



Dying to Live

Colossians 3:5-11

Brief Sermon Outline (with quotes)

1. Put to Death Sinful Lusts (5)

What Mortification is Not

- *It is not the total and final the eradication of sin*
- *It is not improvement*
- *It is not mere avoidance*
- *It is not occasional conquests*

What Mortification is

- *It is the habitual, ongoing weakening of sin*
- *It is the constant warfare against sin*
- *It consists of frequent successes*

John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*

"Whatever your heart clings to and relies upon, that is your god."

--Martin Luther

Why?

- These are earthly (5)
- Judgment is coming (6)
- These represent the old you (7)

We're like a freed slave who still jumps at his old master's voice.

We're like a man with a healed leg who still limps out of habit.

We're like a former prisoner who still wakes at prison hours."

Tim Chester, *You Can Change*

2. Put Away Sinful Feelings and Speech (8-9a)

1. *Consider the dangerous consequences of the sin*
2. *Get a clear sense of the guilt, danger, and evil of that sin*
3. *Load your conscience with the guilt of that sin*
4. *Get a constant longing for deliverance from that sin*
5. *Consider whether that temptation is exacerbated by your temperament*
6. *Consider the advantages of preventing that sin*
7. *Rise mightily against the first step toward that sin*
8. *Meditate on your self-abasement and vileness in light of the majesty of God*
9. *Listen to what God says to your soul; do not speak peace until God does*

John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*

Why?

- You already have! (9b)
- You're being renewed (10)
- You're part of a new creation (11)

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Introduction

Dying to self isn't exactly a "seeker¹ sensitive" message, but it is what Christ's disciples are called to. Again, the preeminence of Christ continues to be central. In this case, central to whom we are to *be*².

This week we'll be diving deep into sensitive areas so leaders need to consider separating men and women and excusing children for parts of the discussion.

This week's text:

^{ESV} **Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹ Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Discussion 1: Imperatives and Indicatives

- *Pick out each of the commands (imperatives), and relate them to the surrounding/supporting truths (indicatives).*

[Some of the indicatives describe why, some describe how (by what power). Some describe what offends God, some describe the call to live in the victory won for you by Christ. *Here is a good place to review the sermon, as these were emphasized strongly.*

Don't forget the greater context. Yes--the thesis statement of the book is the over-riding and ultimate indicative:

^{ESV} **Colossians 1:15-20** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that ***in everything he might be preeminent***. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him ***to reconcile to himself all things***, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

In *everything*, including your thought life, Christ is preeminent.]

¹"Seeker" in the conventional sense of the word. God in Christ is the real Seeker (*Luke 19:10*).

² Ambassador III - *Character of an Ambassador* class focuses on "What Would Jesus Have Me Be?" rather than just "What Would Jesus Do?"

Discussion 2: Growth

Related Texts:

2 Peter 1:5-8 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge,⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.⁸ For if these qualities are yours **and are increasing**, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:19 holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a **growth** that is from God.

1 Peter 2:2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may **grow** up to salvation

2 Peter 3:18 But **grow** in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

- **What kind of word picture would you assign to your Christian growth?**
 - Rut/dead in the water? [same place you were a year ago, ten years ago ...]
 - "Botanical" growth (slow, consistent, sometimes fruit bearing season, sometimes Winter...)
 - Fruits of repentance? [Transformed behaviors, desires, priorities, temptations?...]
[Gently approach the possibility that those not growing may not be born again. You will know them by their fruits (Matt. 7:16-20). Do so privately if to specific individuals.]

- **If there is someone in your group that you've witnessed growth in--tell them!**
[Encourage one another in this--they may be experiencing "botanical" growth and not even perceive their own growth.]

Discussion 3: Putting to death (putting away) the earthly (flesh)

Related Text:

^{ESV} **Galatians 5:16-25** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

[Sexual immorality discussion guidelines:

- Sex outside of the covenant of marriage is common, even among professing Christians. We excel at self-deceptive justification of our actions.
- "Pornography" is not limited to visual stimulation (movies, pictures, and voyeurism). It includes fantasy thought life and self-gratification.
- Bondage³ to pornography is very common, even among ministry leaders (possibly CG leaders... if it is you, confess and repent). Don't assume your group is free of it.
- Pornography is not a "men only" problem.
- While we do call people to confession and repentance, encourage confession to perhaps one or two others rather than the whole group.
- *Sexual immorality is not the only problem! Don't focus too much on it to the exclusion of all the others listed in the text.]*

- *Do you really want the change God calls us to? "Motivation"*

[A recurring theme these last few weeks. *What do you want to do?* Rom. 7:15-8:1]

- *Do we long to grow?*
- *Do we hunger for holiness?*
- *Do we desperately want to be like Jesus? (Phil 3 - "that I may know him...")*

- *What kind of change really needs to happen? "Clarity"*

As we examine the fruits of the flesh in ourselves (first) and in one another (second), we're going to feel guilt and a desire for change.

"... one of the things you will quickly discover is that when most people seek change, the seldom have the heart in view. They want change in their circumstances, change in the other person, or change in their emotions. They think that if "things" would change, they would be better off. But when the focus is put only on the outward circumstances, the solutions are seldom more than temporary and superficial. Certainly, it is true that elements in a situation often need to change, but you cannot stop there. Your goal must be to lead your friend to a deeper, fuller view of change. Your goal is to help her to examine her heart and to see the importance of change at that level."

Paul David Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*⁴, p. 109

- *Where does the power to change come from? "Source"*

[Is it something we conjure up? Something we accomplish by sheer force of will? Are we still so foolish as to look *within* for this power rather than to the Source?

³ We're avoiding "addiction" due to the implication of sickness (deflects accountability) vs. sin.

⁴ Central to "making disciples" is the one-anothering of the gospel call. Pastor Tim Bradley will be teaching us the next several Sync meetings on Biblical counseling (a.k.a discipleship) referencing this fine book extensively.

^{ESV} **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses⁵ in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Is this an indicative or an imperative? Please don't blow past this... if it is an indicative, then it is a promise! Take great comfort in this.]

Discussion 4: Going Deeper --Consider separating men & women and dismissing children

- *In your own life, where is the earthly/fleshly way of life still living... even thriving?*

[Dig deep and relate each and every one of them to the base sins of pride and unbelief/idolatry. *Leaders--lead out in confession and repentance. Use discretion in the specifics of the confessions with respect to who is present.*]

- *Do you discern specific sins listed here in your brother or sister that they do not recognize? Do you love them enough to tell them? Have you examined your own heart thoroughly first? Please do so humbly, gently, and privately.*

⁵ Being a witness goes beyond just a boldness to speak; it is all encompassing discipleship/ambassadorship.

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Discussion 2: Growth

Related Texts: 2Peter 1:5-8; Col 2:19; 1Peter 2:2; 2Peter 3:18

- *What kind of word picture would you assign to your Christian growth?*
- *Encourage one another in growth that you have seen in their lives.*

Discussion 3: Putting to death (putting away) the earthly (flesh)

Related Text: Gal 5: 16-25

- *Do you really want the change God calls us to? “Motivation”*
 - *Do we long to grow?*
 - *Do we hunger for holiness?*
 - *Do we desperately want to be like Jesus? (Phil 3 - “that I may know him...”)*
- *What kind of change really needs to happen? “Clarity”*

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- *Do you discern specific sins listed here in your brother or sister that they do not recognize?*
 - *Do you love them enough to [overcome your fear and] tell them? Have you examined your own heart thoroughly first? Please do so humbly, gently, and privately.*