

Sermon Reflections

Spirit-Led Sanctification: How Do We Fight Sin? (Romans 7:14 – 8:14)

Summary: Fight your indwelling sin by depending upon the indwelling Spirit. **Four Truths for Fighting Sin:**

1. Indwelling Sin Seeks to Kill Us (7:14–25)

- From the time we were born, we naturally keep sinning unless we have experienced the new birth. Romans tells us that, even as believers, we have a disposition to disobey and disregard God’s law, which is often referred to as our “sin nature.” How would you describe what the “sin nature” is — is it a separate and equal nature to our new nature, is it merely an aspect of our natural existence left over from the effects of sin, is it something else, or does it even exist? As well, what is its relationship to the “flesh”?
- Romans 7:14 and 7:22 describe the law as good and something that believers submit to. However, in the sermon from two weeks ago, Galatians 5:18 was mentioned; that verse states that believers are not under law if they are led by the Spirit. How do you explain the apparent contradiction? Keeping Hebrews 10:16 in mind, in what ways must believers submit to law and in what ways must they not? What does submitting to law look like? How do you know you are submitted?
- In 7:21–23, Paul presents the believer as a conflicted, torn person struggling with the tension and frustration of the battle between his inner man and his flesh. Why can this encourage our souls? How can you guard against the conflict misleading you into either spiritual slumber or giving up the fight?

2. The Son Frees Us from Sin’s Condemnation (8:1–4)

- Paul provides encouragement that can assuage all sense of guilt. In fact, his language here and in 8:32–35 is so positively enthusiastic that it opens the door to abusing God’s grace. Even at the risk of misunderstanding, why is it necessary for a person to first fully grasp the details of why we are no longer under condemnation and what freedom that brings, before moving on to an understanding of 8:5–11?

3. The Spirit Frees Us from Sin’s Control (8:5–11)

- God frees us not merely from sin’s penalty but also from its power. Why are we tempted to rest in His justification and not pursue the sanctification possible due to the freedom from sin’s control? When you see people who are not rejecting sin’s control, what can that indicate about their spiritual condition? What role does the Holy Spirit play in causing us to reject sin’s control? In what situations do you find yourself presuming upon His grace instead of fighting sin? How do you maintain a balance in relying upon both Christ’s righteousness and the Holy Spirit’s power? How does Satan tempt you to lose the balance in either direction?

4. The Indwelling Spirit Leads Us to Kill Sin (8:12–14)

- Why, when we think of Romans 8:13, do we often not feel the weight of its observation that if our life is characterized by sin we will die? How can we cultivate the motivation intended to result from this verse? What are you doing to constantly examine your specific choices in life to ensure you are not indulging deeds of the body? Are you in a pattern of sin, not motivated by verses such as Hebrews 12:14, and not sure if sin is controlling you? Ask a mature believer to apply the Bible to your need and come alongside you with prayer.

“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.” — John Owen, *Mortification of Sin*