

“Of Sanctification” part 7, WCF 13.3.2 — Progress and Perseverance

2021.02.21 Sabbath School Lesson

Hopewell ARPC, Culleoka, TN

WCF 13.3

*III. In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail;(k) **yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome;(l)** and so, the saints grow in grace,(m) perfecting holiness in the fear of God.(n)*

(k) Rom. 7:23.

(l) Rom. 6:14; I John 5:4; Eph. 4:15, 16.

(m) II Pet. 3:18; II Cor. 3:18.

(n) II Cor. 7:1.

Remaining Corruption, for a time, may much prevail

Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ¹⁶ If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. ¹⁷ But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹ For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. ²⁰ Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome

Romans 6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

¹John 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵ Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

Our father in heaven how we thank you that you have made us to be born again. In your son. And that it is his strength and his life that you have put in us and the it is your purpose that has caused us to happen in the first place and with your eternal purpose and his

infallible life and strength that we shall ultimately overcome that growth is real and we pray that you would bless us now as we come to your word to hear about these things and consider them that your spirit would convince us of them and cause.

Your word to bear fruit in our lives. So help us we ask in Jesus name. Amen. So the first part of what we have tonight yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ. For whatever reason that did not get one of those little footnotes with some proof texts and I would like to show that.

A little bit from the scripture before we get into the regenerate part death overcome, which I think is the thrust of the Romans 6 and 1st John 5 and Ephesians 4 portions that we'll be looking at. So, we'll look first at Romans 8.

Romans 8 and we'll take a running start from where we had left off under text K and this may again proof text K, which was a Romans 7 and we took versus 14 through 25, but we're gonna pick up in verse 23 and this again, maybe one of the reasons why they don't footnote again going into chapter 8, they just expect that we will try to read these things in context and the continual supply of strength from the, Sanctifying spirit of Christ actually comes in this context.

So Romans 7:23 when he says, I see another law. In my members worrying against the law of my mind and it bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. Now as we get into chapter 8, you'll see that this perhaps is not just that it seems like a law that sent us always right there with him certainly is saying at least that but that the law itself before we are regenerated before we are made new in Christ doesn't produce righteousness in us.

Because it's weakened by the flesh when the law says don't the flesh says do when have losses do the flesh says don't. And so the law becomes to us not something that is itself sinful he's been arguing against that chapter 7, but it becomes to us and occasion for sin.

And it is even part of the just penalty of the law that we would be left in our sin. It is only because of the love of God in which he is provided Christ and even prospectively for them and for us we, Look back on the on the cross the the sacrifice of Christ and his atoning for our sin that we are even that God is even able to justify us.

If you went earlier in the book to chapter 3, it would you would see the apostle rejoicing that after Jesus came and died and rose again it showed that God was being just this whole time even when he passed over the sins of old testament believers. So I see another law in my members warning against the law of my mind and bring me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members a wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of death.

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit now.

Those of us who have had any kind of church or Christian background or if you grew up in church like I did you memorize Roman say one but you don't often memorize it in the context of Romans 7:23 through 25 and Romans 8 2 through 8, but that's its context, so there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

The justified have a walking according to the spirit that is in this irreconcilable war with the flesh and then he goes on to talk about how the spirit is going to win for the law of the spirit of life in Christ. Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

The law no longer provokes me to sin the law in the spirit's hand helps me battle my remaining sin it has set me free from it and we're going to see that freedom a little bit more when we get to the Romans 6 portion and the regenerate part death overcome so the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death for what the law could not do and that it was weak through the flesh.

God did by sending his own son. In the likeness of sinful flesh on account of sin, he condemned sin in the flesh that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. Now. On this side of the Reformation and on this side of Luther.

We get uncomfortable with saying the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us with respect even to our walking but this is one of the gifts to a believer. That we are not just counted right with God only through up. Christ has done we're not counted right with God up through our walking at all.

But he has produced in us genuine righteous walking. And this is this walking according to the spirit this loving God and loving our brother and loving our neighbor that is defined in its actions by the commandments of God is part of what Jesus Christ has won for us and the fact that it is happening at all.

Shows that we have been freed from our former bondage and that that freedom will be completed with the final eradication of our sin so we're in the middle we're in the irreconcilable war but being in the reconciled reconcilable war means you're all already walking according to the spirit now think about all of the the things the all mighty infinitely powerful things that are at work for you if you are walking according to the spirit.

You're walking according to the spirit is through the resurrection of Jesus we're going to see that in a minute in Roman six you're walking according to to the spirit as by the power of the Holy Spirit who is God the Holy Spirit, he's the third person of the Trinity God himself you're walking according to the Holy Spirit is from God's eternal purpose which we have already already considered on multiple occasions, so yes, you're in the reconcilable war two times ago, yes from last time.

The remaining corruption for a time may much prevail but you have a continual supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ continuing in verse 5 for those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit the things of the spirit for to be carnally minded or fleshly minded as death, but to be spiritually minded as life and peace.

And so forth verse 9, you are not in the flesh your battling the flesh, but you're not in the flesh, what are you in but you are in the spirit if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he is not his.

So there's a very strong emphasis in the first half of Romans 8 and it actually continues right up to the spirit's intercession we won't take the time to go through all that passage but a very strong emphasis on this continual supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ, and if you can remember back and when we were still, Not in Ephesians, but back one more to Galatians in the in the evening sermons the license chapter 4.

The in the fullness of time God sent his son born of a woman born under the law and then because we are sons he sent forth the spirit of his son into our hearts crying of a father do not underestimate who. The gift of and the work of and the assurance of the Holy Spirit dwelling in your heart the Holy Spirit who is the one who made you knew the Holy Spirit who gave you the faith to see Jesus and to trust in him the Holy Spirit who has now continually working out the life and resurrection power of Jesus in you for your sanctification.

Okay, so there's this there's this strong emphasis in the first half of Romans 8 on the personal powerful work of the Holy Spirit and the life of the believer and I think that we're meant to know that Romans 7:23 comes in that context, but perhaps some presbytery or senator assembly could go through and add some footnotes and more context for the church in its current weekend state where we don't know our Bibles well enough to know.

That this this continual supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ is is in that context so input Romans 8 1 through. An I probably should have put it on the on the sheet. You know 1 through 27 in there right after the phrase spirit of Christ in confession, 13 3.

So by that strength the regenerate part death overcome and that takes us to Romans 6.

Where we'll spend the balance of the time this morning.

We've got 10 verses and hopefully at least 10 readers will do it popcorn style as before that seems to have worked well, so as soon as someone gets verse 5, go ahead and read verse 5 and then keep giving me another until we get through verse 14.

Might be done away with but we should no longer be slaves of sin who has died has been freed from seven.

Guides no more.

For the death that he died he died to send once brought but the life that he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider. Your life to God. Let's not send therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey his passion. You do not present your members as instruments, unrighteousness descend but present yourself to God as being alive from the dead.

Anger members.

For you are not under the law. Thank you. So, Perhaps you have heard back to you when you are trying to convince someone to love the Lord and the way the Lord says we should love him which is keeping of his commandments and to love your brother or your neighbor in the way that the Lord says we are to love them, which is the the keeping of God's commandments and you've been talking to them about God's commandments and applying them and, You may have been doing it poorly we often do that poorly but perhaps you have had thrown back in your face rather quickly or not under law, but under grace.

Well, yes praise God. We are not under law which demands that we die, but we are under grace which guarantees that we live. And the point of verses 5 through 14. He's just he's just finished answering the questions so we continue in sin that grace may have bound and he says certainly not and he says you did not believe in or be were baptized into you have not been united to a partial Jesus.

You have been united to Christ in all that he is and all that he has done for us all that he is for us and all that he has done for us. You are united to him and his death your United to him and his in his resurrection you are you will receive by faith the one who believes in Christ will receive not just some of the benefits of Christ, but all of the benefits of Christ.

You know, that's the point of that part of the point of. Players baptism last week as Jesus who commanded from heaven or all commanded while he was on earth but from heaven he pours out his spirit as commanded that the water be poured out on earth so that we will see in the sign that he has given as part of the seal of his covenant that when he saves someone through faith, he saves them completely.

He provides everything and he makes it fully work. He gives his whole self. In all that. Years. So he gives his blood for the for the taking away of guilt. He gives his blood for the the washing away of sin. He gives his spirit who does all of all of this work in us.

He gives himself completely to us. So, let me ask.

Someone under the age of 9. Tell me. Is it possible? That Jesus would die again.

Is it possible for Jesus to die again? No, who said that?

B. Always equal. I was sorry and see you through Miss Sue there. I wasn't say B is not under nine. It's impossible for Jesus to die again. And what he's saying here is that it is as impossible for someone who has believed into Jesus to go back to being a slave to sin as it is for Jesus to die again.

Jesus died once and if you believed in Jesus you were joined to him in that death and it's just once and the person who was a slave to sin died with Jesus. That person doesn't exist anymore once he believed in Jesus Christ. When you believe in Jesus Christ, the version of you that was a slave to sin is dead.

The only version of you that can ever exist again if you have believed in Christ. Is the one that is free from sin that is not under law that is under grace that is resurrected with Jesus. Now, he goes on to say don't offer your your members don't offer your hands don't offer your mind don't offer your desires don't offer anything of who you are unto as slaves for sin because if you act that way, you are functioning as a slave to sin.

You are either being what you are because your self-deceived and don't actually believe in Jesus. A lot of people say I believe. They even have their sticker with the date on it in their Bible to show that they believe but they're still safe to send so never believed or you are acting as what you are not and in either case the solution is to cling to Jesus.

If you ever worry that you're not a believer the solution is not to try and go back in time to figure out a point at which you became a believer. It's to believe in Jesus to cling to him and say no one who clings to you. Lord can be lost.

I cling to you for my forgiveness I cling to you for my cleansing. She says if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, we certainly we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection knowing this our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin the body that belonged to sin might be done away with that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

For he who has died has been freed from sin. If we died with Christ, so the old self that we were. Outside of him is dead now with him we believe that we shall also live with him verse 8 knowing that Christ having been raised from the dead dies no more.

So good job Ezekiel and all of you other under nine year olds who just were to bashful to to say it is impossible for Christ to die again death no longer has dominion over him and if death no longer has dominion over him sin no longer has dominion over you.

Okay. For the death that he died he died to sin once for all but the life that he lives he lives to God. Likewise you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin. The pull of the flesh is strong we studied that last week. It can for a time feel like it prevails like it is winning and it does for a time in in our actions and our thoughts prevail even the apostle we heard and we cried out with him last week who will save me from this body of death.

So the pole of the flesh is strong, but it is no longer our master. Death no longer has dominion over him. He died to sin once for all so you yourselves reckon yourselves to be dead indeed sin. So when you feel? The the strength of your remaining sin the strength of your your fleshliness and your tempted to gossip and you're tempted to resent mamas command in your heart even though you have

learned outwardly to say yes ma'am and run off and do it right away all the way and with at least enough of a cheerful looking face that you won't get you're looking.

Okay, you still got that cheerful heart to deal with and if you love Jesus and your heart's not cheerful that bothers you. And you say, Who will save me from this remaining fleshliness this body of death but you're fighting against it in your heart, right? I know the body heart language is difficult but you're fighting against that and it feels strong.

You can then tell your resenting your mama heart. Jesus can't die again. I don't belong to you anymore. I belong to him. The the me that had to resent Mama because I was in Adam. That that me that had to do that is dead. I don't have to resent my mama.

I could be cheerful to obey my mama the way Jesus was. Because he rose again so that his life would be in me therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in its lusts do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness is in present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness to God, so you're in this battle.

But the battle has already been one by Jesus and he is winning it in you by his spirit. And you can fight that battle as someone who's guaranteed to win it that's the best kind of battle to win. That's probably what happened in the election, right? You're regret beforehand so that whatever happens in the middle, you know, you're gonna win and and you you come out in the end and you say look we won haha.

But that has done by Christ in your battle with sin in righteousness, he has resurrected beforehand his plan and his power have determined the outcome so fight your battle like someone who knows you're going to win. That's what Romans chapter 6 is saying no, you don't sin so that grace can increase you obey so to everyone can see that grace is winning.

And that grace will win.

Think we'll go ahead and do just very quickly first John five the pastors at the assembly chose verse four in particular, whatever is born of God overcomes the world and this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith. I'll read verses one through five to get that in context whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, okay, so your faith didn't come from you there's only one place that believing in Jesus can come from what's the place what's the only place that believing in Jesus can come from.

God himself. Jesus. Jesus gives you believing in Jesus. Whoever believes that Jesus is a Christ is born of God and everyone who loves him who begot also loves him who has begotten of him so that's one of the ways that you that you know that you believe is you love Christians by this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments so for all those people who say but you should love your neighbor but you should love your neighbor but you should love your neighbor when they're like trying to justify social justice church you say well social justice isn't actually.

Bust unless you love God and keep his commandments It's possible to do outward works that look like loving your neighbor or loving your brother. But by this sorry loving your brother, but by this we know that we love the children of God by this we know that the fellowship that we're having and enjoy so much is actual Christian fellowship because we also keep the first great commandment.

We love God and keep His commandments. And that shows us that our Christian love our brother love is authentic. By this we know we're sure of that we love the children of. God when we love God and keep His commandments. For this as the love of God that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not burdensome.

So we don't think of the law as this immense weight anymore because Jesus is born the burden of the law the law now is a help to us to love our Lord to love our brother to love our neighbor. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. Now, some of us probably have memorized first.

John 5:3, right? This is the love of God that we keep his commandments in his commandments are not burdensome. Take that you antinomians love does not burden me, or the law does not burden me anymore. But how is the law not a burden to you? Verse 4 begins with a 4 not the little numeral the three letter word for whatever is born of God overcomes the world.

The law is not a burden to me because I know that the way I came to love God in the first place is that God gave me new birth in His Son and whatever is born of God cannot be defeated. Is it possible that God would give you new life in Jesus and then that one day that life would fizzle out or be extinguished?

That is absolutely impossible. So when we love God and when we're trying to keep His commandments, we're doing it out of something that must win. Whoever is born of God over or whatever is born of God overcomes the world and you come to the law of God and you come to the law of God as it engages your sin and you say I've been born of God.

I'm gonna overcome you sin and with the certainty that your sin will be overcome the law is no longer a burden. The laws that delight the way God prepared for us to sing about you guys love to sing about because one nineteen w is almost never not on the board.

It's a lot of negatives in one sentence. Okay. That delight in the law can only come or or is designed to come. Out of the confidence that that love for God, that is in you came from God. And it will not ultimately be defeated. So yes, you stumble and you fall and you sin and you have to come to God the billion times with new confession and repentance.

You have to come to your brother's thousands of times with new repentant new confession and repentance. Since that you committed against them. But, You will win in which war although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying spirit of Christ Romans 8.

1 through 27 the regenerate part death overcome. Romans 6, really 1 through 14 and 1st John 5 1 through 5 were a little bit over Celestray. Our Father in heaven. Okay, thank you for the encouragement of the certainty. That the war is one even when the battles are fierce.

And so help us we pray to battle out of that certainty of victory. Thank you that our birth is from you. Thank you that your spirit is the one who continually supplies strength. Thank you that it is the strength of the resurrected Christ in us that your spirit continuously supplies.

Help us oh God in the everyday nitty gritty of battling our remaining sin. To battle out of the certainty that these truths gives us for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.