

Methods for Mortifying Sin (Part 3)

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[0 : 00] Well, we've been steadily working through our subject, pursuing holiness in an unholy world.

! And we're at a point in our study where we have been examining the scriptural support that we have been examining the scriptural support of the Lord.

Thus far, we've examined two passages of inspired scripture that guide us as we seek to answer the question, how do we mortify or kill sin? How do we do that?

The first passage we looked at dealt with our sinful flesh and came from the pen of the apostle Peter, we must abstain from fleshly lusts. And in 1 Peter 2.11, it says, Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

The second passage we dealt with also dealt with the flesh, and that is found in the writings of the apostle Paul in the great book of Romans. I marvel at that book.

[1 : 28] I believe that Luther was right when he said it's the Mount Everest of Scripture. Make no provision for the flesh. And in Romans chapter 13, verse 12 to 14, let's rid ourselves of the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Let's behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and debauchery, not in strife and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Those verses should also serve to remind us of another passage written by Paul, obviously by inspiration in 1 Corinthians 6, flee sexual immorality.

So this evening we're going to look at some other verses that will help us in our battle against sin and in our pursuit of personal holiness. One such passage deals with our old self as opposed to our new self.

The old self typically is a reference to Adam, or in Adam, the new self, we're now in Christ. Be encouraged that the old self is already dead.

[3 : 01] We're supposed to be encouraged by that. The old self is dead. Well, that leads to some penetrating thoughts and questions.

I say here, how can we, maybe I should say, how can I be encouraged that the old self is dead when sin plays such a major impact in my life?

To try and answer that, we turn to God in the Scriptures. It won't come as a surprise that again, we're going to wake up Paul, the great contributor to this subject.

And again, the book of Romans chapter 6, beginning in verse 1. What shall we say then? How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.

[4 : 26] For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with so that we would no longer be slaves to sin, for the one who has died is freed from sin.

That's the first seven verses of Romans chapter 6. I'm going to skip down to kind of the middle part of that verse, around verse 3, which says this, Do you not know that all of us have been baptized into Christ Jesus?

Talk about believers, obviously. And here we have a principle. It's the first principle we looked at tonight, and I thought long and hard and finally named it principle one.

You know, it's not rocket science. All true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have been baptized into Christ Jesus.

Now we know that John the Baptist, in what was referred to as the waters of repentance, he baptized.

[5 : 58] There was actually a denomination sort of named after him, Baptist. And we shouldn't get too puffed up being Southern Baptist. There's like 125 Baptist denominations in the world.

But baptism is important to us. He was preaching to those who underwent baptism that by that physical example, they were to turn to a life of righteous behavior.

By going into and under the water, the sinner was declaring that he was renouncing his sin and was being at that moment symbolically cleansed.

In that act, he was identifying with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, who was actually on earth when John was baptizing, that had been promised, the same Messiah that had been promised to the nation of Israel.

Baptism was a mark of identification. We would not refer to what John was doing as Christian baptism. If he had said to the people coming into the water, this is Christian baptism, they wouldn't have known what he was talking about.

[7 : 16] And he wouldn't have either. But there's a very interesting analogy here. In the Old Testament, the people of Israel were baptized into Moses.

Interesting thought. Paul actually speaks about this in 1 Corinthians 10. First couple of verses. For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters.

By the way, anytime you see that, usually it says in the King James, I do not want you to be ignorant. Mark it down. They were ignorant. That's a nice way of saying you're ignorant or you're unaware.

I don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud. And they all passed through the sea.

Now you remember, a cloud followed the Hebrew children. and that cloud was actually Christ. And also remember that they passed through the Red Sea.

[8 : 24] And I've actually been there. And I actually went out swimming there. And I've got a rock that I found from the... I think maybe a Hebrew stepped on that, you know, and it's big and wide and deep.

It's pretty amazing, really. Being under the cloud and passing through the sea symbolized the people's willingness to recognize to recognize Moses as God's spokesperson.

He was the spokesman for God. Moses was their leader and people placed themselves under his authority. And by placing themselves under Moses, they were beneficiaries of the honor and blessing that he, Moses, received from God.

He got titanic blessings and those were passed on to the people. I want to speak to a similarity of this to Christ, but obviously in a much more profound way.

We can't compare Moses with Christ. Much more profound. Believers have been placed in Christ and made one with Him.

[9 : 53] We are even described in Scripture as joint heirs with Jesus. Heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. In other words, we have been permanently immersed with Him and we receive all of His benefits.

Many times the Apostle Paul speaks of baptism. baptism. And it's easy for us because we see it live here, but it's easy for us to conjure up images of people going into the baptistry and being immersed.

But Paul's writings go beyond that. He is using the physical image of water to teach a spiritual reality of the believer's union with Christ.

Physical example that has spiritual application. And in that regard, water baptism is an outward display of an inward reality.

We've been baptized baptized with Christ. Now, I was raised in a denomination that taught that everything depended on water baptism.

[11 : 20] Everything. And I wasn't a Nazarene, but they hold to that too. I was raised in an independent Christian church. We were similar to the Church of Christ except we had a piano and an organ.

I'll explain to you that way. First Christian Church, I was raised in that church. They wanted to get people wet. Boy, that was their goal.

But I've said many times to people in various denominations, and I've helped a lot of people step into our baptistry. You guys know that.

I've been doing that 30 years, Mike. if you're not saved when you step into the water, you're not going to be saved when you step out of the water.

Nothing magical occurs during that process. That's just good old Bartlesville water. Nothing magical.

[12 : 28] nevertheless, it's an important right, it's important for us to do it, because it's important for us to be obedient to the commands of the Lord, and God said, believe and be baptized.

A lot of us get the cart before the horse, we get baptized, and then later we believed. Through it, we identify, and you can see the picture, we identify with the death, the burial, and resurrection of the Lord.

When Mike takes that candidate, that candidate dies, Mike buries them in the water, and then they are resurrected.

We used to have an Hispanic church here, and I can't remember the brother's name, that was it, Ricardo. Ricardo's with the Lord now, and boy, I'll tell you, you came out with the most sincere prayer, because he'd hold you under, and he would take you down three times, but that is identifying death, burial, and resurrection.

Listen to what the apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 3, verse 21. Baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, it's not a bath, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[14 : 09] But for Peter, baptism was an outward mark that gave evidence a The within a believer.

Same thing with Paul. Of course, they would not be in conflict. The Holy Spirit was leading them both. So water baptism is important, but as a symbol of genuine saving faith.

faith. And as we've already taught, the first principle that all true believers in the Holy Jesus Christ have been baptized into Christ Jesus.

Baptized. Now, there's a second principle we want to talk about this evening. Principle number two, all true believers are not only identified with Christ, but are identified with Him specifically in His death and resurrection.

Again, Romans chapter 6, Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we may too walk in newness of life.

[15 : 35] For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. It is an historical fact that all true believers have been baptized into the death of Christ, but it begs a question.

When did that happen? Well, it did not happen when we stepped into the baptistry. And for me, it did not happen the first time I stepped into the baptistry, and it didn't happen the second time I stepped in to the baptistry.

God this historical fact dates back to our union with Christ when He was on the cross. We're going a long ways back.

A long ways back. The historical fact dates back to that union on the cross. in addition to our death with Him on the cross, we were also raised with Him in the resurrection from the grave.

I will make a statement that no human can ever fully grasp. We died with Christ in order that we might have life through Him and live like Him.

[17 : 06] Boy, that's deep. That'll preach for the rest of your career, Mike. We died with Christ in order that we might have life through Him and live like Him.

And as I've said, that truth is far too wondrous to comprehend in fullness. Because of this truth, we can now walk in newness of life.

We have within us the ability to walk in newness of life. the great theologian Charles Hodge, not to be confused with his son, the great theologian A.A.

Hodge, and I have some of both of their books, said this, there can be no participation in Christ's life without a participation in His death.

And we cannot enjoy the benefits of His death unless we are partakers of the power of His life. We must be reconciled to God in order to be holy, and we cannot be reconciled without becoming holy.

[18 : 21] And then I screamed out and said, but wait, I thought in this life we could never attain full holiness. holiness. And the short answer is we can't.

But this is a life where we strive. It's a life of striving. In the next life, we don't strive anymore, we arrive.

We will arrive at a state of holiness, and that's important, because the Spirit of God said without holiness, no one will see the Lord.

So we have to understand the difference between striving and arriving. And I've had a lot of guys tell me, well, I've arrived, I've reached sinless perfection, and I'm always real friendly with them, but by the time I'm through, they not only hate me, they think they've lost their salvation.

You know, I point out, 1 John, 1 chapter, if you ever say you're without sin, you're calling God a liar, because He says you sin. He calls upon you to confess your sins.

[19 : 29] If you're sinless, you don't need to confess. Do you need an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous one, if you're sinless? So, you know, you could shoot all kind of holes in that thing.

But we got a third principle, our final one tonight we're going to deal with. Principle three, Paul stresses the fact that the old sinful self has been killed.

And again, he says this in Romans chapter 6 starting in verse 6, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with so that we no longer be slaves to sin, for the one who has died is freed from sin.

The one who's died is freed from sin. And the Holy Spirit starts that section with a very important phrase. He says, knowing this, two words.

In other words, what follows should be common knowledge among believers. Knowing this, everybody knows this, when the Lord redeemed us on the cross, not only was He crucified, our old self was crucified with Him.

[21 : 11] When Christ redeemed His people on the cross, the old self was put to death and destroyed. Why then do we have to deal with so much sin in our life?

It's very frustrating. I've died to it. Why is it still there? Why is it still there? Again, we live in unredeemed flesh.

We still battle a sin nature. We war against the world and the devil in addition to the flesh.

And I have to tell you, the flesh for me is the worst. Yeah, I battle the world, the devil, but the flesh, that's by far the worst. Paul wrote about this in the fifth and sixth chapters of Romans.

Very marvelous two chapters. And that's why Paul cried out, what a wretched man am I. That's the guy we would put out as probably the greatest Christian that ever lived.

[22 : 25] After he got his head on straight on the road to Damascus, quit killing believers or arresting him. the victory has been won.

The war is still going on. I used the analogy in here a few weeks ago and maybe someone wasn't there but seen in India a little bitty one room house, wood house, a huge snake, 18 foot snake got in there.

Authorities were summoned and one of them got in a position with a rifle and shot that snake in his head. Now I'm going to tell you, that snake was dead. That snake was dead.

But he didn't know it. And he began, is that word writhe? Is that a good word? What is it? That's the word. Twist and turn.

And he destroyed the house, destroyed the furniture. It had to be torn down. He was dead, dead, but he was still at it. Well, that's a good analogy.

[23 : 32] Dr. McBride used that analogy. That's where I learned it. Old, as in old self, is an interesting term. It does not refer to chronological age.

I mean, if Oscar was here, we would say Oscar is old. Oldest guy in our class. I won't say who is, but followed by Jerry, and I think followed by Charlie, and followed by me.

But this is not chronological. This refers to, this old is something that is worn out and completely useless.

That might be me, but it's worn out and it's useless. useless. And the best thing that can happen to it is that it be discarded.

Don't give this lesson to Diane, please. Just discard it. From the standpoint of the Lord, it has been destroyed and it needs to be on the scrap heap.

[24 : 40] Take it out to the dump. So, just who is the old self we keep hearing about? It was our life in Adam. It was our life in Adam.

Adam and Eve fell in the garden, chapter 3, you can read about it, and everything changed. And every human who has come since then, with the exception of the God-man, Christ Jesus, has within them that sin nature.

The old self is Adam. And you read about that not only in Genesis, but in Romans chapter 5. In other words, it is the unregenerate man who is apart from the new life that comes through redemption.

And, you know, the old self, people in Adam are dead, described in scriptures as dead. And I heard a great pastor, I've got a book where he contributed one chapter, it's a marvelous book, and he contributed one chapter and he said, we live our lives out in a desolate graveyard.

Every day we walk by people, whether at work, at the mall, wherever, not in our mall, Walmart, there's nobody out at our mall.

[26 : 09] We walk by people that are dead. They don't know they're dead, but they're dead. This is a graveyard. So old is an interesting term, completely worn out.

We must be very careful at this point. If we are both dead in trespass and but now alive in Christ, are we teaching a dualistic view of the believer?

And Paul was very much on guard with that for a very special reason. In other words, do we have two natures?

One in Christ, one in Adam. As confusing as it may seem, that is not what we are teaching. It's not what the Bible teaches. Those who hold to that, and there are people today that hold to that, are what we would call modern day Gnostics.

That starts with a G. Now, who are they? Well, the Gnostics in Paul's day were false teachers with which he had to contend.

[27 : 33] And they thought they were the ascended learners. They were higher than everybody else. And they had the best knowledge, the latest knowledge. I heard it going on the radio once.

I still remember it. Years ago, we were young. I was traveling in Arkansas investigating fire cases. And it's a charismatic guy, I'm being honest with you. And he said, if I say anything to you that conflicts with the Bible, remember I have the latest information from God.

Just ignore what the Bible says. I've got the latest information. And I'll never forget because I tried to put my hand through that radio and choke him and I almost broke my fingers. I was so mad.

We don't have dualism. The Gnostics were false teachers. And they taught that all believers had two natures. They taught that one nature was very spiritual, did good things, and was going to live forever.

forever. But the Gnostics also taught the other nature which is in us is an evil nature and it cannot be controlled, it cannot be changed, and therefore we can do whatever we want to.

[28 : 53] And let me tell you, historically, there were some horrible things they did. Taking advantage of married women or single women and it's okay to do that.

They said, I'm not advertising that. It didn't matter what you did in the old nature, just do it. and they committed all sorts of sin because they said that old nature is eventually going to be destroyed.

So go ahead and eat, drink, and be merry. Eventually, the old nature will be destroyed. And it meant even committing all sorts of sin, they would eventually be destroyed.

The spiritual nature or good nature would live on. There were whole congregations that adopted this dualistic lifestyle, engaged, in all sorts of immoral conduct, and there was no discipline.

There are some churches like that now, guys. We had a pulpit team a long time ago. I was not on it.

[30 : 02] I don't think I was a member yet. The head of that pulpit team was a name a few people here will know David Ray. David told us this story, but they were looking at a pastor in Tulsa and he had a resume and he had a guy listed and they went and interviewed this guy that was on the reference and he said, he put me down?

I said, yeah. He said, it must be an old resume. He said, I don't go to that church anymore. He said, really? He said, yeah. He said, the deacons started engaging in wife swapping and the pastor knew it and allowed it.

And I told him I couldn't put up that. He said, maybe you need to leave. And his name got discarded on the spot.

That's in Tulsa about 30 years ago. spiritual nature or good nature is going to live on. Congregation said, do what you want to do.

So what have we learned thus far in our study on pursuing holiness in an unholy world? We must abstain from fleshly lust.

[31 : 26] You've got to work at that. And you know in the 21st century there's a lot of work to do in there. make no provision for the flesh.

Be encouraged that the old self is already dead. And then we looked at three principles. Number one, all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have been baptized into Christ Jesus.

Principle two, all true believers are not only identified with Christ, but are identified with Him specifically in His death and resurrection. We've died and we've been resurrected.

And principle three, the old sinful self has been killed. It's been killed.