadn't picked the right, like the best directions to go.

We ended up making a loop through the whole park. And of course, we got stuck behind some slow main driver again. And so I'm getting kind of upset. And I'm just like, I want to be on the trail.

I want to be hiking. I want to be enjoying nature. That's why I'm here and everybody else is in my way. And it was making me a little irritable. And of course, this was only a couple weeks ago. So this passage is ruminated in my mind too.

And later on at dinner, we were talking through this. I'm like, well, what is it? What is it in me that has that type of reaction? And I just identified it as selfishness, right?

[ 25 : 17 ] I'm selfish. I want to be hiking. I want this. And you're in my way. So get out of the way, right? It's selfishness. And I probably deny that.

Actually, Brittany helped me identify it. It wasn't me. I was probably eating her food at the time too. I don't know. But if you're not sure, if you're not sure what it is, because sometimes we have blind spots in our lives, right?

Sometimes we can't see the sin in us. Follow the example of King David. Psalm 139, 23 and 24. David says, Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any grievous way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting. So we've got to identify our sin.

We have to identify what's earthly in us. Now notice the command here is put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you. Paul is saying to kill them, kill those parts of you, mortify them.

[ 26 : 18 ] Literally, it means make dead. So make dead what is earthly in you. And how do we put something to death? Something's put to death when we remove from it its strength, its power, its vigor, its life.

That's how something is put to death. You see here, this is wartime. This is severe type of talk. This is how you treat something evil, right? Something dangerous, something destructive.

Just like the weeds I talked about earlier, right? Now the sin nature, it's always lurking, right? It's always acting. It's always moving. It's always seeking to bring about the deeds of the flesh.

And it's always pushing further and further and further. It never just stops. It never just stops and is content with what it has. It's always trying to take more ground and yield more destruction in your life. There's a book that I have here.

It's called The Mortification of Sin. And this is like the classic work. As I started studying this passage, everybody referred to this book. So I decided to get it. It's not even that long.

[ 27 : 20 ] It is in Old English because it's from the 1600s. So it's a little bit to get through. But I highly recommend reading this book. If there is a sin that you're struggling with or just for any believer, this is an excellent book.

And John Owen famously wrote in this book, Be killing sin or it will be killing you. Be killing sin or it will be killing you.

Now Jesus commands this kind of ruthless action towards sin, right? Matthew 5, 29 and 30.

Talking, here talking specifically about lust. He says, If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away.

For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go to hell.

He's not talking about a literal, physical, like cutting off of your arms and your legs and you're gouging out your eyes. He's talking about an attitude that's set on destroying sin, right?

[ 28 : 18 ] Where our goal is complete destruction of that sin. We don't want any traces, any stains of that sin anymore. It's contrary to our lives in Christ. So we have a duty here.

We have a duty as believers in Christ to be actively, constantly working to destroy the sin that exists within us. But I just want to, I want us to remember this here.

Sin is ultimately defeated by Christ, right? Romans 8, 1. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We already read back in Colossians 2, 13 and 14 that God made us alive by canceling the record of debt that stood against us.

This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. So it's because of Christ and his work on the cross that then we have this love and this joy and this power and peace in life.

We have these things from God in Christ. But, our daily experience of these things depends much on our killing of sin.

[ 29 : 25 ] One pastor put it this way, in the spirit we are executing the sentence that God has already pronounced over our sin.

I just love that. I'm going to read this again. In the spirit we are executing the sentence that God has already pronounced on our sin. See, sin is condemned and its doom is certain.

That would have been a good spot for an amen. Let me try that again. Sin is condemned and its doom is certain. Yes. But, its presence in our lives deprives us of communion with God.

It inhibits our growth towards holiness. It keeps us from bearing spiritual fruit. My question for you though is, are you making war against the sin in your lives?

It's keeping you from moving forward in your life yet are you making war against it? Are you putting it to death? Are you making every effort to put this stuff behind you once and for all? That's what we're being called to do here by Paul.

[ 30 : 28 ] I'm going to quote John Piper again. Actually, I was reminded in my small group that there is a hip-hop Christian artist, Tedeschi, who actually takes this Piper saying and then he puts it into a rap and song.

So, shout out for small groups. You get to learn stuff like this. But, this is what Piper says. If you go back home, type in Make War Piper Tedeschi on YouTube and you'll find it.

It'll be worth your time, I promise. John Piper said this, I hear so many Christians murmuring about their imperfections and their failures and their addictions and their shortcomings and I see so little war.

Murmur, murmur, murmur. Why am I this way? Make war. If you wonder how to make war, go to the manual. Don't just bellyache about your failures. Make war.

That's what we have to do as believers. This is what we're called to. Now, notice back in the verse, put to death, therefore, what is earthly in who? In you.

[ 31 : 39 ] Right? It's really easy for us to spot sin in the people around us, but Paul is not calling us to killing the sin in our wife and in our roommate and in our co-worker and in our mom and in our brother.

He's calling us to put to death the sin that's in you. Right? Your biggest enemy is you and not the people around you. We can twist that so easily. Your biggest enemy is you. So that's who we're called to put sin to death in.

So that's the command. Put to death what is earthly in you. What we haven't answered, how do we do this? How do we actually put to death the sin? And we're going to need to turn to Romans chapter 8 for this.

So I want everyone to turn back through those pages. Romans 8, 11 to 13. Because if you have a phone, I won't hear your page turn, but that's okay. Romans 8, 11 to 13.

If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you.

[ 32 : 54 ] And keep them going down in verse 12. So then, brothers, we are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if, here it is, if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

By the spirit. So it's by the spirit that we make war against our sin. Now, before I go further, I want to take an opportunity here.

This is an aside. This is a parenthetical statement about who the Holy Spirit is. And I'm not going to take long, but the reason I want to do this is because I see in our culture a misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit and frankly a neglect in American Western culture about the Holy Spirit.

And there's all sorts of reasons why that may be. I'm not going to go into that right now, but here are some biblical truths about the Holy Spirit of God. He is a person.

He's not some indistinct power or thing. He is a person with intellect, emotion, will. He is God. He is divinity. He is the third person of the Trinity.

[ 34 : 02 ] Father, Son, Holy Spirit. He bears witness to and brings glory to Jesus Christ. He is a teacher. He reveals God's word to us.

And in that, he is not, he's never contradictory to the word of God. The spirit and the word, they're together. The spirit wields the word of God.

It's the sword of the spirit. He convicts us of sin. He allows us to experience the love of God. And if you're curious about passages, I have passages for all of these if you want to talk to me later.

He indwells believers, confirming our adoption as God's children, guaranteeing eternal life. He comforts, encourages, and strengthens. He counsels and guides. He intercedes for us to the Father in prayer.

He empowers us with gifts to use for the building up of his church. He makes us fruitful for God. And there's certainly others. But in summary, the Holy Spirit is an essential means of living a fruit-bearing, God-glorifying, Christ-exalting life.

[ 35 : 07 ] He's an essential means of that. You see, the Father initiates, the Father sets the plan of redemption in motion. It's the Father's love. And then the Son carries out that work of redemption on the cross.

He's the one that shed his blood. And it's the Spirit that causes these realities to bear upon our lives. He's the one that causes the truth to come alive in us in real and practical ways.

So, we ought to be continually seeking a fresh empowerment of the Holy Spirit, continually pursuing life by the Spirit. So, back to the text, back to Romans 8.

We're called to put sin to death by the Holy Spirit. Owen says that for this kind of work, an almighty energy is necessary for its accomplishment. An almighty energy.

See, without this energy, we will certainly fail in our attempts to mortify sin. He explains this further. Now, remember, this is from the 1600s here.

[ 36 : 06 ] So, keep thinking here. Engage your mind. And indeed, I might hear bewail the endless foolish labor of poor souls who, being convinced of sin and not able to stand against the power of their convictions, do set themselves by innumerable, perplexing ways and duties to keep down sin.

Somebody's struggling with sin. They're trying to keep it down. But, he says, being strangers to the Spirit of God, all in vain. They combat without victory.

They have war without peace. They're in slavery all their days. They spend their strength for that which is not bread and their labors for that which profiteth not. So, let me ask you, are you struggling against sin and seeing no victory whatsoever?

You fight and you fight and you fight and you will and you work at it and you're not seeing any ground. The weeds are keeping going. They keep just tearing apart and bringing destruction and you can't make any ground.

Paul said in Colossians 1.29 talking about his ministry that he struggles with all his energy. He struggles with all God's energy that he powerfully works within me. And it should be no different in our outward ministry as in our inward spiritual lives.

[ 37 : 21 ] You need the Holy Spirit. You need God's power to overcome sin in your life. That's right. So, how then?

We're still at the how. How do we do this by the Spirit? And to talk about this, I want us to go forwards and backwards in Romans 8. So, first backwards.

Look at Romans 8.5. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

You know, when Paul says set your minds, this is actually the same word used in Colossians 3.2 that Jordan talked about last week. There's an intentionality of setting our mind on something. It's a pursuit.

And here in Romans, though, we're told to set our minds on the things of the Spirit. So, this phrase, things of the Spirit, it only occurs one other time in the New Testament, and that's 1 Corinthians 2, which Matt actually referenced earlier.

[ 38 : 22 ] 1 Corinthians 2.14, Paul says, the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him. And in that section, what that's talking about is wisdom and knowledge from God and of God.

It's the word of God. The things of the Spirit are the word and the knowledge and the wisdom of God. Right? And if you turn back to Colossians 3, look at verses 9 and 10 there.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

So, we're going to be talking more about the putting on next week, but that idea that we put on the new self, it's a one-time thing, it's a once-and-for-all thing, the word new that's used there is new in time, and then the being renewed is new in quality, it's something that it continues, it's the process of sanctification.

Right? And what does he say? He says, being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Right? So this renewal of our minds and knowledge, this is connected to Romans 8, things of the spirit, it's being renewed by the spirit through the word of God.

[ 39 : 41 ] Right? The spirit is the one that teaches us and gives us insight into God's word. So through that, we can put sin to death, through that renewal of our minds and through the word of God.

Paul actually says in Ephesians 4, 23, that we're to be renewed in the spirit of our minds. This idea that our mind has a spirit, too. So it's not just intellectual thoughts and facts, we actually have a bent, a mind has a mindset, right?

And that, too, needs to be renewed by the spirit. Now, I mentioned earlier that the spirit and the word are never in opposition, right? I mentioned their only offensive weapon, right?

Ephesians 6 talks about the armor of God. The only offensive weapon we're given is the sword of the, what? Which is the, yes, which is the word of God. See, the word of God has power because it's permeated by the spirit and the spirit wields that word as his weapon, right?

So, the Holy Spirit gives us understanding of and by the word of God. the Holy Spirit actually accomplishes that renewal of our minds, but we have the responsibility to go to that word, right?

[ 40 : 48 ] Set in our minds, it's an intentional thing, we're pursuing it. And when we do that, when we rely on the spirit, he brings that renewal that puts sin to death, right?

Now, it's worth mentioning that as we do this daily, consistently, renewing our minds, reading the word, pursuing that, then we will be fighting sin, but there's also moment, there's like moment by moment decisions, right?

Where temptation comes at us. And, we see the example of Jesus, right? Jesus was brought out to the wilderness and tempted by the devil, and what did he do?

He fought it with the word of God. He had a word on his mind that fit perfectly and attacks what Satan was trying to come at him with. So, that's also how we defeat sin in our lives.

So, are you, are you battling malice? Are you battling ill will towards a co-worker or a family member wanting someone to not succeed? Matthew 5, 44 says this, but I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

[ 41 : 52 ] If that's your struggle today, write that sin down. Put it on your cube wall. Memorize it so that it's on the tip of your tongue so when those thoughts come, you have a word of God. You have a word from the Lord to help put that sin to death.

Are you fighting sins of sexual pleasure? Well, then go to 1 Corinthians 6. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. We could go on and on of examples, but the point here is go to the word of God.

Seek out, seek out the truth that fights against the sin that you're battling against. So, by the spirit through the word. So, I was looking backwards in Romans 8.

Now, let's look forward let's look forward in Romans 8. Romans 8, 14 and 15. It says this, for all who are led by the spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry out Abba, Father.

You see, the spirit, one of the things we mentioned before, the spirit confirms our adoption. He says, you are a child of God, right? And, as such, we have access to the Father.

[ 43 : 03 ] It's incredible. We have access to the almighty sovereign God. We can come before him, right? And down in Romans 8, 26, it says that the spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

So, we see the spirit as an intercessor going before the Father, helping us express the thoughts we can't even express, right? Who else makes intercession for us before the Father? Who else? Yeah, Jesus Christ himself. Don't turn there, but Hebrews 2, 17 and 18, therefore, he, Christ, had to be made like his brothers in every respect so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God.

For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted, right? And we just sang about this, boldly we approach the throne. Hebrews 4, 14 and 16, since then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

[ 44 : 23 ] So these passages talk about how both the second and third persons of the Trinity make intercession before us on our behalf as we come before the Father, right? But they're also, in a way, they're also commending us to do that, right?

Go to the Father, draw near his throne of grace, you're going to receive it, you're going to receive grace, you're going to receive the strength that you need, it's promised to you, and through that, by going to the Father and receiving that strength in a time of need, we overcome the sin that's fighting against us.

We put it to death. So my question to you, how often do you actually approach the Father for his grace when you need it? How often do you ask for victory over that sin that you're murmuring about, the sin that you're struggling with that you can't overcome, do you actually go to the Father and ask him for strength?

He wants to give it to you, he wants you to overcome that sin, and yet, like Piper's talking about, we murmur and murmur about it and we make no progress because we don't use the weapons that we have as believers.

So by the Spirit through the Word, we put to death what is earthing in us by the Spirit through prayer, and finally, by the Spirit with faith.

[ 45 : 45 ] Alright, so we make war against sin through prayer, through the Word, but there's another key here that I only briefly mentioned before, and that being faith. I have a few passages, but in light of the time, I'm just going to read from Galatians chapter 3, verses 2 through 5.

Paul said to the Galatians, let me ask you only this, did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?

Are you so foolish, having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain, if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law or by hearing with faith?

It's faith that releases the power of God in our lives, that releases it in us and through us, right? It's when we trust, when we have faith in him, that he says, I promise you this, I'm going to provide you with this.

By faith, we receive those things, right? And the Christian life, it's born from faith and it's daily lived in faith, right?

[ 47 : 03 ] Through Romans 1, 17, the righteous live by faith. So when we set our minds on the Spirit and the Word, let us do that in faith, expectantly. He's going to give us what he's promised.

He's going to defeat the sin in your life when you come before him with faith and believe his Word. And when we draw near to the Father's throne, let's do so in faith, right?

And by faith, we're going to see these sins killed and laying down on our feet because of the faith that we have. So I'm almost done here. The last thing I want to do is just kind of summarize this for you in steps.

So what I have here is six steps to waging war on the sin in your life and scripture passages with it. So the first thing we talk about is name it. You have to name that sin, right?

And that verse in the Psalms was David asking that God would see into his heart and see the sin that he has. You've got to name your sin. You've got to repent of it.

[ 48 : 05 ] 2 Corinthians 7.10 says that godly sorrow, so we're sorry for our sin, we know that it hurts God, we're sorry for it, but godly sorrow leads to repentance. That's a transformation, a changed heart.

I'm not going back to that. I'm repenting of it. Third, we have to claim freedom from it. Romans 8.1, there's therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ. You are free from that sin.

Fourth, we need to be renewed in our heart and our mind by the spirit and the word, right? We talked about Romans 8.5, Colossians 3.10. Fifth, approach the father's throne of grace.

Go to him. Christ is interceding for you. The spirit is helping express your desires. Go to the father. He offers his grace. He offers victory over sin. And finally, six is believe that victory over sin is yours in Christ.

Believe it. Have faith in it. Right? Hebrews, it says, let us hold fast the confession of our hope because he who promised is faithful. Amen? He's faithful.

[ 49 : 11 ] He's going to do it. Lastly, I want us to look at verse 11. Colossians 3.11. 11. 11. 11.

Here, there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is all and in all.

Now, without going into detail here, the goal, what is the goal of all? What is the goal of putting sin to death? The goal of putting sin to death is bringing glory to Christ who is all and in all and is bringing unity to the body of believers.

That's our goal here. We're not just killing sin for the sake of killing sin. So by putting sin to death in us by the Spirit, instead of pointing out the flaws in the people around us, right, instead of allowing division to spring up from within us because of our sin, when we put it to death, we are drawn in unity to Christ who is all.

And so in this way, by putting sin to death in this way, Christ is made known to the world and the Christ on the throne is exalted as the divine and the preeminent Savior.

[ 50 : 25 ] That's what we're after. Amen. So make war. Make war against your sin. Use the tools that you've been given.

You've been given the Spirit. He helps you understand this Word. He helps this Word renew your heart and renew your mind. There goes all my stuff. And go to the Father.

He's offering you grace. He's offering you strength. You have to go to Him, though, and make war against that sin that keeps us from being unified and that keeps Christ in us from being manifested in this world.

Please pray with me now. Father, we do come before you right now. God, there are patterns of sin in our lives, in our minds, in our hearts that are difficult to overcome.

There are things that we struggle with and we struggle and we struggle with no victory because we have not used the tools that we've been given.

[ 51 : 33 ] Lord, you call us to put these things to death, the pride in us that fights for so much, Lord, the pride that wants our name to be recognized, that wants us to be right.

God, the selfishness in us that battles for getting what we want. God, the lusts of our flesh that always want more, that want to be gratified, that fight so much within us.

Lord, laziness that battles in us. We can't even get up to read your Word and to pray. God, the greed that we have, always wanting more, always wanting more, never content.

God, all these things wage war in our souls and if we but believe your Word and rely on your Spirit and go to the Bible and go before you in prayer, God, we might receive the mercy and the grace we need to overcome these sins.

God, I pray that even now, God, that you would be breaking the chains of sin that have held people in bondage and have kept them from growing and becoming more like you. God, break these things down in our hearts and in our lives, God, for your glory, for the unity of your church, Father God.

[ 52 : 46 ] We pray this in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you, Brother Mike. Would you please stand with us?

What a tremendous encouragement to hear how close we are. Amen.