

How To Mortify the Body

(Rom 8:13)

- Having covered the false views of sanctification, we need to now address the biblical method given us by God

I. “Mortify the deeds of the body”

A) “Body”

1. The body here is not the same as the “flesh” used elsewhere in the passage
 - i. “Flesh” here is the fallen human nature
2. “Body” – Our mortal body as it continues after salvation
 - i. Rom 8:10-11- “mortal bodies” are those that will also be quickened
 - a) There is nothing sinful about the “body” as it was created by God and declared good
 - b) The Lord Jesus Christ had and still does have a “body”
 - c) The body is dead now because of the affects of sin working in it
 - ii. Our Bodies have natural desires and affections given us by God
 - a) But sin is always pressing these into “inordinate affections”
 - 1) Col 3:5- Mortify the body to avoid inordinate affections
 - b) Sin also does the opposite by tempting us to avoid discipline, deny sacrifice, duty and self control

B) “Mortify”

1. To put to death, to treat as dead, to “deaden”
 - i. Think of the way in which a dentist “deadens” our mouth so that the body’s reaction to pain is not felt and no reaction is generated

II. How is this done?

A) Negative

1. Not through monasticism (removing self from the world around us)
2. Not through flagellation and self punishment
 - i. Both Luther and Whitfield did themselves permanent physical harm through these methods prior to their salvation
 - a) Both of these methods are primarily Roman Catholic
3. Not through legalism (false Puritanism)
 - i. Being taught Puritan practices without being taught Puritan doctrines
 - a) This is a religion of fear and is imposed on the will, without addressing the understanding
 - b) This produces a joyless, rigid, tyrannical type religion

- 1) This is mostly a Protestant problem, such as many Mennonites, Cotton Mather, many Charismatic cults, etc.
 - (a) Good example is the movie Footloose
 - (b) Martyn Lloyd-Jones speaks about this being his type of upbringing

B) Positive

1. “Through the Spirit”
 - i. Rom 8:9- The Holy Spirit must 1st be present; if the Spirit is present then the ability to mortify is as well
 - a) Therefore we must never complain “I can’t do it” because we have received of His fullness (John 1:16)
 - 1) John 15:1-7- The believer is a branch attached to the Vine
 - 2) 1 John 4:4- “Greater is He that is in you...”
 - (a) Therefore we should not make excuses as “I can’t” or “but the devil, the flesh and the world are too powerful”
 - (b) The truth is not that we can’t, it is more that we don’t want to
 - 3) 1 John 5:18-19- Those born of God do not keep on in their sins unaffected, “because the wicked one can’t touch him”
 - (a) V.19- But the world lies in the wicked one and can do no other, they are under his full control, because they do not have God acting on their behalf through regeneration and the Spirit
2. “Through” the Spirit is a call to action, to exercise the power given us, but again, how?
 - i. General
 - a) We must 1st remember who and what we are
 - 1) 2 Pet 1:2-4- By using that which is true of us (not by “handing it over”)
 - (a) 2 Pet 1:9- Notice the man who is not acting has “forgot” what he is and Who He has to aid him, he doesn’t stop to consider
 - b) We must realize our sins grieve the Holy Spirit
 - 1) This must be in the 1st place, and not my feelings or how my sins make me feel
 - c) We must keep our eye on things eternal
 - 1) Stop looking at ourselves and the world around us first, and set our affection on things above
 - (a) Heb 3:1- “Consider Jesus”
 - 2) 1 John 3:1-3- Keep always the end in view, the “hope” and promises
 - (a) We are to live as “pilgrims and strangers” on earth
 - d) We must aim to make our election certain within us

- 1) 2 Pet 1:10- “Do these things” (v.2-9) and you shall not fall
 - 2) Gal 5:16- Walk in the Spirit and you want fulfill lusts of flesh
- ii. Specific
- a) Negative
 - 1) 1 Pet 2:11- “Abstain from sin”
 - (a) We must stop doing whatever it is that is defeating us
 - (b) Eph 4:25- “Steal no more” is a command and not a call to make a plan to address our stealing, same with lying, etc.
 - 2) Eph 5:11-12- Have no fellowship with works of darkness
 - (a) Avoid it and those that do it
 - (b) 1 Pet 3:10-11- Eschew evil and pursue peace
 - (1) 1 Cor 9:27- “I keep under my body....”
 - (2) Plan against evil the way an athlete makes a life choice to obtain his goal
 - 3) Luke 21:34- Avoid surfeiting (over indulgence in anything)
 - (a) 1 Cor 6:12- Moderation in all things
 - (1) Disorder in any area e all areas of life
 - (2) We are called to live an orderly disciplined life
 - 4) Rom 13:14- “Make no provision for the flesh”
 - (a) Psa 1- “Blessed is the man” that avoids the process of sin and everything to do with it as well as those involved
 - (1) Beware of justifying sin by saying “but I’m there to share the truth with them”
 - (2) If I cannot do it without falling, I’m not mature enough to try, avoid it and them
 - 5) Job 31:1- “I made a covenant with my eyes”
 - (a) Be careful what we take in, look at, read, watch, etc.
 - 6) James 1:13-15- Deal with the very 1st motions of sin
 - (a) Nip it in the bud
 - (1) This is not simply repressing it, that’s dangerous
 - (2) We must say “I am a child of God and am to have no of this, period!”
 - (b) Bring things into the light an examine them
 - (1) Expose the thing for what it is, then realize what we are
 - (2) Example of a Margarita
 - 7) 2 Cor 7:10-11- When we fall, do not be quick to move on, to “forget it” (Jer 6:14- “heal hurt of my people slightly”)
 - (a) Examine the process, ask how did this happen, and how did it start, and where did I 1st go wrong
 - (1) Understanding our failures leads to not repeating them

- (2) By bringing our sin into the light, we learn to hate it
- (3) We then go to God in prayer and remorse becomes true repentance
- (4) 1 John 1:8-9- Remember Christ is faithful and **just** in forgiving us
- (b) Avoid the extremes of despair and being flippant
- b) Positive
 - 1) 1 Cor 16:13- Watch, stand fast, quit you like men
 - 2) Gal 5:16- Walk in the Spirit and you won't fulfill the flesh's lusts
 - (a) These 2 are indirectly proportionate, if one goes up, the other must go down, so we must plan accordingly
 - 3) 2 Pet 1:5-7- "Giving all diligence" (not surrendering) (2 Tim 2:15)
 - (a) "Add to your faith" (which comes by hearing the word)
 - (b) "Virtue" (strength)....."- each promotes the other
 - 4) 2 Pet 1:3- God has given us all things needed, **so be positive!**
 - (a) 1 Pet 2:9-10- Quit focusing on that 1 sin and look at what we are in Christ
 - (b) 1 Pet 2:11-12- Our main business is to shew forth the work of Christ, especially in us
 - (1) This is perhaps the worst thing about our sins: we fail Christ and misrepresent Him before the world
 - (2) People will say what value is there in Christianity, they are no different than us
 - (3) My sin may very well be a roadblock to someones salvation at any time