

# Crucifying the Flesh

Colossians 3:5

Topical/Textual Sermon by Phil Kayser

Intro: Matt 16:24; Matt. 10:38; Heb. 12:4

## I. Finding the true enemy

A. Never mistake the following for enemies:

1. The material things of life (2:20-22)
2. The human body (2:23)

B. The true enemy is called:

1. "the flesh" (Col. 2:23) - our sinful nature
2. "the old man" (3:9) - our old identity with Adam
3. "whatever belongs to your earthly nature" (NIV of 3:5)

## II. Why putting to death our sinful desires is called "Crucifixion" elsewhere

- A. It is painful (Heb. 12:1-4; Matt 16:24; 10:38)
- B. It affects the whole person
- C. It is slow
- D. It is shameful (Heb. 12:2; James 5:16; 4:6-10)
- E. It is violent

## III. Why should you go through this uncomfortable process?

- A. Because you cannot please God if you are controlled by the flesh (3:6; Rom. 8:7-8; James 4:4)
- B. Because this is the way to life more abundant (Rom. 7-8; 8:13; Col. 2:20-3:4)
- C. Because it is a deadly enemy, a citizen of the world and wars with God (2:20; cf. Gal. 5:17; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 5:16; Jude 1:23; Rom. 7:23; John 8:34; Prob. 10:16; 1 Pet. 2:11; Gal. 5)
- D. Because it will seek to take you captive (Rom. 6:6,16,19; 8:15; 2 Pet. 2:19; John 8:34)
- E. Because it will seek to kill you (Rom. 6:13,21; 8:6,13)

## IV. How should we obey this command?

- A. By the Spirit (Rom. 8:13)
  1. He delights in God's laws (Rom. 8:2,4)
  2. He takes away the joy of sinning (Gal. 5:17)
  3. He changes our minds about sin (Rom. 8:5,6)
  4. He produces the opposite graces (Gal. 5:16-25)
- B. Through union with Christ (3:3-4)
  1. Union with Christ gives us security (2:20; 3:3-4)
  2. Union with Christ gives us authority (3:1; Eph. 2:6)
  3. Union with Christ gives us hope (3:4)
- C. According to God's plan (2:20,22; 3:10,16,17)

## V. Is there hope for me to ever win these battles?

- A. Yes. We have already been crucified positionally (2:20; 3:1; Rom. 6:6)
- B. Yes. We have already been crucified experientially (Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 2:20)
- C. Yes. The cries of the flesh are progressively getting weaker and weaker (Gal. 5:17 to 24; James 4:5)
- D. Yes. One day we will return to judge all evil (3:4)
- E. Therefore we not only must put these sinful desires to death, but can put them to death one by one (3:5)

## Quotations on the Mortification of Sin

“Use sin as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you; it is your murderer, and the murderer of the world; use it, therefore, as a murderer should be used. Kill it before it kills you; and though it bring you to the grave, as it did your Head, it shall not be able to keep you there.” (Richard Baxter)

“That sin must die, or you will perish by it. Depend upon it, that sin which you would save from slaughter will slaughter you.” (Spurgeon, vol. 28, p. 646)

“Mortification from a self-strength, carried on by ways of self-invention, unto the end of a self-righteousness, is the soul and substance of all false religion in the world.” (John Owen in *Mortification of Sin*)

“Has sin dominion over you? If so, then you are not a believer. I did not say, ‘Do you sin?’ for ‘if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us’ (1 John 1:8). But I did say, ‘Has sin *dominion* over you?’” (Spurgeon)

““As a man nailed to the cross; he first struggles, and strives, and cries out with great strength and might, but, as his blood and spirits waste, his strivings are faint and seldom, his cries low and hoarse, scarce to be heard; - when a man first sets on a lust or distemper, to deal with it, it struggles with great violence to break loose; it cries with earnestness and impatience to be satisfied and relieved; but when by mortification the blood and spirits of it are let out, it moves seldom and faintly, cries sparingly, and is scarce heard in the heart; it may have sometimes a dying pang, that makes an appearance of great vigour and strength, but it is quickly over, especially if it be kept from considerable success.” (John Owen in *The Mortification of Sin*)