Killing Sin - Part 1: The Christians War

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Date: 25 October 2026

Preacher: BK Smith

[0:00] Good morning. Please be seated. For you that are visiting, do not know me. My name is BK. I have the pleasure of being the other pastor here that serves at SBC. Please turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 8. Before I start, just a thought on, man, I can't believe we're even talking about Christmas, but Operation Rescue.

I have it in good authority. If the 12 boxes are not reached, you're going to have to deal with Rachel on this. There will be knocking on the door. There will be screaming and howls for, cries for mercy. So, go easy on yourselves. Make sure they're taken care of.
All right. This morning we are getting into an incredible text. In fact, there are many books written specifically just on the verses that we are looking at this morning. I feel it'd be wrong for me not to warn you that these are not comfortable verses.
They're not complicated verses in the sense that we cannot understand them. In fact, the basic command is clear. The difficulty is we might not like what Paul has to say to us. Let's take a look. Verse 12 of Romans chapter 8.
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.
[1:55] But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. This morning we're going to talk about an old theological word that describes what Paul is referencing here.

That word is mortification. Mortification. And it's not a word we use very often. Some of you, if you're pretty brilliant, you might use it on a scrabble board.
But it doesn't seem to show up at many dinnertime conversations. The word mortification comes from the Latin word for death. Simply put, to mortify something means to put it to death.
And although the English word may sound a little bit old-fashioned, the idea is found right here in Paul's text. Text, it says, put to death the deeds of the body.
What Paul is talking about here is mortifying sin. And notice something immediately. He says, put them to death. Make no mistake, this is violent language.
[3:12] And the truth, which we are going to look at today, is that as Christians, the Christian life is a war.

And one of the greatest mistakes we can make in understanding Christianity is thinking that when God saves us, the war with sin is no longer.
In fact, it's the opposite. That is when the war truly begins. You see, before Christ, you lived in a different domain.
Your sin was your master. You were in the flesh, as Paul describes it, and you belonged to that realm. But when God saves you, he does something radical.
Romans 6 tells us you died with Christ and were raised with Christ. And that imagery is you've gone from a life of death to a life of life.
[4:13] He raised you. You were dead in the flesh, and he now raises you in the spirit. Romans 8 teaches us you are no longer in the flesh, but in the spirit.

What that means is sin has lost its dominion. Sin no longer has the right to rule over you. Sin no longer reigns, but it fights.
And therefore, the Christian fights. And I want us to understand something today that we will develop much more practically next week, Lord willing.
And I think this quote sums it up. You cannot make peace with the very thing Christ died to set you free from.
You cannot make peace with the very thing Christ died to free you from. What he means is there is no such thing as a peace treaty with sin.

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[5:27] There is no negotiated settlement. There is no little corner of my life where I can say, Jesus can have everything else, but I'm keeping this, and it's mine, mine, mine.

Lord of the Rings captures it so clearly, my precious. And the urgency of this passage is unmistakable.
Because Paul attaches two outcomes to this. Death and life. So I have two goals for this section of Scripture.
This morning, I want us to understand what the Christian war is. And the second, which Lord willing we will cover next week, I want to answer the practical questions of what does it really look like to put sin to death.
How do I actually fight this war that I am in? But before we learn how to fight, we need to understand what is the war and why there is a war in the first place.
[6:41] You with me on this? I think if you've been with us through all of Romans, this is what we're waiting for, right? Chapter 7 talked about all the ways we fight, and it's not working out. And now we're in this place where now we're going to learn to fight with the Spirit.

The Spirit is on our side. But what does that look like? What does that mean? This is what I'm hoping to answer, not only these two sermons, but as we go on.
Because I really think it's crucial as we grow, Lord willing, into mature Christians who live with more victory than defeat.
It's imperative that we understand this text. Before I go any further, I just want to pray. I want to ask for God's guidance, God's wisdom, God's blessing on this sermon.
And I pray that he would prepare our hearts and minds to understand. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just thank you that we can come together. Father, Father, I love the fact that you are a God which we can ask questions to.
[7:57] Sometimes we think we can't ask questions, but we know from the prophet Habakkuk we can clearly ask you questions. Why? Why?

Why is there sin? Why do I battle? Why am I tempted? Why do I struggle? Why aren't you hearing me? Why are you hiding your face? Father, for some of us, these are really deep questions and, dare I say, cries of our heart.
Lord, ultimately, we're asking the question, Lord, why am I not changing? Father, I thank you for your word that directs us, that instructs us.
Father, I pray that you would give my voice clarity. Father, I pray that you would give the ears to hear an understanding of this great and glorious truth that you have for us.
Father, I pray that you would remove the burdens that we carry. Every single one of us comes here with a worry, a stress, something that just occupies our minds and our emotions.
[9:19] Father, even for this time together, I pray that you just remove it from us so we would understand what you are saying to us. Lord, I pray that this truth not only penetrates our heart and mind, but it drives our will and gives us this freedom where we can know how to clearly live in the Spirit.

So, Father, if there's any words that I might say that are confusing, I pray that you would take them out of my mouth before those words are uttered. Or give me another word to say that is understanding and relevant to what we not only live with, but what we experience.
So, God, we love you. We thank you for this time of worship. And we thank you that we can continue worshiping under your instruction. In your name we pray. Amen.
I've got four points for you this morning. And the first point is going to be you have an obligation. You have an obligation. Why do we have an obligation?
Because verse 12 tells us, right? So then, brothers, we are debtors. We have a debt to pay. Now, these first two words are critical.
[10:45] The ESV translated as so then. If you're using another version, it says therefore. And any time you see a so then or a therefore, you have to ask the question, what is the therefore for then?

Right? What does it mean? What Paul is doing here is he's drawing up a conclusion. He's not changing subject. He is saying, because everything I've just told you is true.
And what he's talking about is verses 1 to 11. This now follows. Now, what has Paul told us?
Well, we know the great and glorious truth of Romans 8.1. Therefore, or there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

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We are no longer condemned. God has removed the condemnation. Verse 2 said, the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ from the law of sin and death.
[11:50] That tells us we were once enslaved and now we are set free. Let freedom reign. Let freedom reign. Verse 3. God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.

What that simply says is you could not save yourself. God did what you could not do. He sent his own son. He condemned sin in the flesh.
Then Paul told us that the Holy Spirit now lives in every believer. Verse 9. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the spirit. In verse 11.
The spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you. That is the guarantee of our mortal bodies rising.
Do you see the order? Paul doesn't begin with do something for God. Paul begins with look at what God has done for you.
[13:00] And only then does he say so then. My friends, this is how biblical Christianity works. Grace comes before obedience.

Identity comes before activity. Who you are determines what you do.
And what God has done comes before what God commands us to do. You with me on that? See, there's a difference between gospel obedience and legalism.
Legalism say obey so that God will accept me. The gospel says God has accepted you in Christ. Therefore, live like someone who belongs to Christ.
Legalism says change so that God will love you more. The gospel says God has loved you in Christ. Therefore, his love changes how you live.
[14:06] See, this distinction matters when we start talking about killing sin. Because if you get the order wrong, this sermon becomes try harder.

Do better. Why don't you clean yourself up? I know a way, ten ways to make God happier with you. That's not Christianity.
That is not what the Bible teaches. You see, Paul has spent 11 verses telling us what God has done. So when he says, so then, that brings us to Paul's remarkable statement.
We are debtors not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. That word debtors means we are under obligation.
Some of your translations will literally say, we are under obligations. What does that mean? It's interesting, a lot of commentators say that it's kind of a divided verse.
[15:12] Because you almost, like he's comparing this, he's making a contrast. But he doesn't really say what he's contrasting it to. But what he's simply saying here is, you are under absolutely no obligation to obey the flesh.

That's what it says. Think about it. What do you owe this old sinful nature? This world where you lived, where this was your nature, and God has now transferred you to the life of the Spirit.
What do you owe that old life? The fact is, what has sin ever done for you? What has lust ever done for you? What has pride ever done for you?
What has bitterness ever done for you? What has envy ever done for you? What has greed ever done for you? And what has selfishness ever done for you?
That's the old. This is the new. And you owe that old life nothing. And we know what sin does, right?
[16:19] Sin promises things. Sin's going to promise, man, I can give you freedom. I can give you pleasure. I can give you satisfaction.

And I can give you life. And it starts off as a sweet siren song in your ear. I want that. But we all know, sin delivers slavery, misery, emptiness.
And ultimately, it brings death. But here's the audacity. The audacity of sin. Sin has the audacity to show up at your door.
You owe me. Paul is telling me here, you don't have to answer that door. You don't need to talk to him.
Because why? Because the flesh is going to always knock at the door. It's going to cry out. It's going to want you back. And that's why we understand in Romans 8, 9, it says, You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.
[17:39] It's another way to say that may have been who you were, but it's not who you are now. The example that just about every author uses to explain the sentiment that Paul is giving, if you could imagine for a moment that you were a slave, you were beholden to a master, what he told you

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to do, you had to do under the penalty of death.

Then all of a sudden the war comes. You're freed. You're freed. The chains are off. You are no longer a slave. You were told you are free. And you're walking down the street.
And your old master sees you. And says, slave, pick up my luggage. The instinct is to move to pick up the luggage. And sometimes it's the same thing with us.
We've got to stop what we're doing and we've got to think. I'm not a slave to you anymore. I don't owe you anything.
I have freedom in Christ. That slave master, he can yell and scream and call you all sorts of words, but guess what?
[18:57] He has zero authority over you. See, that's the problem. Sin still shouts. It demands.

It threatens. It entices. And sometimes we start listening, but we've got to stop and start thinking, oh yeah, you don't rule over me anymore.
You have no rights over me. I've been transferred into another kingdom and I belong to the new king. Amen? And Paul is simply saying, stop living as though the old master still owns you.
You see, this is the gospel logic of mortification. We don't kill sin to be free. We kill sin because Jesus Christ has set us free.
All right? So here's the big truth. This is my second point. Christian, you are at war. You are at war.
Romans 13 simply says, 8, 13, for if you live according to the flesh, you will die.
[20:15] But if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. So we got this word, put to death, which is mortification. What does that mean?

It means actually exactly how it sounds. It means to cause to die, to put to death, to render powerless. Best definition I ever read on the subject says, to stop or state an activity with lethal determination.
Paul chooses strong language because he wants us to understand the seriousness of what it is to have a relationship with sin. One guy simply wrote, I love when I call these scholars or commentator writers, some guy, but some guy wrote, there are certain things in life you manage.
You can manage your calendar, you can manage your finances, you can manage your schedule, but you cannot manage sin. You kill it. And notice this is not something that happened once when you become a Christian.
The tense and form and the language that Paul is using is, describe that you have to continue killing sin. It's not a one-time moment, it is an ongoing characteristic of the Christian life.
[21:44] Now remember in Romans 6, Paul told us that we've already died to sin. It's dead, it's got no power, but in Romans 8 he says, we must continue to put sin to death.

Now there's no contradiction here. Because the first one tells us, one is about sin's dominion, the other is about sin's presence. What I mean by that is, sin's dominion has been broken, but his presence remains.
And because sin's dominion has been broken, we now can fight the sin that remains. One of my former pastors was always quick to say, the closer you grow to Christ, the more aware you often become of sin.
Not because you're sinning more, you're committing more sin, but you become more sensitive to your sin.
Right? Like, when you're starting off, you might not feel so bad about yelling that guy who cut you off in traffic. But when you grow into maturity and you say, man, I'm losing my cool, why am I losing at my cool?
[22:58] Right? Lord, forgive me for this. Like, it's, they're just different things. You see, before conversion, there wasn't a war because sin occupied the throne of our life.

But sin wants that throne back. And it fights, and it fights, and that is the war that we face. So why is Paul telling us this?
Why is this so important? The first thing Paul wants us to know is, he doesn't want us to be surprised that there is a war. Right? Wait a second.
There's a battle going on. Maybe you got the wrong address for Christianity, right? I was told I could have sweetness, glory, and gold if I follow this form of Christianity.
Christianity. It's not Christianity. It's a lie. Paul is telling us to fight.
[24:02] But I want you to notice carefully what Paul says we're to kill. Look at the words, the deeds of the body. Now, a lot of people get confused by the term body.

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Paul is not advocating that you kill the body. There were sayings in the old days, you mortify your flesh.
There's horrible stories from the history of Catholicism that you would wrap spikes around your legs, and if you were tempted with something, you would hit those spikes that were in your legs to cause you pain with the whole idea.
I need to mortify the flesh. And you would cause this. You would cause damage to your actual flesh. That's not what Paul is talking about here. The fact is, Christianity does not teach that the physical body is evil.
The fact is, your body was created by God, and your body belongs to God. That's what 1 Corinthians 6 tells us. It tells us that your body is a temple for the whole world.
[25:03] Last week, we learned that in Romans 8, 11, that one day God will raise our mortal body. So we know from Scripture that our body isn't the enemy.

But guess what is? It's the sin that uses our body. Remember a couple weeks ago? I'd like to say it was a couple weeks ago. It could have been two years ago. I don't know. In Romans 7, we saw how God uses the law.
The law is good. The law is holy. But God uses our sin to corrupt it and twist that law. It's the same way, right?
Our eyes can see the glory of creation. Amen? With those same eyes, we can look at things that we should never look at. Our tongues, we can praise God in song, but those same tongues can slander and gossip and destroy a person's reputation.
Our hands, we can serve, we can build. Those same hands, we can take. With our minds, we can meditate on the deep truths of Scripture, but those same minds, we can cultivate fantasies.
[26:21] We can dwell on bitterness, envy, and pride. See, here's the thing. Sin loves to twist good things. Think about sex, food, rest, and pleasure.

All wonderful things that God has created for us to enjoy. But sin corrupts it. Give me more, more, more. It creates this idea we can enjoy these wonderful things that God has given us outside His boundaries.
We start to think, I can have these things on my own terms, and I can have it right now. See, what Paul is simply saying is, those deeds must die.
Now, before I get into how to do that, I want to give a couple of warnings here. The first warning is, some people think, to kill, to mortify the deeds of the body, is to kill everything that can be used wrongly.
What I mean by that, TV, bad shows, throw it out. Internet, I can get bad websites, throw it out. Movies, holy cow, there's garbage, throw it out. That's not what he's talking about.
[27:33] Now, for some of us, if that is an entryway that allows our sin to quote-unquote prosper, it's good to put boundaries on those areas, but in them themselves, they're not evil.

Mortification is not the destruction of normal human desires. What I mean by that, like sex, sex is not bad, but it's meant for a man and a woman who are married, right?
Because when it's used outside of that, it distorts, it destroys, and it causes pain rather than blessing, which God intends to happen in those relationships.
It is the destruction of sin's misuse of them. So, some people, they create this warning by banning and throwing out everything that might have to do with the desire, and that's not wrong.
I love chocolate, but I can't have chocolate every day. Right? Second warning, mortification isn't pretending temptation doesn't exist.
[28:53] Nor is it hiding sin, nor is it merely feeling guilty after sin. Man, if I could only get rid of that guilt, I'd be free. No, that's not how it works. Nor is it becoming so skilled at appearing holy while secretly feeding what you publicly condemn.

Right? The sin of hypocrisy. I put on that mask at church when I'm around Christian people, but when I'm not around them, I live an entirely different life.
See, mortification means that when I discover remaining sin in my life, I take God's side against it. That's essentially what it means.
I agree with God. And when I agree with God, I stop defending it. I stop excusing it. I stop renaming it. And I stop blaming someone else for it.
I don't know. I no longer say that. That's just my personality. Just the way I am. My mom, my dad was like that.

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[29:58] You don't understand my background or what I've been through. You don't understand how angry my wife has made me. Or you don't understand my husband doesn't meet my needs or my boss drives me crazy.

Here's the fact. Other people can tempt you. Other people can hurt you. Other people can provoke you.
But here's the thing other people cannot do. They cannot take responsibility for the sin that comes out of your own heart. You with me? We all have agency.
That agency is we have the freedom to act on that sin or that pain or not. We're not slaves to that pain. We're not slaves to our backgrounds.
We're not slaves to how other people make us feel. Are you with me on that? And I know it's stuff and I'm not I'm not trying to be flippant here.
[31:12] It's one of the reasons we know there's more to it. And that's why we've tasked Dave to not just counsel but we've asked Dave to educate himself more in biblical counseling.

To spend extra time because we understand we live in a world that is broken and messed up and some of us have been hurt so badly that it's hard to see straight because our bell has been rung so hard.
That's why Dave sits with us and can help us walk through seek forgiveness release bitterness understand that our sin our background our past those aren't the things that identify us anymore. Helps us understand and change and to say I am new in Christ. See mortification begins when we stop negotiating with sin and agree with God about what sin is and Paul simply says kill it kill it why? Because this is war. It's daunting isn't it? There's this war we've got this command to kill it well I'm going to give you an encouraging word here the encouraging word is you do not fight alone you do not fight alone this is my third point look carefully if by the spirit put to death the deeds of the body now who puts sin to death you do how by the spirit now that's hard to understand we're going to go deeper next week into that but here's the thing you can't have one without the other and we know the balance right?
[33:10] Some Christians say you put it to death work harder discipline yourself make rules try harder do better and then you get exhausted because you understand you're on the treadmill of legalism but there's other danger there's these other Christians that say by the spirit it means let go and let God stop trying just surrender let God do it and then Christianity somehow becomes this this passive life thing is Paul teaches neither he says by the spirit you put to death the Holy Spirit doesn't obey for you but here's the thing you cannot obey without the Holy Spirit you fight he gives you the power you act he enables you you obey he empowers and this connects directly to what we've been learning about the Holy Spirit and I want to talk a little bit about and I've taught it in different areas of the

Christian faith there's this idea of what does it mean to be filled with the spirit and this I believe perfectly illustrates what it means to be filled with the spirit just think picture and I've used this before you've got a sailboat and the fact is a sailboat cannot manufacture wind right it can't it's dead in the water without the wind like you can stand on the deck and scream at the sails all day long move go do your thing boat and it's not going to do anything see that power has to come from outside of that boat and obviously it's a sailboat and it needs wind and when that wind comes that wind fills the the sails but when the wind comes what does the sailor do does he say well now's my time for a nap right we're moving I'm alright now right of course not the sailor needs to raise the sails he has to adjust them he has to handle the lines he's got to take the rudder and respond to the power that's being supplied
I believe this is almost the best picture of the spirit filled Christian life that I can think of too many people think it's like a glass of water problem is the glass of water gets full and it goes nowhere no we need a constant filling amen we need the spirit we need the wind at our backs to live this life that God has called us to and it's this wind this spirit's power that makes obedience possible that is why Philippians 2 simply says work out your own salvation with fear and trembling why because you're on your own no because Paul continues for it is God who works in you both to will and to work with his good pleasure you see you work because God is working in you amen not God works therefore I do nothing and not you work because God has left you to yourself no it's
God works in you therefore you work and that means we need to reject several false ideas of sanctification what does it mean to be made holy like I said mortification is not let go and let God obviously there's a surrender in Christianity and that is a surrendering of my own will but nowhere

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does Paul ever say stop fighting sin I just looked at some of the action commands that he's given us in the New Testament put to death flee immorality resist the devil make no provision for the flesh put off the old man put on the new man run the race fight the good fight those are all action terms they're not passive words secondly mortification is not perfectionism notice how Paul addresses them brothers he has already said the spirit dwells in them and then he puts these spirit indwelt believers put sin to death here's the question why would
God command Christians to kill remaining sin if Christians no longer had remaining sin it's there can't ignore it you see the very command assumes the battle is real and thirdly mortification is not a special experience that removes the battle like there's no higher life where I'm above sin man I'm hovering over it nothing bothers me that doesn't exist we do not graduate from the warfare we face on this earth until God glorifies us all and I know that hurts but we understand he doesn't leave us alone he is with us in this battle see a mature Christian isn't Christians who stop fighting sin the mature Christian is the one who has learned to fight it better and we're going to spend much more time like I said next week but today I want us to understand the spirit filled life is not a passive life the spirit filled life is a fighting
[38:56] Christian why does this matter and this brings me to my final point final point is the war has eternal consequences the war has eternal consequences if you live according to the flesh you will die now notice what Paul doesn't say he doesn't say if you live according to the flesh you'll miss God's best he doesn't say that you'll lose some rewards he doesn't say you know what you're going to have a less satisfying Christian experience he says you will die and then he builds in the contrast but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live so we've got death and life what does

Paul mean here and we need to be precise because two errors can come out of this understanding one error says that Paul is teaching that Christians earn eternal life but by defeating sin that is not what he's saying here we know he isn't saying this because that would nullify everything that we've learned so far in the book of Romans Romans 3 tells us we are justified by faith apart from works Romans 5 tells us we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ Romans 6 says the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord so we know eternal life is a gift and we do not earn it by mortification we don't purchase heaven by successfully fighting sin we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone amen but there's another error and it's that error is to become so nervous about salvation by grace that we empty Paul's warning of its force
Paul says if you live according to the flesh you will die and sometimes we say well I don't really think Paul means that I think Paul means something else well I'm here to tell you he does he means exactly that and what he's saying is a life characterized by the flesh leads to death a life characterized by the spirit leads to life Paul is not teaching that mortification is the cause of our salvation mortification is the evidence and consequence of salvation if you are saved you want to fight sin that's simply what he's saying we are not saved because we fight sin we fight sin because we are saved and the person who claims to have been saved but has made permanent peace with their sin every person has a right to examine such a claim notice again whom
Paul addresses brothers see these warnings are one of the means God uses to preserve his people for parents when a child reaches for a hot stove or is about to run across the road what do we do we yell we scream stop stop doesn't mean we don't love them in fact we yell we warn turn because we love them and this is a warning that Paul is giving that warning if you're calling yourself a brother you're calling yourself a Christian and you have no desire to mortify your sin you might not be a Christian you might still be living in this domain even though you go to church you hang out with Christian friends and you say that sin is bad it's really saying that you still live here you see there's only two trajectories that we can come to in this text one live according to the flesh two by the spirit put to death the deeds of the body notice there's no third category which says spirit filled Christians who are perfectly content to live in unrepentant sin it's not there Paul never gives us that category and I need you to understand something Paul is never or not describing sinless perfection never make that mistake because we get there fact is we fall we stumble some of us know we can fall really badly not only hurt ourselves we hurt others around us those are all part of the Christian life but the issue is not do you ever sin the issue is what is your relationship to your sin do you defend it or do you fight it do you cherish it or do you hate it do you hide it so you can keep it!
[44:52] it dead and ultimately are you at peace with your sin or are you at war with your sin see the presence of sin does not prove you're not a Christian but peace with sin should terrify you

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should terrify you because when the Holy Spirit takes up residence in a person he begins producing a new attitude towards sin not perfection but you want war and that's where Paul is going next verse 14 it says for all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God and I don't want us to miss this connection because when we talk about being led by the Spirit Paul is not talking about a feeling that tells us where to go what job to take or what house to buy that's not what he means when he's talking about the

Spirit here in this context the Spirit is leading God's children away from the flesh and towards holiness my friends that is evidence of sonship or daughtership before the Lord mortification does not make you his child but God's children practice mortification simply because his Spirit lives in them so let me conclude where does this leave us Romans 8 begins with one of the greatest declarations all of scripture there is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus and then we read 12 verses later put to death the deeds of the body the fact is these truths belong together we know that no condemnation does not mean no conflict grace does not mean sin no longer matters freedom from sin's penalty does not mean indifference to sin's presence in fact precisely because
Christ has freed us from sin's condemnation we are now at war against sin's remaining presence now there's three types of people I want to address in my conclusion I don't know who you are but maybe you will find yourself in one of these the first person is thinking why am I still tempted why am I still fighting this why hasn't this completely disappeared we've said it before and I'm going to say it again the battle itself is not proof that Christ has done nothing in many ways the battle exists because Christ has done something who you once were you now have new desires right you have a new allegiance a new master now you're learning you have a new power the Holy Spirit lives within you so my words of encouragement never confuse warfare with defeat right never confuse warfare with defeat because we face warfare does not mean we're defeated so
Paul's admonition is to get up and fight the second person is you aren't discouraged about your sin you're comfortable with it right you've learned to manage your appearance you've found respectable names for your favorite sins and you even made theological excuses around them and you've decided that grace means God isn't particularly concerned about my sins what I mean by that and I've heard it dozens of times oh grace is gonna forgive me grace is gonna give me a pass he loves me God is filled with so much love I can still live in this sin listen to Paul here these aren't my words these are Paul's if you live according to the flesh you will die don't call peace what God calls war don't think that grace will save you when in fact grace came to destroy the sin that you love perhaps you're the third person who says
I know exactly what Paul means here I am I've been fighting I've tried I've made promises I've made rules I've started again over a hundred times and I can't do it and this is where I hope that you understand these three words that change everything by the spirit by the spirit by the spirit we're never commanded to fight alone the spirit the spirit lives in you the power that you have is not yours but what is yours is your responsibility what Paul says by the spirit we fight by the spirit we put it to death by the spirit we refuse to let the old master rule what Christ has redeemed so next Sunday Lord willing if we should be granted another week we're going to ask the intensely practical question how how do
[50:54] I mortify lust how do I mortify anger bitterness pride how do I deal with temptation before it grows right what do I stop what do I avoid what do I cultivate and what does it actually mean to put sin to death by the spirit but today I believe Paul wants us to settle something first you're in a war and if you belong to Christ you've been called to fight it not to earn salvation not to keep God loving me or not to make yourself acceptable you fight from acceptance not from acceptance you fight because sin is no longer your master and you fight because you know where this is all going one day the war will end one day the same spirit who lives in you will give you life to your mortal body and one day there will be no remaining sin to mortify no temptation no flesh waging war no fall no shame no struggle no more tears in fact we were told we will be like

Christ but until that day I ask you I beg of you don't manage sin don't excuse sin don't negotiate with sin don't make peace with sin simply follow what Paul says by the spirit kill your sin because the Christian life is not peace with sin it is a battle with sin let me pray Lord sometimes the reality of this life is stunning it slaps us in the face sometimes we try to create these fake worlds that exist that these fake troubles do not these real troubles do not bother us we're not tempted we don't have sin but those are all lies those are all fake worlds the real world has sin the real world we will battle we

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will be tempted we will fall sometimes we will fall hard but we are never alone the spirit will pick us up the spirit will make our hearts right with
God the spirit will even give us the strength to endure the consequences of the sin in this world Lord I pray as everyone here I pray does I pray that you give them the strength and the right thinking through this and we thank you Paul for for unpacking this for us and what these words mean father we give you thanks for these bodies we give you thanks for the pleasures of this life to enjoy I just pray that we steward them well Lord I pray that you grant holiness to every one of us that you would work within us that we would have this desire this longing to be with you but to team with you to fight this battle that is before us father
I also pray if someone is overwhelmed by the battle I pray that they would call our attention to them because we long to walk with them it's not only the spirit that you give us to help battle this war but you also give us a church some of us have been!
in those same battles some of us have faced those same consequences some of us bear the same scars that we get from those sins and God through his redemptive mercy allows us to love people who were like us who struggled as we do to help us understand these great truths so father as we go into next week I pray that just even be with me as I put together this sermon to go through such practical application of this truth but first let us apply it to our hearts and lives and just to even think about it this week pray for the blessings on the growth group where!
[56:06] we can apply these truths to our heart that we can even talk about them that we can be honest with one another we can pray with one another we can encourage one another that we can freely share our fears with one another father you're good and you're merciful and we thank you we ask you for these things in your most gracious and glorious name amen for like one one time and one more time and one time and see fathers out of some people have their together and just just one time and one here and there we have one some time that have had been were first can they get their fathers fathers they did but fathers they did fathers us they had them way

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