

**Sunday School (6/11/2017)**  
**Mortification of Sin**  
**Lesson 2**

Having divided and discussed Romans 8:13, let's see what truths are uncovered and let's confirm those truths.

**Truth 1:**

*The choicest believers, who are assuredly freed from the condemning power of sin, ought yet to make it their business all their days to mortify the indwelling power of sin.*<sup>1</sup>

I. Scriptures:

- A. Can you confirm each part of this truth 1 from Romans 8:13 and this passage?
- B. Romans 8:1
- C. Hebrews 1:3
- D. 1 John 1:7
- E. Romans 8:13
- F. Colossians 3:5

II. Confirmations

A. Threats

1. "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit." (John 15:2, NKJV)
2. What is the purpose of threats for members of the covenant of grace?

B. Apostolic Practice

1. "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." (1 Corinthians 9:27, NKJV)
2. And if this were the work and business of Paul, who was so incomparably exalted in grace, revelations, enjoyments, privileges, consolations, above the ordinary measure of believers, where may we possibly bottom an exemption from this work and duty whilst we are in this world?<sup>2</sup>

C. Purpose of the presence of the Spirit and new nature

1. Replaced dryer coil and sensors
2. "*For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*" (Galatians 5:17, NKJV)

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<sup>1</sup> John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold, vol. 6 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, n.d.), 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

3. This is one main reason why **the Spirit and the new nature** is given unto us,—that we may have a principle within whereby to oppose sin and lust. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” Well! and what then? Why, “The Spirit also lusteth against the flesh,” Gal. 5:17

D. Prudence and Absurdity

1. Now this is, first, the most unjust and **unreasonable** thing in the world, when two combatants are engaged, to bind one and keep him up from doing his utmost, and to leave the other at liberty to wound him at his pleasure; and, secondly, the **foolishest** thing in the world to bind him who fights for our eternal condition, [salvation?] and to let him alone who seeks and violently attempts our everlasting ruin. The contest is for our lives and souls.<sup>3</sup>

E. It is our purpose

1. “*as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,*” (1 Peter 2:2, NKJV)
2. “*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*” (2 Corinthians 7:1, NKJV)

III. Objections

A. What if we attain perfection?

1. Indwelling sin always *abides* whilst we are in this world; therefore it is always to be mortified.<sup>4</sup>
  - a. “*Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*” (2 Corinthians 4:16, NKJV)
  - b. “*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.*” (Philippians 3:12, NKJV)
  - c. “*For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*” (Galatians 5:17, NKJV)

B. What about if sin takes a break influencing us?

1. Sin doth not only still abide in us, but is still *acting*, still labouring to bring forth the deeds of the flesh. When sin lets us alone we may let sin alone<sup>5</sup>
2. I shall discharge him from this duty who can bring sin to a composition, to a cessation of arms in this warfare; if it will spare him any one day, in

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 11.

any one duty let him say to his soul, as to this duty, “Soul, take thy rest.”<sup>6</sup>

- C. Even if it always acts, is sin acting that dangerous? If it’s not that bad, then I can take a break, right?
1. Sin will not only be striving, acting, rebelling, troubling, disquieting, but if let alone, if not continually mortified, it will *bring forth great, cursed, scandalous, soul-destroying sins.*<sup>7</sup>
  2. “*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*” (Galatians 5:19–21, NKJV)
  3. Observations from Owen
    - a. Sin aims always at the utmost; every time it rises up to tempt or entice, might it have its own course, it would go out to the utmost sin in that **kind**.
      - 1) Every unclean thought or glance would be adultery if it could;
        - a) That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto<sup>8</sup> (Q.99; A.6).
      - 2) every covetous desire would be oppression, every thought of unbelief would be atheism, might it grow to its head.
        - a) David and Bathsheba
      - 3) And herein lies no small share of the deceitfulness of sin, by which it prevails to the hardening of men, and so to their ruin, Heb. 3:13,—it is modest, as it were, in its first motions and proposals, but having once got footing in the heart by them, it constantly makes good its ground, and presseth on to some farther degrees in the same kind.<sup>9</sup>
      - 4) Now nothing can prevent this but mortification; that withers the root and strikes at the head of sin every hour, so

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>8</sup> Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith: Edinburgh Edition* (Philadelphia: William S. Young, 1851), 242.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

that whatever it aims at it is crossed in. There is not the best saint in the world but, if he should give over this duty, would fall into as many cursed sins as ever any did of his kind.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.