

Killing Sin By Power Of Spirit

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[0 : 00] Open up your Bibles to the book of Romans chapter 8.

If you're using one of the Bibles that we provide for you in the chairs, then just open up to page 944. It's very easy to find that way. Otherwise, make your way to the New Testament and pass the Gospels in the book of Acts until you find the book of Romans.

And we are in chapter 8 this morning, where we've been now for about a month. We've been in Romans chapter 8, and we've made our way down all the way to verse 10, where we find ourselves this morning in verses 10 through 14.

And I want to ask you all to stand to your feet in honor of God's Word as we read it together. The Apostle Paul writes, So then, brothers, we are debtors.

Not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

[1 : 36] For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Let's pray. Father, we are thankful that we have this Word.

This Word both of promise and of challenge for us this morning. And as we meditate this morning over your Word, we pray earnestly that you will send your Spirit, who is spoken of in this passage, to speak powerfully to us.

So that the Apostle Paul's words are not words merely written in the past, that we can look back on and appreciate, but so that they come upon us now with power.

To change us, to transform us, and to give us hope for the future. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. You guys take a seat. One of the reasons that I'm so excited about being in Romans chapter 8 for the last few weeks, and now for the next few weeks as well, is that Romans chapter 8 really is a powerhouse.

It is packed full of the promises of God. In fact, you can see that in the very first verse of this chapter where Paul tells us that there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ.

[2 : 52] What a promise that is. Or if you travel further down through the book, how about verse 28 that many of you are familiar with, where we're told that we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

What a powerful promise that is, to know that no matter what happens to you in life, if you belong to Christ, all things God is working. He is sovereign, and He's working all of those things ultimately for your good.

Or consider the verses that we read earlier. Verse 31, If God is for us, who can be against us? 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?

What a great promise. Or down towards the end of the chapter, In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is a chapter packed full of powerful promises, from no condemnation in Christ, all the way down to nothing able to separate us from the love of God in Christ, and in between all sorts of other promises.

[4 : 15] So it should not surprise us this morning when we see, in the middle of the passage that we're reading today, a powerful promise concerning our future. I want you to look down at verse 11.

That's where I want us to start this morning. Jump in in the middle of verse 11, and then we'll back up to verse 10, and we'll cover the rest of this passage in a bit. But verse 11 says that, If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

He will give life to your mortal bodies. That is hope for the future. That is an ironclad promise for all those who belong to Christ, for all those in whom the Holy Spirit now dwells.

If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead, if that is true about you, if you are in Christ, then that same Spirit will someday give life to your mortal, that is, your dying, decaying, and someday to be dead body.

It will happen. There's nothing that we can do to avoid that. We know that we're going to die, and yet the promise is that we might live again, and not just in a spiritual sense, we have spiritual life now through Christ, but in a real, physical, bodily sense.

[5 : 32] The hope of all believers is not that we will someday exist forever in a bodiless state floating among the clouds. That's not our hope. That's not something that I'm even capable of hoping in.

I can't even imagine something like that. That doesn't even make sense to me. That's not, I don't want to turn into something else. I'm a human being. And yet here we have the promise that we will live as humans in bodies that have been raised and therefore are no longer capable of dying, or decay, or disease, or pain.

We will be raised and given those new bodies through the power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, we're going to see in a couple of weeks that Paul elaborates that on that theme when you get to verse 18.

He says, I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

We're told in verse 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption to obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. So all of creation is waiting for the fulfillment of this promise.

[6 : 41] All of creation is holding its breath, waiting for the day when the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal body and my mortal body. These are cosmic promises.

This is a big deal. And yet, it comes in the context of reality. We are first reminded in verse 10 that in order for that promise to come true, in fact, we must recognize that we are destined first to die.

And that we are destined to die, and this is even more important, because we live in a fallen world. We are still subject to the effects of the fall in the world around us.

Notice verse 10. If Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. So there's the promise in a nutshell. The Spirit is life.

What kind of life? Verse 11. Resurrection life. There's hope beyond this life. But in this life, the body is dead because of sin. That's a reminder that though we have a great hope for the future of a day when sin will be no more, when death will be no more, when we will be set free from this world, when we will no longer be beset by temptation and a pull back into dark things that we shouldn't be a part of, although that is our hope for future, nevertheless, in the present, we still live in a world in which we are doomed to die because of sin, although the body is dead because of sin.

[8 : 22] So we have not yet arrived, right? We all know that we haven't received our resurrection body. All I have to do is look in the mirror and find new gray hairs and realize I haven't received a resurrection body. All I have to do is count the new crow's feet every year or two.

And I know that I have not arrived at a place where I've received the resurrection body, but it's also true that we have not arrived at a place where we no longer suffer some of the effects of sin.

And that's not only physical death, it is the fact that we remain surrounded by a sinful world, pulled and tempted by our old sinful nature at times to join with that sinful fallen world in its sin.

That's a reality. And in the middle of that reality, we need to hear and cling to the promise. In the middle of a reality in which we know that there are going to be stumbles, in the middle of a reality in which we know we're not going to have a day in this world when we wake up and we don't feel temptation all day long.

We're not going to experience days like that. And in the middle of that, you need to hear the promise. You need to hear that although the body is dead because of sin, yet the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

[9 : 37] Some of your translations might say that the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. And Spirit probably in those translations is written with a lowercase s. But if you notice in the English Standard Version, which is what I regularly preach from, that the word Spirit is capitalized in verse 10.

The Spirit, capital S, is life, not merely alive, because of righteousness. And the difference in those translations, and honestly it could be translated either way, there's no secret here in the Greek that opens up a world for you of understanding.

The reality is we just have to look at the context. It could be translated either way. So what Paul might be saying is he might be saying that even though your body is dead, your Spirit is alive.

He could indeed be saying that. But given the broader context of this chapter in which we have seen Paul describe the work of the Holy Spirit in saving and sanctifying us, I think that it is far more likely that Paul has in mind the Holy Spirit.

And if it's the Holy Spirit here, it is far more likely that the word life should be rendered life rather than alive. So that what Paul's point here is not that your spirit is alive even though your body is going to die.

[10 : 52] Paul's point is that even though you live in a fallen world, even though you still suffer the effects of your old sinful nature, nevertheless, the Spirit is life.

He's still infusing life into you and he's going to bring resurrection life to you one day. And if you ask how or why, the answer is because of righteousness.

What righteousness is he talking about here? He's talking, I think, about the righteousness of Jesus that is credited to us by faith. I do not think that he's talking about the righteousness that we have performed, nor do I think he's talking about the righteousness that we will perform, although he's talked about that in this chapter.

I think Paul's point is to say here that though sin has brought death to you, the Holy Spirit brings life because of a righteousness that has entered into the world.

Because Christ lived a perfect life of righteousness on your behalf and died on the cross in your place because of the righteousness of Jesus through faith that can be counted as yours, the Spirit now comes with the same life-giving power by which he brought Christ back from the dead.

[12 : 08] He comes with that same life-giving power now to us who have received the righteousness of Jesus by faith and by faith alone. The Spirit is life because of righteousness credited to us through faith in Jesus.

That makes the promise seem even more powerful because now the life held out and promised to us is not held out on the basis of something that we perform. You can have life.

The Holy Spirit will give you life. If only you do X, Y, and Z. No. The Spirit is life because of the righteousness of another counted to you by faith.

And that's the gospel message. That is good news for us to hear. But it is good news that comes in the context of reality. Still the body is dead because of sin.

So that we need help in navigating this time where we live in between. We live in between the infusion of present spiritual life into us.

[13 : 13] Though we're in a fallen world, we live in between that moment and the moment when He finally gives life to our mortal bodies. We live in the in-between. We are people who are destined for glory and yet we live in a world that is fallen and full of shame.

How do you live in a world like that? How do you conduct yourself in a world like that? I think that that's primarily what verses 12 and 13 are aimed at showing us. How can we go about as those who have the hope of future life, who have life infused to us now through the power of the Holy Spirit in a spiritual fashion?

How can we conduct ourselves in a fallen, sinful world? What are we to do? Notice the first thing that He says in verse 12. So then, which means this is in light of the promise.

Since the Spirit's going to give life to your mortal body someday, so then, in light of that promise, so then, brothers, we are debtors. We owe a debt.

But notice, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. The first thing that we have to realize if we're going to conduct ourselves in a way that honors Christ in the midst of this world prior to the day when sin is removed from us, the first thing that we need to realize is that we have real, genuine freedom.

[14 : 31] That's what Romans chapter 6 is all about. The fact that through Christ we have been set free from sin's dominion in our life. Now Paul puts it in the terms of flesh, of the old sinful nature.

And Paul says, you don't owe the sinful nature anything. You don't owe Him your obedience. You don't have to bow down before the person that you used to be. You don't have to go back along those trails and those pathways.

That's not who you are anymore. And you don't owe that guy anything. You might look back on your life and you might, when you think about certain periods of your life, you might feel this overwhelming sense of shame that comes upon you.

And you might at times be tempted to think, that's who I really am. And I'm eventually going to fall back into those old patterns of behavior. To which Paul says, no, you don't owe that person anything.

That's not who you are anymore. You're not condemned. You're set free. The Spirit of Christ dwells in you now. You don't have to be that guy.

[15 : 34] You don't owe the flesh a thing. Forget about the flesh. Push the flesh aside. That's the first thing that we've got to realize. We've got to be aware of the reality that a real change has taken place in the hearts of those who belong to Christ.

And that change is that we have been set free from who we once were. The sinful nature, the flesh, no longer has the power over us that it once did. We don't owe the flesh anything at all.

But there's more. Not only do we not owe the flesh anything, but we are engaged in a real war. Because if you don't recognize that the Christian life is a battle, then you're destined to lose fight after fight after fight.

If you don't know that you're engaged in a war, then you're going to have trouble experiencing any victory in the midst of that war. Paul describes the battle for us.

Verse 13. If you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

[16 : 47] There's two sides here. If you continue in the old life, in fact, if you remain a slave to sin and the flesh, if you live according to the flesh, you're going to die.

What does he mean by that? Does he mean simply that you're going to die physically since he has mentioned mortal bodies in the previous verse? Is that his point? I don't think so because he's already conceded that we're all going to die physically.

The body's dead because of sin. That's true for everybody. So it would make no sense for him to say if you live according to the flesh, you're going to die physically. That doesn't make any sense. Everybody's going to die physically.

Whether you live according to the flesh or you live according to the Spirit, you're going to die physically. So that's not the point that he's making. He's saying that if you live according to the flesh, you will experience spiritual death.

You will experience condemnation. You will experience hell if you live according to the flesh. But on the other hand, if you engage in battle, if by the power of the Holy Spirit, you go about the business of killing sin, of putting to death the deeds of the body, then you will experience the life that has been promised to you here throughout this passage.

[17 : 56] So is Paul implying, or is he saying here, that those who once experienced the life of the Spirit might someday then experience death and destruction and condemnation?

Is that what the Apostle Paul is saying? Because on the surface, verse 13, removed from the context of Romans chapter 8, could very well be saying something like that. It's the old debate over whether or not you can lose your salvation, whether or not somebody who's genuinely trusted in Christ could someday fall away and no longer experience the power of the justifying righteousness of Jesus.

It's the old debate over eternal security. So is Paul implying, or is Paul saying here, that we can lose our salvation? I would answer no to that question, but not simply because my theology forces me to say no.

I would answer no because of the context of Romans chapter 8. And really all you have to do is move down to verses 29 and 30 to see this very clearly.

Verse 29 tells us that those whom God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom He predestined, He also called.

[19 : 16] And those whom He called, He also justified. And those whom He justified, He also glorified. This is called by theologians the golden chain of salvation.

So that each of these descriptors, each of these terms, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification, each of them are sort of pictured as a link in a chain, right?

Each of them is a link. So predestination is a link. And it's bound to, it's linked to calling. And calling is then bound to and linked to justification.

Justification is bound to and linked to glorification. Glorification, of course, is just another term for our ultimate resurrection and being completely set free from the power of sin in this world.

So, in verse 30, Paul says, those who have been predestined are called. They're called by the Spirit. And that's what we talked about last week where we looked at the power of the Holy Spirit to take someone who does not have the ability to obey God's law, who does not have the ability to please God, and therefore cannot put faith in Christ.

[20 : 26] We saw that the Spirit of God is powerful enough. All those whom God has chosen, He has the power to infuse life into them. We call it being born again. That's a work of the Holy Spirit.

That's what He means by calling. Those who are predestined are called. And all those who are called are justified, declared righteous in God's sight. But then the crucial link that we need to notice right now is that those who are justified are glorified.

In fact, Paul is so certain of the connection between justification and glorification, that He speaks of glorification as if it's already happened. Those who are justified, He also glorified.

It is as good as done in the mind of God. So that there is an inseparable connection between your justification and your ultimate salvation, that is, your glorification.

So if I'm asked the question in the form of, can a genuine follower of Christ, someone who has been justified through faith in Jesus, can they then later come under condemnation?

[21 : 27] I would say, no, because those things are inseparable. There's no condemnation for those who are in Christ, and we don't flip-flop back and forth between being condemned and not being condemned.

If you're not condemned, you're not condemned. If you're justified, you're as good as glorified. It's guaranteed it's going to happen. So then, what's the deal with the language here in verse 13?

What's the deal with this? If you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Why the if? Why the condition? Why does he use this kind of language? What is Paul trying to tell us? I think that we can get some insight into that if we move down to verse 14, where we're told that all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Notice that. All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. There's no one led by God's Spirit who's not a son. There's no one who is a son, and that includes women and children.

[22 : 43] There's no one who is a son that is, Paul goes on to describe us as heirs of eternal life. There's no one who is a son who doesn't have the power of the Spirit. Those two are linked inseparably as well.

If you belong to Christ, then the Spirit of Christ dwells in you. And if the Spirit of Christ dwells in you, then you belong to Christ. You are a son of God. Which means that that verse 13 is telling us that all those who genuinely belong to Christ, all those who are truly in Him and have the Spirit dwelling in them, they will put to death the deeds of the body.

But those who are not will find themselves living according to the flesh. It's a powerful test to see whether or not you do belong to Christ.

Is there evidence in your life of the work of the Holy Spirit that then testifies and gives evidence to the reality of your faith in Jesus? I think that's part of what Paul is saying here.

That when we see the Holy Spirit at work in us and through us, we are seeing evidence that our faith in Christ is real and that we really do belong to Jesus.

- [23 : 58] So that I would say that the work of the Holy Spirit in us, or we could put it this way, the work of putting to death the deeds of the body, the work of killing sin in our life and doing battle with temptation, does not make us sons of God, but it proves that we are sons of God.

It doesn't turn us into children of God, it shows to whom we belong and who is our Father. That's the point of this verse. You belong to Christ, the Spirit of Christ dwells in you, and the kind of things that you ought to be engaged in that we should see in your life for the kinds of things described here in verse 13.

That is, if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. Now this is the battle. This is the fight. This is the war because though we have the Spirit dwelling within us, we are still in a fallen world.

We are set free from sin and from the flesh and yet sin and the flesh would still seek to impose its rule over us wherever it might be able to so that we have to be engaged in this battle.

Every Christian is called to be a soldier. Every Christian is called to engage in war and that's what Paul describes here.

- [25 : 18] He says you have to put to death the deeds of the body. You have to kill them. There can be no room for quarter. There's no taking prisoners here.

You see sin, you kill it. You see temptation coming towards you, you destroy it. You kill it. This is all out war. There's no mercy involved here.

You just kill every sin and every temptation that arises in your life. There's a great Puritan writer some of you might have heard of. His name is John Owen.

John Owen actually wrote an 80 some odd page book on Romans 8.13. You guys think that I tend to go on for a while about three or four verses. He's got 80 something pages just on this one verse.

And it's really one of the most incredible insightful books that I've ever read on how to deal with sin and temptation in your life. It's simply called The Mortification of Sin.

- [26 : 17] This is a nice little small paperback version of it that I found in a bookstore. You used to not be able to get it like this. You had to go buy a big huge hardback cover volume 6 or 7 of his works. I don't remember.

And that was the only way you could get it. But now you can get it online for free. You can buy a little paperback version and it's great. It's called The Mortification of Sin. Which of course in the 1600s when John Owen was writing, mortification didn't mean to be embarrassed.

To be mortified wasn't to be embarrassed. To be mortified was to be killed. So he wrote this little book on the killing of sin. How do you go about killing sin? I'm going to read you a passage.

I want to read you something he said here. I think it's powerful. He says, Do you mortify? Do you make it your daily work?

Be always at it whilst you live. Cease not a day from this work. Be killing sin or it will be killing you.

- [27 : 14] It's a good summary of verse 13. Be killing sin. Be about the work of doing battle with sin. Lest you be shown not to belong to Christ and sin in turn kill you.

So the question is how do we do this? How can we actively engage in the killing of sin in our lives? This is a lot of what we talked about at our men's retreat this weekend.

Looking at the Sermon on the Mount, looking at Jesus' instructions there about anger, about lust, about integrity and our words, about how to react to those who persecute us and come against us.

We spent a good deal of our time, virtually all of our Bible study time together, talking about this and really getting practical into looking at various types of sins that we are called to put to death, that we are called to kill.

But the question for us this morning is how do we go about that? I mean it's all fine and well for me to sort of issue a rallying cry and say, you need to kill sin, that's great, you need to be encouraged in that, but you also need to know how to do it.

[28 : 25] How do you kill sin? Paul tells us very clearly that it happens by the Spirit. See what he says?

If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. So I think first of all, the first thing that you need to recognize as you are engaged in this war is that the power for the fight does not come from within yourself.

The first thing that we need to know and that we need to be aware of is that we don't have it in ourselves, we don't have the strength in and of ourselves to defeat temptation. You don't have the power to overcome the pull of sin in your heart and in your life.

You just simply do not have it. You can do everything that you want to do. Take, for instance, one of the things that we talked about at the men's retreat that Jesus discusses in Matthew 5.

Take the issue of lust where Jesus tells us in Matthew 5 that anyone who's lusted after a woman in his heart has committed adultery with her in his heart. How do you fight against lust?

[29 : 31] How do you do that? Well, there are lots of practical things you can do that I encourage men to do all the time. You can put all kinds of blocks on your internet and you can decide that you're not going to watch a lot of movies that come out.

You can just decide you're going to sort of cordon yourself off and that's important. You need to control the things that you see. That's really important. That's really crucial. But the truth of the matter is that if you're doing it all in your own strength, it doesn't matter how many blocks you put on your internet.

It doesn't matter how many protections you put in place. Sin will pull you to a spot to where you make your way around those things and you find yourself drawn into that again because you don't have the strength on your own to avoid it.

You just don't. Which is why Paul says it's only by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can actually go about the business of killing sin.

In fact, if you try to do battle with sin in your own strength and in your own power, that comes with devastating consequences. we can see all over the world.

[30 : 43] We see all kinds of religions in which men and women are engaged in a battle against sin in their own strength and in their own power. In fact, I would argue that almost every other religion other than genuine, gospel-based Christianity, every other religion is in some way an attempt to fight against the things that we by nature know are wrong in our own strength and in our own power.

And that's deadly. That's dangerous. Let me read you one more quote from John Owen on that particular issue in and of itself because I found this to be particularly powerful as I read it this week.

He says, Mortification, so killing sin, Mortification from a self-strength carried on by ways of self-invention to the end of a self-righteousness is the soul and substance of all false religion in the world.

Do it by your own strength. Aim at your own righteousness that you've achieved. That is the soul and substance of false religion and false gospels. And Paul would not have us do that.

He would say, don't do it in your own strength because you don't have any strength. Do it by the power that the Spirit supplies. So let me, before we close, real quickly, suggest to you some ways in which the Holy Spirit works.

[32 : 07] How practically does the Holy Spirit work and how can we practically become partakers of the power of the Spirit in putting to death the deeds of the body? The first one might be the most obvious.

And that is that if you're going to engage in battle, if you're going to go to war, then you need to have some weaponry. You need to be armed. And if you ask yourself, with what weapons does the Spirit of God fight? The answer is clearly the Word of God.

It's called the sword of the Spirit in Ephesians chapter 6. The Spirit of God works through the Word and the Spirit wields the Word as a weapon in your life so that you might be able to actually do battle when temptation arises.

So that we need to have a firm grasp upon the Word. We need to know the Word. We need to meditate on the Word. We need to memorize the Word. We need to read the Word. We need to be a people of the Word.

Not so that we can be filled with knowledge. No. But because the Holy Spirit works through this book. He does powerful things with it. He can bring to your remembrance passages of Scripture that you haven't thought about in years when He needs and He wants to bring them to your attention so that you might fight the battle well.

[33 : 20] He uses the weapon of the Word to deal a death blow to sin. And you need to have that weapon in your arsenal if by the power of the Spirit you're going to do battle with sin.

So the first thing I would say and one of the most practical things I would say to you is you've got to know your Bible. You've got to spend time in your Bible. You've got to love the Word not for the sake of knowledge but for the sake of the power of the Spirit mediated through the Word as He directs you to Christ and places your hope in Christ.

And secondly, but closely related to that because it's drawn from the Word as well. It said if you're if you're a soldier on the battlefield imagine yourself in the trenches maybe get a picture of World War I or World War II where they have the trenches and if you're down in the trenches and the enemy fire is passing overhead and you know that in that moment the enemy has the advantage you're stuck in a hole what are you going to do?

The enemy has the advantage if you pop your head up you're going to die. There's very little that you yourself can do at the moment. You need to know that there's a greater power at work.

You need to know that reinforcements have been called in. You need to know that there's a promise of sure victory on the other side. You see when you're down in the trenches you might be tempted to think I'm going to lose.

[34 : 41] I'm doomed. But if you know with certainty that the army in which you fight is far more powerful than the enemy. if you know for certain that the general in charge of your army is 10,000 times more strategic and more intelligent than the opposing forces leaders then you know with a certainty even as you're in the trenches that victory is guaranteed.

And you need that sense of guaranteed victory when you're feeling the weight of temptation press upon you. Which is another way of saying you need to cherish and you need to treasure the promises of God.

You do. You need to know all of the promises of God. You need to say to yourself when temptation comes you need to say I'm no longer a slave to sin. You need to know Romans 6 really well so you're never tempted to think that sin is more powerful.

You're never tempted to think that you have to give in to sin. You need to know Romans chapter 6 really well. You need to know these promises. You need to know that even if something terrible were to befall you God is working in that for your good and for his glory.

You need to know those kinds of promises because when bad things come sin will use those things to pull you in. When everything seems to be crumbling around you when it seems in the short run that you're going to lose you've got to see and know the bigger picture and know that victory is assured.

[36 : 10] So you do need to know the word of God in a general way but you also need to know the promises of the word. You need assurance of victory at the end of the battle so that you can fight more bravely in the moment.

And then thirdly I think this is significant. I think this is really important and often overlooked is that you need to know that you're not fighting in this battle alone. You need to know that there's another guy down in the trenches too.

And then there's some guys over here in the trenches. And there's another trench dug behind you and one in front of you and there are guys in those trenches as well. You need to know that there are other people engaged in the battle which is to say that you need to be a part of the church.

You need to be plugged in to the church and not just sort of in a nominal way where you come and you show up and you do things but you need to really be a part of a local church so that you have other believers that you meet with under the word week in and week out and you can encourage one another and strengthen one another and you can hold one another accountable.

And then inside of the umbrella of the church there are always smaller groups of people that you are closer to that you can draw near to that can pray for you when you really need prayer when temptation is really coming against you.

[37 : 24] You need to have people that you can confide in and say I feel it it's coming I just I don't know what to do I'm fighting but I need someone to help prop me up and carry me on.

You need to have people around you who are engaged in the battle and who can help you and hold you accountable and encourage you and strengthen you and remind you of the promises when you forget the promises. You need you need fellow believers you need friendships within the church people who know what's happening in your life people who can look at you and sense and know if something is off if something is wrong and they can come and say how do I pray for you what can I do for you you need those kinds of relationships because no soldier fights a battle on his own.

Even if he has all the weaponry and he has all and he knows the strategy even if he has all of that no soldier fights the battle alone. We need the help of other Christians to come alongside of us and strengthen us and encourage us.

We need the word in a general way we need the promises of God in a much more specific way so that we know that victory is assured but we also need people to come alongside us bring us back to the word remind us of the promises pray for us plead with the with the spirit of God that the spirit of God might kill this sin in us.

We desperately desperately need that and and if you begin to fill your life with those kinds of things if you begin to do battle with sin no longer in the basis of your own strength but in the power of the spirit you will begin to grow in your assurance of your salvation you will begin to sense and know that you do belong to Christ and the spirit does dwell in you.

[39 : 10] The mark of a genuine follower of Christ is not that he never sins no the mark of a genuine follower of Christ is that he wages war with sin.

Read a quote from Charles Spurgeon this week he said the holier a man becomes the more he mourns over the unholiness that remains in him.

I want to modify that for us this morning. I would say that the holier a man or a woman becomes the more he or she fights with the unholiness that remains within.

Let's pray.