

Dead, But Not Gone Yet

Text: Romans 8.13

Theme: It ought to be the business of all those in Christ to put indwelling sin to death

Introduction — Be killing sin or it will be killing you

- another similar to it
- Bible: either this book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book
- it ought to be the business of all those in Christ to put indwelling sin to death
- going to take closer look once again at this, from Romans 8.13

Read Romans 8.13

Pray: Our gracious heavenly Father, deal bountifully with us this day, that we may live and keep Your word. Open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Your law. Amen.

Let's ask some questions of this text by starting with this:

I. WHY MUST WE BE SO DILIGENT?

- simple answer is this: God says so
- clear teaching of Scripture

1. Biblical evidence of this necessity

- **Philippians 3:12 ESV** Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.
- **2 Corinthians 4:16 ESV** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.
- **2 Peter 3:18 ESV** But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.
- **Galatians 5:17 ESV** 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.
- **1 John 1:8 ESV** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- indwelling sin always lives in us while we are in this world
- therefore, we must be about the business of putting it to death
- so...let's all of us get to work
- if we only acknowledge that this indwelling sin exists but do nothing
- well, we've not even done half the work we are called to

2. Indwelling sin isn't just laying around; it is active

- while those in Christ, under no condemnation, free from dominating power of sin
- sin still exists and it wants to be active
- as one man wrote: When sin lets us alone, we may let sin alone
- so, we must be about the business of putting indwelling sin to death

3. Sin is always about the business of sinning

- **Romans 7:23 ESV** but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

- **again Galatians 5:17 ESV** 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.
- **James 1:14 ESV** But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.
- **Hebrews 12:1 ESV** Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
 - if you are a soldier in a battle and simply stand still, doing nothing against your enemy
 - if you let that enemy shoot 2-3x as often at you, while you return no fire against him
 - well, you'll lose the battle every time
 - sin is all about sinning
 - the one in Christ is all about putting that to death
 - all we would need do is study Galatians 5:19–21, great list of sins
 - these are the things indwelling sin wants to throw at us, bring forth in our lives
 - so we must be about the business of putting this sin to death

4. You have been given a new nature in order to fight against this sin

- **2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
- **Psalms 40:3 ESV** He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the Lord.
- **Psalms 51:10-13 ESV** 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
- here is what has passed away **Jeremiah 17:9 ESV** The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately sick;
who can understand it?
- **Ezekiel 36:26 ESV** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
 - if we will not fight hard to put sin to death by working of Holy Spirit, we go against God
 - we sit idly by flying in the face of truth of God's Word
 - we just might be revealing that we have not been made new at all
 - let fruit of justification be yours: you have peace with God, access to His throne room
 - come and plead for Christ's resurrection power to help you kill remaining sin in your life

5. It is our duty, an obligation of exceedingly great gratitude

- **2 Corinthians 7:1 ESV** Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.
- **Isaiah 1:16 ESV** Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,

- **1 Peter 2:2 ESV** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—
- **2 Peter 3:18 ESV** But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.
- **2 Peter 3:11 ESV** Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,
- in light of God's judgment of earth and hope of heaven, get busy
- we must be about the business of putting indwelling sin to death

Second question is pointed more at us from this text...

II. WHY DON'T WE DO THIS?

- this applies to individuals and to us corporately
- try doing this all alone and you will most likely fail
- but churches who are not about helping, encouraging, strengthening believers to do this fail

1. We take sin too lightly

- those who are in Christ have been made to see their need of rescue
- deliverance from sin: forgiveness, removal of guilt & God's wrath are so sweet
- but when we cease to dwell on these marvels of grace, we grow lax
- we may think the worst is behind us, now I can coast on in to heaven
- as we have seen already, we can never let up, but constantly fight this sin
- it may be, in some of you, that you just grow weary
- certain sins seem to just keep hounding you
- doesn't matter: pride, selfishness, covetousness, greed, jealousy, envy, lust,
- instead of daily asking Holy Spirit's aid in killing these sins in you
- you grow weary, you neglect that duty, thinking you are all on your own
- this is what the church is for
- we come alongside each other
- we let others closest to us, perhaps, know of our struggle with certain sins
- we ask them to pray, to encourage us, to stand with us
- we dare not forsake the gathering together because we know this is one of the means
- God has given us all we need for this fight
- **Romans 8:32 ESV** He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
- **2 Peter 1:3-4 ESV** 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
- so we stand, arm-in-arm, and fight together

2. We have allowed our hearts to grow cold, hard, and deceived

- we look at others and think, "Well, I'm at least as good as so-and-so over there"
- "Sure, I'm not the best Christian, but I'm getting by"
- and so you just seek to live a good, moral life
- as long as you don't commit sins that seem like "big ones" you think you'll be okay
- these are dangers of those who are still in sin and under the law
- but they tempt us who are in Christ as well
- so, we must keep at it, getting up and putting sin to death today, tomorrow

- taking advantage of the means of grace: Word, prayer, worship, sacraments

Question #3 is...

III. BY WHAT MEANS CAN I BE KILLING INDWELLING SIN?

- God has ordained means—tools or instruments, if you will—for this task
- we are meant to employ them, use them, let His grace flow because of them

1. Don't use man-derived means

- there are many who teach and preach mistaken ways and means
- taking of vows, giving up certain things for a short season, unusual fasting
- some hold these out, but they are mere legal duties, without power to help us
- even the means which God has appointed get misused
- they are given higher place than Christ & God's grace in Christ Jesus
- Bible reading becomes another law rather than means of grace
- you brag to others how often you read it, how many times thru in year you have done it
- perhaps you've heard that if you pray certain prayers
- or if you pray at certain times
- or if you pray enough prayers, this will work
- well, now prayer has become the end, not God's grace and glory
- too often we grab books, listen to preachers, follow schemes not prescribed in Bible
- don't be ignorant of the gospel: know that you cannot kill sin by yourself
- stop making empty promises to yourself alone: "I'll not do that again"
- instead, look to Holy Spirit and God's ordinary means given in His Word

2. This is truly a work of the Holy Spirit

- according to what we read in Ezekiel 36.26 earlier, this is why we have the Spirit
- He gives us this new heart; He will tend to it
- but we must constantly ask Him, not because He is unwilling
- not because He is forgetful
- but because it humbles us from our self-righteous efforts and we depend upon God
- mortification, to use the old word from the KJV, is a gift
- it was purchased for us by Christ; price paid = His precious blood
- it is given to us by God, so don't let it sit unwrapped and unused
- remember: He has given us everything in His Son
- rejoice and have Spirit work powerfully in you

And then fourth...

IV. HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT DO THIS?

- if joy of faith depends upon killing indwelling sin...
- if I must do this by the Holy Spirit...
- how does He do this work in me?

1. He causes our hearts to abound in grace

- we find ourselves knowing God, loving Christ more and more
- we discover new joys in discovering truths in Scripture
- the fruit of the Spirit matures in us
- none of this happens perfectly in us, but it does happen by the Holy Spirit's working
- we may seem to experience it in fits and starts, but it does happen

2. He burns away the old desires

- **Isaiah 4:4 ESV when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning.**
- by God's good grace in Christ, the Spirit works so you find less and less pleasure in sins
- He assists you to have an easier time of turning away from temptation
- and when we still need to confess our sins, He is the One God uses to burn it off us

3. He brings the gospel to the forefront

- when we take killing sin seriously, we know we need the gospel every day
- we keep looking to the cross, knowing this work of redemption is finished
- now, since God has begun this work in us, we are buoyed up, knowing He is perfecting it
- it truly is Holy Spirit causing us to want to pray
- **Zechariah 12:10 ESV "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy..."**
- as we pray, we know Spirit is helping us
- **Romans 8:26 ESV Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.**

Conclusion – But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live

- Spirit works in us and with us
- He is not against us, nor are we ever without Him
- His assisting work picks us up and emboldens us for holy living
- He will let us know we must never neglect this duty
- so, by the Holy Spirit's working, we must be about the business of killing indwelling sin.
- know that God's Spirit works through ordinary means
- these are centered around the Word of God, how God speaks today
- preaching, teaching, and reading the Word are necessary, ordinary means
- the Spirit works thru these to mature us & to fight sin
- there are the sacraments or ordinances of baptism & the Lord's Supper
- neglect these to the peril of your joy in Jesus
- and then there is prayer, the way we speak to God
- both corporate & private prayer are involved here
- the exhortation to each of you today is: use these ordinary means
- let the Holy Spirit strengthen you through them to put sin to death in your lives
- in doing so, we will know the fullness of life in Christ
- and God will be greatly glorified