

The Conflicts and Consolations of the Disciple

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 February 2019

Preacher: Jon Hinkson

[0 : 00] In our first time together, we considered the call of the disciple to put out into the deep with Christ.

We then considered the course answering that call puts us upon one involving an ongoing dying, yet also of the simultaneous upwelling of the life of Christ within us.

This morning, we want to take up another constant companion in our course as disciples, and that is an inner conflict with which our experience is perpetually fraught.

And while I want to be soberly realistic as to this dread conflict, I want the accent to fall upon the hope we have that even in this fierce inner fray, our Lord Christ has given us provision that we might not finally succumb, but rather prevail.

To speak of an inner conflict is to speak of a reality with which every disciple is intimately familiar. The Apostle Paul depicts this conflict forthrightly in Galatians 5.

[1 : 26] And that is where we will put in. Here is how he describes it. Turn there, if you would.

Galatians 5, picking up in verse 17. What's going on here?

How does this conflict play out? Well, when we choose one course of action, say something good or right, then our sinful desires, the desires of our fallen humanity, oppose.

Alternately, when, alas, we have a mind to do something wrong, the spirit opposes, the indwelling spirit. Perhaps you experience this conflict this very morning, 7 a.m. snug in your warm bed.

You awaken to your alarm, which you deliberately set early, reflecting your holy desire to make it to Sunday school this semester, as was your ambition.

[2 : 51] You start to get up accordingly. That is, about to do the thing that you please. Suddenly, your flesh opposes you, so that you would not do it.

That is, not do your spiritual pleasure. You are, says the flesh. Really? Are you really going to get up?

Oh, but you're so exhausted. You were reading that Page Turner spy novel last night, and you didn't get to bed till 1 a.m. You're awfully tired.

Why don't you just take a miss this one morning? There will be plenty more. One morning can't hurt. You'll catch up next time.

Besides, if you get up now, you'll be so tired, you'll probably embarrass yourself by falling asleep at the church service, the worship service. You wouldn't want to be nodding off then.

[3 : 57] So, a little more shut-eye, and you'll be able to stave off, nodding off. All right, so now, you are about to roll over and fall back asleep.

That is, do the thing you please in fleshly esteem. Then, the spirit opposes you.

That is, opposes your now prevailing fleshly pleasure. Suddenly, you feel convicted. What am I doing? I resolved this semester to attend Sunday school.

I want my life to show some spiritual harvest. And, I think this would be a good way to sow to it. In the final clause of verse 17, So that you may not do the things you please.

That describes the outcome of the conflict. Not simply the result of one or other force, whether flesh or spirit, prevailing.

[5 : 05] Sometimes, not doing as we are a mind to represents the spirit's victory. Other times, alas, it indicates the flesh prevailing.

It all depends upon what or whom we allow ourselves to be persuaded by. I wonder if you've ever experienced this kind of thing.

Which of us does not know this conflict? Now, I want you to take, for a moment, The most grueling, fleshly enticement.

Self-pity or self-assertion. Anger or anxiety. Lust or laziness. Pride or possessiveness. Fear or fury.

And recall the dread struggle. Is it not an experience of ferocity? Can we not at times feel as if in the throes of a Jekyll and Hyde tale?

[6 : 18] You recall the chilling description of the moral conflict within, which Robert Louis Stevenson gives us in his classic. The parallel was suggested by an old mentor of mine.

Dr. Jekyll, a respectable London physician, in the course of research, discovers a drug which transmogrifies him into a repulsive, malevolent dwarf.

Hyde. And Hyde performs all kinds of immoral and abominable acts. Yet for all of Jekyll's shame and disgust at these deeds, he finds himself incorrigibly addicted to his alter ego.

And the more often he yields to the drug, the more difficult to regain his virtuous identity afterwards. Eventually, the evil side of his personality so dominates that he becomes permanently wedded to the character of Hyde, finally destroying himself after many a heinous crime, a dramatic and dreadful inner conflict.

Interestingly, judging from some of the author's correspondence, it is not unlikely that Stevenson intended his story as an allegorical commentary on this very verse of Paul.

[7 : 50] Well, if so, and if he got it right, so much for our hoped-for hopeful accent. Will Hyde, in the end, destroy Jekyll?

Will the deeds of the flesh, the very unglorious catalog of verses 19 through 21, be the prevalent display? Sometimes I can sure feel this way.

But not according to Paul. And this is why this passage brings mighty encouragement. So for all of Paul's sympathy with the power and inveteracy of the flesh, all of the sinful desires of our fallen humanity, the apostle in this passage is notwithstanding optimistic.

Notice that it opens with a reassuring promise. Surely one of the most wonderful promises of the whole Bible. Do you see it there, verse 16?

Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. If you have the NIV, it dissolves this promise by making it a second imperative.

[9 : 11] In other words, a command. But that's not the way to translate it. It's a promise. It's a promise. You see, it is for us, as disciples of Jesus, no longer a conflict of Jekyll versus Hyde.

That was the old war before we were believers. And that was a losing battle. But now, it is Jekyll plus the Holy Spirit versus Hyde.

And with the Spirit, the balance of power in the inner war has been decisively altered. And this battle, we can win and we shall win.

But how? That's what we need to know. What is the way of victory? How do we overcome the dark acts of the flesh, clamoring to be indulged?

And instead, begin to bear the fruit of the Spirit. That glory display of the character of Christ that's cataloged there from verse 22 on.

[10 : 24] What is the dynamic? Surely, there are few questions more vitally practical for the Christian. And Paul gives us the answer in this passage.

And though challenging to apply, I think it's probably simple to grasp. And I want us to apply ourselves to grasping it.

So let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you have given us every good thing we need for doing your will. That you have given us all that we need for life and godliness in your scriptures.

And that you can take these truths and you can make them real and animate them for us by your Spirit. Would you do that? That we might begin to display this wonderful glory that is the character of Christ.

So we ask for this aid with confidence that you will give us it as our good shepherd in Jesus' name. Okay, here it is in a nutshell. Team, for victory in this battle, we must maintain both toward the flesh and the Spirit a right attitude or posture or disposition.

[11 : 46] Namely, in the Apostle's words, we must first crucify the flesh and we must walk by the Spirit. Okay?

Let's look at each of these vital aspects in turn. So for one, we must crucify the flesh. Verse 24, those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh.

Notice the tense there, have crucified. This crucifixion is something that took place for us in the past. So when did we, described as those who belong to Christ, when did we crucify the flesh?

Well, at our conversion, when we repented and we believed in Christ, it was then that we, by faith, were united to Christ and so shared in His crucifixion.

It was then that we were incorporated into His, Christ's, death and resurrection. As Paul previously told the Galatians in 2.20, I have been crucified with Christ.

[13:00] So both 2.20, which I just quoted, I have been crucified with Christ and chapter 5.24 refer to the same event. But, and this is vitally important, don't miss this, there's a crucial difference between 2.20 and 5.24.

Although they refer to the same event, they're looking at it from different angles. Notice that Galatians 2.20 is passive.

I have been crucified with Christ. Okay? I have been crucified. It happened to me. But here, in 5.24, it is active.

Do you see that? Here, crucifixion is not done to us, but by us. Do you see that?

It is we ourselves who are said to have crucified the flesh. How was this so? Well, when we came to Christ, we repented, we put to death everything that we knew to be wrong, we radically renounced fellowship with sin, we took our old self-centered selves, all its sinful passions and desires, and we nailed it to the cross.

[14:31] That's what we did. Probably, our promise at our baptism gave verbal expression to this turning from a life of following sin to a life of following Christ.

Christ. Now, in describing the Christian's relation to her flesh as that of crucifixion, Paul is borrowing Jesus' metaphor.

It was he that originated this metaphor. You recall, he says in Mark 8, 34, if anyone would follow me, they must deny themselves and take up their cross.

Okay, crucifixion. And the cross was the Lord's figure of self-denial, a crucifying of self. Now, when anyone was seen taking up a cross, there was no question as to what was happening.

That was very clear. Execution. That was the point of it. And Paul is making the same point here.

Taking up the cross means that we need to make sure that an execution takes place.

[15:45] And that is the Christian's posture toward the flesh, their flesh, crucifixion. Okay, now, these days, I hope I may safely say that we haven't witnessed a live crucifixion.

Not so for those in Jesus' and Paul's day. People would have seen crucifixion. Hence, for them, the grisly power of this metaphor.

What did it communicate? Let me draw this out. And the late John Stott is very helpful in his commentary on this stuff, too.

So, for one, crucifixion was pitiless. Pitiless. It was not a pleasant form of execution for the nice and the refined.

It was reserved for the worst of criminals. If you were a Roman citizen, couldn't do this. No, this is too terrible. And that's how our flesh is to be treated.

[16:51] We are to show it no courtesy or deference. It is so flagitious that it deserves no better fate than to be crucified.

Also significant to the metaphor, crucifixion was painful and so also will be our rejection of our flesh. Who does not know the acute pain, even anguish of the inner conflict when the fleeting pleasures of sin are renounced?

You remember Augustine's cry, Oh, Lord, give me chastity. Just not yet. Just not yet. Or what's that wonderful part in Lewis's great divorce.

Remember when that habit, that terrible fleshly habit that is dominated and the angel is saying, can I kill it? And that habit sitting on the shoulder, oh, you can't kill me, don't, no, oh, think of what it will be to be without me, no, I comfort you, oh, I bring you such pleasure, don't kill me, can I kill it?

[17:59] Oh, no, you can't, the anguish is terrible. That's what it's to crucify these things.

And also, part of the metaphor as well, crucifixion was decisive. No one who saw someone nailed to a cross queried, you know, I wonder what the outcome of this will be.

No, no, although death by crucifixion was a lingering death, it was a certain death. Everyone knew criminals nailed to a cross did not survive.

they were left there to die. And so it is and must be with our flesh. Now, it is true that the crucifying of our flesh produces death, not suddenly, typically, rather gradually.

In fact, we never succeed in completely killing it off in this life. But, we fixed it to the cross and we are determined to keep it there until it expires.

[19:14] It's interesting that soldiers were placed on the scene of the execution to guard the victim and their job was to prevent anyone rushing up and taking them down from the cross.

So, at least until the felon was completely dead. God, and so it is with Christians. We have put, when we came to Christ, we have put our flesh on the cross.

We crucified it at our conversion. This was a decisive action in the past. But, that decisive action in the past involves the ongoing duty of keeping the flesh on the cross.

We need to leave it there to die. And, it will be a lingering death. Life long. Now, this requires of us a daily, moment by moment, continuous attitude toward our flesh of ruthless and uncompromising rejection.

As Jesus said, take up your cross, daily. Daily. That is, each and every day. No half holidays or holidays or long weekends for the flesh. We can't do it.

[20 : 37] No. However painful to experience, we must show our flesh no pity. However much it pleads, screams, petitions, no mercy.

This must be our policy. daily draconianism. Okay? And this daily reassertion of our crucifixion, decisively begun at conversion, is absolutely vital in this terrible contest.

We cannot, having once nailed our flesh to the cross, wistfully return to the scene of execution and there begin to fondle and caress the flesh and long for its release or maybe even try to take it down from the cross just for a little bit.

So how does all this play out practically? Okay? When some jealous or proud or malicious or lustful thought or suggestion invades our minds, we must banish it at once, instantly exile it, give it not a moment's refuge.

We cannot be an abetter to a condemned criminal. And it's fatal to Parley to begin to examine it and consider whether or not we might give in.

[22 : 16] No, no. I mean, imagine Joseph responding to Potiphar's wife's proposition. Well, run that by me again. What particularly did you have in mind?

Yeah, good luck, buddy. No, no. We have declared war on the flesh. We cannot resume negotiations. The issue is settled and cannot be reopened.

We have crucified the flesh and we are never going to draw the nails. So this is the posture that we must maintain unflaggingly, indefatigably, incorrigibly toward our flesh.

If we are to experience victory in this crucial campaign. If we are ever to see glory begin to dawn and show its radiant beauty in our lives, the likes of that wonderful catalog of fruit that we see there. But there is an indispensable, a second prong to this strategy. Namely, the attitude or posture that we must maintain in relation to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

[23 : 37] Okay? So, we must walk by the Spirit. And we saw that this was pivotal to that promise there in verse 16. Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

And the phrase occurs again in verse 25 there. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Okay?

Here the Spirit is first described as the source and sustaining power of the believer's life. We live by the Spirit, then as the regulative principle of the believer's life.

Walk by the Spirit. So, the exhortation here is this. Since, and that probably better renders the if for the condition is assumed to be true, since the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct the course of our life.

So, how does this play out? Well, it plays out in terms of a posture that we adopt in relation to the Holy Spirit. And the requisite posture is described in this passage in two ways.

[24 : 52] First, it is to be led by the Spirit, verse 18, led by the Spirit. Second, it is to walk by the Spirit, verses 16 and 18.

Sorry, no, 16 and 25. Yeah, 16 and 25. In each of these expressions in the Greek, Spirit is positioned first in word order for emphasis, implying that the Spirit is the key to this process.

And the verbs are both continuous, implying the need for this to be happening on an ongoing basis, not just episodic, has to be ongoing.

And so much those phrases have in common. But there is a critical distinction between being led by the Spirit and walking by the Spirit.

Notice that the former is passive and the latter is active. In other words, it is the Spirit who does the leading, but we who do the walking.

[26 : 05] So first then, we are led by the Spirit. That is, the Spirit here takes the initiative, he forms within us, the indwelling Spirit forms within us, holy and heavenly desires, and he puts gentle pressure on us to yield to his direction.

As, for example, we speculated may have happened at 7 a.m. this morning when the Holy Spirit awakened you and gently prompted you perhaps to recall your ambition to make it to Sunday school this semester.

Just gently prompted you with that recognition. And then perhaps reminded you gently that you desire a spiritual harvest in your life and this is going to be a good way that you might sow to that. So you yielded to his promptings and you got up and here you are. Well done! Well done! Here you are. Maybe it's growing up in Vienna but I tend to think of this process like a waltz.

I wish my sister were here. She could really demonstrate. She's a master waltz instructor. Well she's actually a missionary but she does a little waltzing on the side. But in that it's just you get it's probably with a lot of old-fashioned dances at least you're just following the gentle lead of the partner.

[27 : 40] And this kind of describes the passive aspect of our relation to the spirit. Yielding to the spirit's lead. Just gently taking us along and we just respond to the lead of the spirit.

So that's that side. But in relation to the holy spirit it's not our relation to the spirit is not entirely passive and it would be a grave mistake to think so.

We are not simply led by the spirit. We also walk by the spirit. And this is the active side. It's interesting to note and I think suggestive that the Greek words translated alike walk so in the English 16 and 25 just walk same word but in Greek they're different words.

The verb in verse 16 is the ordinary word for walking but in verse 25 the verb translated walk isn't the ordinary it's not the ordinary word but rather one that suggests marching or walking in rank or walking in line with it's a different one.

It's a word that's used in Romans 4.12 and translated follow in the steps of the faith of your father Abraham. And it occurs again in Galatians 6.16 where it's rendered walk by this rule and the notion is deliberately walking the path that's marked out by the spirit.

[29 : 19] Okay? In the spirit's steps. Here, because I picked on the NIV before, here the NIV very felicitously puts it in step with the spirit.

That's good. That's good. I regularly take the girls out hiking, my daughters, and they have become equal to some pretty astonishingly tough terrain now.

Very proud of them. But when they were young, occasionally we would encounter a particularly tricky bit of trail and some sort of soggy slough or a carking quagmire or who knows what.

And here I would tell Vienna then Geneva and Belle, okay, watch where dad puts his feet and you step just where dad steps. And then I would show them how to pick their way through the little challenging bit and they would do that.

And that's the idea here. Or if you, again, if you want the ballroom metaphor again, think of a dance school this time, not the waltz, but the dance school where don't they stencil out the steps that you're supposed to take?

[30 : 26] One, two, three, four, and you place your feet in those steps and that's how you learn these moves. And that's what this is. So the Holy Spirit is not simply the partner to prompt the dance in our first metaphor to whom we passively yield, that's one side, but he is also the instructor to indicate the steps in which we deliberately walk, kind of in the Spirit's choreography.

That's what we're doing there. So just as we actively, consciously, and deliberately repudiate the flesh, we reject to follow the path suggested by the flesh, likewise, it's equally vital actively to ply the Spirit's path and deliberately turn ourselves toward the things of the Spirit.

This is what Scripture means when it tells us to set our minds on the things of the Spirit, Romans 8. Seek the things that are above, set our minds on things above, in Colossians 3.

Or let your mind dwell on these things, Philippians 4, and so forth. This sort of active resolve, this posture, will be reflected in our whole way of life.

What we do with our leisure time, those precious discretionary hours that we have, the books that we read, the friendships that we cultivate.

[32 : 09] Will these choices play out to grieve or quench the Spirit? Or will they sow to the Spirit? And especially significant here is what an older generation of Christians called the diligent use of the means of grace.

In other words, availing ourselves very prodigally of those means that God has particularly established and appointed for our growth in grace.

He's given us some really good fat paths to grow in grace, such as maybe the disciplined practice of prayer, meditation, hiding God's word in our heart, attending upon the ministry of the word, corporate worship, remembering Christ's death in the cup, and so forth.

these things. So we ought not to simply wait to be prompted by the impulse of the Spirit.

That's the passive side. Okay, if the Spirit does prompt us, yield, but we don't just wait for the promptings of the Spirit. We need to be forming holy resolves and resolutions on the basis of what the Spirit has clearly mapped out in his word.

[33 : 37] I think of the young Jonathan Edwards during his college days. He formulated some resolutions that would guide his paths while he was in college.

Here are a few of the ones that he formulated as a college student. Here was number 28. Resolved to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently as that I may find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

Number 30. Resolved to strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion and do a higher exercise of grace than I was the week before.

Wow! He wants to be so diligent about his growth that there's a, you could actually tell the difference from week to week. Yeah, I'm growing. I'm growing. Ah!

43. Resolved. Never henceforward till I die to act as if I were in any way my own, but entirely and altogether Christ's.

[34 : 54] Well, these are three of, I think it's 70, 70 that we find in his diaries. Well, this is just an example of the active walking in the way of the Spirit.

And this then is the dynamic of how we are progressively transformed into the image of Christ. We must actively crucify our flesh and actively walk in the steps of the Spirit along with passively yielding to the Spirit's promptings.

And as we do this, the layers of tarnish will begin to come off and we will begin to sparkle with the reflected light of the glory of Christ.

This is how the Spirit will manifest in us the character of Christ. And as if this were not enough, we begin also to make the discovery that as we yield to the Spirit and as we stay in stride with His steps, we find that all along He is giving us a greater and greater taste for the things of the Spirit, a deeper delight in them, a more settled satisfaction in them, a richer relish of them, a taste for glory. Isn't that wonderful? Haven't you noticed, you know, when I was in college, I used to love to eat Lucky Charms. And then, I don't know, after college I couldn't afford to get them, and then I got married, and that was the best thing that happened to me after Christ.

[36 : 42] And then I started eating Alpen and this good stuff. And one day I was at a conference, and they had a little box of Lucky Charms, nostalgia, and I went back and I tried to eat that. It was like burning my tongue.

It was so sweet. I thought, whoa, my tastes have changed. You know, you eat good food, and your tastes actually get bent toward the better quality. That's the way it is in the spiritual life.

Our tastes actually change. The Spirit gives us changed taste. It's wonderful. And correspondingly, those old dainties of the flesh, after which our hungry hearts had so hankered, well, they just don't seem to have the same appeal that they once did.

It's like the Lucky Charms stuff. And they just fall away, and are not even missed. You see, the dynamic of glory to return for a moment to Jekyll and Hyde, is not Jekyll, kind of precariously holding out, kind of white-knuckled and squinting over the strain, just managing to keep Hyde on a tight leash.

We're imprisoned in the straitjacket of strictures. No, and without denying the blood, sweat, and tears side of discipleship.

[38 : 10] That's part of the dynamic. But the dynamic also involves being caught up in a swell, kind of an incoming tide of joy, a spirit-generated swell of profounder delights and desires.

Delights in and desires for the things of Christ and his kingdom to which he calls us. You remember in Homer's Odyssey, Odyssey, when Odysseus' ship passed the island of the Sirens.

Remember those fabled creatures, kind of half woman and half bird, that would beguile passing sailors by their entrancing singing, luring them to shipwreck on the rocks.

Remember that? Well, Odysseus, to escape the seduction, he stuffed his sailors' ears with wax, but he wanted to hear them, so he lashed himself to the mast and forbade his men to loose him no matter what he might do or plead.

Okay? Lash himself to the mast. Well, there's one technique, all right? Lash yourself to the mast, okay? But, remember, when the Argonauts traced the same route, Orpheus employed a different strategy.

[39 : 40] Remember, Orpheus took out his harp, and he played music of such surpassing sweetness that the sailors paid no heed to the siren song.

And so it is with the spirit. He fosters in us a greater delight in holiness than in the flesh is touted fair.

So we may walk through the streets of vanity fair, like Christian and faithful, and not be enticed by its wares, for ours is a better portion.

And we not only know it to be so, we got good theology here, we know it to be so. No, we experience it as the better portion.

Even the best charms of this world cannot match the sweetness of fellowship with the Savior, that his spirit works in our hearts.

[40 : 52] I don't know if you guys have seen this thing, I read for it occasionally, it's a Spurgeon morning and evening, wonderful. Here's a little bit from him. Nothing gives the believer so much joy as fellowship with Christ.

He has enjoyment, as others have, in the common mercies of life. He can be glad both in God's gifts and God's works, but in all these separately, yea, and in all of them added together.

He doth not find such substantial delight as in the matchless person of his Lord Jesus. He has wine which no vineyard on earth ever yielded.

He has bread which all the cornfields of Egypt could never bring forth. Where can such sweetness be found as we have tasted in communion with our beloved?

in our esteem, the joys of earth are little better than husks for swine compared with Jesus, the heavenly manna.

[42 : 06] We would rather have one mouthful of Christ's love and a sip of his fellowship than a whole world full of carnal delights.

What is the chaff to the wheat? what is the sparkling paste to the true diamond? What is a dream to the glorious reality? What is time's mirth in its best trim compared to our Lord Jesus Christ?

Friends and fellow wayfarers and warfarers, do not grow weary in well-doing or faint in the fray for its ferocity.

Keep crucifying the flesh. Keep yielding to the Spirit's prompting and walk deliberately in his steps. And the indwelling Spirit will make your communion with Christ so sweet it will more than compensate for the wending weary way that marks our path to glory.

those who take up the cross and carry it soon make the discovery that the cross is carrying them.

[43 : 29] Well, let me stop there and open it up. I think we have a little bit of time for any questions or comments. was this practical?

If there's something that doesn't seem concrete or practical, hold me to it. We want this to be practical. You feel like there's some actionable, there's some actionable things?

Okay. Comments, questions? Wow! Maybe it was okay.

I thought it was clear. Not a chance. I really appreciated your description of putting the flesh on the cross and guarding it from not coming off again.

But yet, despite all the warnings, it does come off sometimes. Yeah. And I guess the question is, you know, how do you reason about that?

[44 : 33] Because, you know, as you were describing, there's a tonality having gone on there in the first place. Excellent. Here's a, I was just looking at a, in 2 Timothy 2, 21, 22, somewhere, maybe 23, verse 23, it's talking about, hey, if you want to be a vessel fit for the master's use, you've got to cleanse yourself.

How do you cleanse yourself? And he gets real, real practical, okay? And, and he, and he talks about flee, got to be fleeing, and then pursue. You got to be pursuing.

And then, he kind of gives some concretes in how to do that well. And one of these is, flee, youthful lust, with those who call upon the Lord.

So there's a sense in which this is, it's really hard to be doing this solo. So we want to be surrounding ourselves with, with friendships, kind of a community of the committed, you know, and who say, yes, we are committed to this, let's do this.

And we talk about, we talk about how hard it is, the temptations, the trials, we encourage one another. So don't try to fly solo in this. Find some people with whom you can, you can be engaged. [45 : 52] Then again, he says, have nothing to do with, you've got to decide right off the bat to just, your stance is one of rejection.

If you're always considering it, and you haven't just, in principle, rejected the flesh, it's got to be really hard, it's going to be tempting each time. But we need to have a stance of rejection. He says, refuse, or have nothing to do with. You know, there are a lot of alternatives in our culture proffered, offered to us, alternatives to monogamous fidelity in marriage.

Well, you know, one of the helpful things is, you don't have to spend one ounce of imaginative energy considering those other options.

Because you can just have resolved, no, it's just not a category. Not going to go there. So some of those stances. But then it also, Paul in that same verse he says, knowing what these things lead to, and there's a sense of understanding some of the dynamics of these sins that often get us.

[47 : 07] Think, doggone it, every time I walk down that alley I get mugged and I lose my wallet. Let me stop and think this through. Is this going to be the best alley to walk down to get home? And you begin to ask, how does the devil bait the hook?

What is it that I desire? What are some maybe idolatries beneath these desires? Because sometimes when we fight sin, we're just kind of weed whacking on the top and we don't go down to the roots of some of these things.

So when he says, knowing that these things lead to and knowing that, he's talking about getting an understanding of, well, as Paul writes, you are not ignorant of Satan's devices.

In other words, don't be ignorant of how Satan keeps taking you out. C.S. Lewis has this book called Screwtape Letters, where it's kind of these demon tempters are trying to get you.

So sit down and think, okay, let me do a screwtape letter. How is Satan going to try to mug me and take my lunch? So those are some practical, concrete ways to do this.

[48 : 20] And then let's keep talking about this together with each other. Hey, how are you finding? Oh, boy, where are you stumbling and falling and what are you finding to fortify you? What can buttress your best results?

And then just to try to do this together. So there are a couple thoughts. Yeah. Anything else? Maybe a chance for one more? I just wanted to say that I like the way you illustrated putting it on the cross. One of the things that I haven't ever heard from when you gave God to me though I was somewhat conscious of it, but the consciousness is clear to me now, that when you put it up here, that crucifixion is not an instant thing.

It's gradual. And what the gentleman was just referring to, you're seeing this thing still alive, and as you were saying earlier, it's calling out like, free me, set me free.

Yeah, right, right. But, yeah. Thank you.