

## Biblical Sanctification - Part 5

(A Series from Terry Landrum)

Today, we are going to begin discussing the process of *how* God wants us to change. We've defined what biblical change is - the process of being separated from the world and being conformed to the image of Christ. We've looked at the reason for change - God's redeeming work to set apart a people for His own glory. We've learned who is responsible for this change - God, who regenerates us and empowers us through the Holy Spirit and us, who have a responsibility to trust and obey. It is a cooperative effort. We've been reminded of what should motivate us towards our responsibility to change - It pleases Him, we've been freed from slavery to sin through our union with Christ, we have a high calling in Christ, we are a chosen people, we are adopted sons with a heavenly inheritance, we have the promise of future rewards.

The Bible teaches that the believer has three main spiritual responsibilities in the sanctification process. God, the Holy Spirit, is the primary initiator in all of these activities, but a believer must cooperate with what the Holy Spirit is doing in his life. The apostles Paul and James give these three responsibilities to us. Paul's instruction is given to us in

*Eph 4:22-24*

*22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,  
23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,  
24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

James's instruction is in

*James 1:21-22*

*21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.  
22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

The three activities that these passages call us to do are to 1.) Put off the old; 2.) Renew our mind; 3.) Put on the new. When the Holy Spirit enables a believer in these activities, then He, the Holy Spirit, will produce a certain kind of fruit in our lives. Our flesh will be restrained, our mind will be renewed, and Christ will be revealed through our example and ministry to others.

But the process is not easy. In Matthew 22, a Pharisee, who happened to be a lawyer, asked Jesus,

*Matt 22:36-37*

*36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"  
37 And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'*

Knowing Jesus' command is one thing, but doing it is another, primarily, because, if we look at our hearts and minds we see a pretty ugly sight. We see our flesh manifesting itself through, as one author calls it, our "designer lusts," which seem so natural to us. The process of biblical

change involves a daily spiritual battle with our flesh. We must examine ourselves and learn to recognize our own, unique ways in which we manifest our sinful habits. Daily, we must nail to the cross our selfish desires and our "old" ways of doing things. The battle is tiresome, and we can become easily discouraged. But God's Word does not leave us without hope and instruction on how to change. If and when we get discouraged, we have a wonderful promise from God in Isaiah:

*Isa 40:28-31*

*28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.*

*29 He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power.*

*30 Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly,*

*31 Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.*

Now, we have learned that the word "flesh" refers to the indwelling sin principle that remains in us after we are saved, although its absolute power over us is broken. Regarding this "flesh," Paul tell us

*Rom 8:13*

*13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

In this verse, Paul seems to equate "flesh" with "deeds of the body," implying that "flesh" could mean both the source of evil - indwelling sin - and the manifestation of evil - deeds of the body. Furthermore, in this verse, Paul tells us what we are to do with the "flesh" or the "deeds of the body." We are to "put it to death." The KJV uses the word "mortify," to describe this putting to death. Today we use the word "mortify" usually to indicate a strong sense of embarrassment. I might say, "When Resa told that story about me, I was mortified. I could have died!" However, Paul uses the word translated "mortify" to indicate a process of "deadening" the power of the flesh. Literally, he means that we are to "drain the life out of" the flesh through the Holy Spirit's assistance. So, the NAS translation of "putting to death," which implies a continual action, accurately captures what Paul means. (Berg, Changed Into His Image, p 90)

John Owen states,

God has designed this mortification of the indwelling sin that remains in our mortal bodies in order to eliminate the life and power of the flesh. . . . What then is mortification? What does it mean to mortify sin? Every lust is a depraved habit or disposition that continually inclines the heart toward evil. Unmortified, it is what is described in Genesis 6:5 "Every imagination of the thoughts of [man's] heart was only evil continually." The only reason why an unregenerate man is not under the perpetual pursuit of some lust is because he is distracted by so many more of them. But the general bent is well recognized, for it is the disposition toward self-pleasing. Men are said to have their hearts set upon evil to make "provisions for the flesh" (Rom 13:14). Now the primary task of mortification is to weaken this habit of sin so that its power to express itself - in violence, frequency, tumult, provocation, and unrest - is quelled.

Mortification robs sin of its debilitating, inharmonious, and emotionally distracting influences. Without mortification, sin darkens the mind, while the lusts of the flesh grow like weeds. Mortification is the soul's vigorous opposition to the fruitless self-life. (Owen, Sin, pp 154-59)

When Paul says to "mortify" the "deeds of the body," he means to kill their action by dealing with the indwelling sin that motivates them. When we do this, we have mortified the "flesh" or killed its influence, not its existence, on us at that moment.

Mortify is not the only biblical term that shows our proper response to the flesh. There are several parallel designations for indwelling sin and several parallel terms that describe various aspects of the biblical response to it.

1. The flesh - and its resulting deeds - must be **mortified** (Rom 8:13; Col 3:5)
2. Self and its "ungodly lusts" must be **denied** (Luke 9:23; Titus 2:12)
3. The deeds of the old man must be **put off** (Eph 4:22; Col 3:9)
4. The indwelling sin nature must **not be served** (Rom 6:6, 12-13, 16-19)

So, the question before us is "How do I mortify the flesh?" First, we need to remind ourselves that all change starts in our mind. Therefore, we need to know certain things. The Scriptures teach us what we need to know about sin and how to respond to it. Specifically, in Romans 6, Paul gives instructions for attaining victory over sin. The repetition of the word "know" in Romans 6 indicates that Paul wants us to understand a basic doctrine. Doctrine simply means teaching. Romans 6 teaches us that because of Christ's death and resurrection, we have been "made free from sin" (6:22). We no longer have to obey its pull and go our *own* way. Just as we are identified with Adam in sin and condemnation, so we are now identified with Christ in righteousness and justification. Jesus not only died *for* our sins, but He also died *unto* sin, and we died with Him. Whatever happened to Christ has happened to me. Therefore, when He died, I died. We He arose, I arose in Him. I am now seated with Him in the heavenlies (Eph 2:1-10; Col 3:1-3).

Because of this living union with Christ, we have a new relationship to sin. We are the recipients of every benefit of His death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus considers that what happened to Him has happened to us, and He wants us to consider it the same way. Verse 6 says, Knowing this, then [remember, Paul wants us to know something], that our old self was crucified with Him that our body of sin might be done away with, then we should no longer be slaves to sin. The phrase "done away with" does not mean annihilated; it means "rendered ineffective, made of no effect." The same Greek word is translated "released", or "loosed" in Romans 7:2. If a woman's husband dies, she is "released" from the law of her husband and is free to marry again. There is a change in relationship. The law is still there, but it has no authority over the woman because her husband is dead. In the same way, sin and death have no dominion over Christ. Jesus not only paid the penalty for sin by dying for sin, but he also broke the power of sin by dying unto sin. Therefore, since we are "in Christ", sin and death have no dominion over us. Before our identification with Christ in this way, we, in these earthly bodies, were required to serve the flesh. If our sinful bent was better served by lusting, we lusted. If it was better served by lying, we lied. As believers, we no longer have to respond to the pull of the flesh within; we now have a choice. Paul says this is something we need to know. The big question now is, "I can believe these facts of history, but how do I make this work in daily experience?" (Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, pp 530-534)

Well, not only do we have to know these things, which involve the use of our mind, but we have to consider, or reckon, some things.

*Rom 6:11*

*11 Even so [because of the truth of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and our death, burial, and resurrection, as well, because of our union with Christ], consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Paul is saying, "God knows you have been freed from the requirements to obey indwelling sin. Now take it personally and quit living as if you had to obey it and start living unto God, your new master."

In some parts of the country, "to reckon" means "to think" or "to guess." "I reckon" is also the equivalent of "I suppose." But none of these popular meanings applies to this verse. The word "reckon" is a translation of a Greek word that is used forty-one times in the NT - nineteen times in Romans. It appears in Romans 4 where it is translated as "count, reckon, impute." It means "to take into account, to calculate, to estimate." The NAS translates the word as "consider." We "reckon" things everyday. When we drive along the highway, we see a speed limit sign that says "65 miles per hour." We are expected to "reckon" or consider that sign to be binding for us. We are to apply it to our lives. We are to believe that it is an accurate statement of the government's expectations on that highway and that it applies to us. That is an act of faith. If we don't believe the reality of the law's existence and our accountability to it, we may be duly reminded of that with a speeding ticket. We will be held accountable. We are to "reckon" or consider that the speed limit to be true for us. (Berg, *Changed Into His Image*, pp 89-110; Wiersbe, pp 530-534)

Paul is not telling us to feel as if we were dead to sin, or even to understand if fully, but to *act on* God's Word and claim it for ourselves. "Reckoning", or "considering", is a matter of faith that results in action. It is like endorsing a check. If we really believe that the money is in the checking account, we will sign our name and collect the money. Reckoning is not claiming a promise, but acting on a fact. God is not commanding us to become dead to sin. He is telling us that we *are* dead to sin and alive unto Him, and therefore, we are to act on it. Even if we do not act on it, the facts are still true. (Wiersbe, pp 530-534)

We may protest, however, and say, "I don't feel free. When sinful impulses arise in my heart, I feel as though I have to obey!" **We are going to have to take it by faith that these facts are true no matter how we may feel.** We may feel as though we have to give in, but we need to know better because God says otherwise. He says that because we are to consider ourselves dead to sin, we do not have to obey its urges and pulls, regardless of how we feel. Many of us fail right here. We make decisions about what we will or will not do based upon how we feel at the moment, not by the facts of what God has said is reality. **We don't consider things to be true because God says they are true. We consider a thing to be true only if it feels to us as though they might be true.** The result of this kind of living is instability. We will be up and down, moody, and unpredictable. We will be the kind of man James describes as a "double-minded" man. We will be minding our flesh and our feelings at one moment and then minding God and His truth the next. James says we will be "like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind" (1:6) and he warns us, "let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways (1:7-8). **We cannot let our ways be determined by the skewed view of reality that our flesh and its feelings will give us.**

Before any of us were saved, that is the only way we could live. We no longer have to give in to feelings that are generated by our selfish thinking. (Berg, pp 89-110)

So, not only must we know some facts about our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and consider those facts to be true for us, whether our feelings agree or not, but, finally, God's Word tells us that we must present, or yield ourselves to Him as a result of what we know and consider. Let's look at what it means to present, or yield, ourselves unto God.

To "yield" means, "to place at one's disposal, to present, to offer as a sacrifice." According to Rom 12:1, the believer's body should be presented to the Lord as "a living sacrifice" for His glory. We are all experts at "yielding." We have done it for years. We are skilled at presenting the members of our body to sin as instruments [weapons] of unrighteousness [unto sin] (6:13). We know what it is like to be "slaves of sin" (6:17). We are now ashamed of this yielding to sin, with its outcome - death (6:21). After Paul reminds us that we have had so much practice yielding ourselves to sin, he says, even so, now present your members as slaves to righteousness (6:19), deriving your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and its outcome, eternal life (6:22). There must be in the believer's life that final and complete surrender of the body to Jesus Christ. We must permit God to take and use our bodies for the fulfilling of His purposes.

The Christian life is not an easy life to live because of the warring sinfulness that dwells within us. Though it isn't easy, it isn't complicated. Complications are usually the natural consequences of going our own way. But even at that, the way out of those complications is always a series of simple choices: "In this thing or that thing before me, am I going to please God or please myself? Paul defined it as obeying. He says in Romans 6:16-17

*Rom 6:16-17*

*16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?*

*17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,*

Don't miss the point here. Paul does not prescribe some long, convoluted series of therapy steps. He says, "You got yourself into this mess by obeying your flesh and denying God, and the only way out is to start denying the flesh and obeying God." Paul is clear - the flesh *can* be denied and it *must* be denied.

These three instructions need to be heeded each day that we live. **Know** that you have been crucified with Christ and are dead to sin. **Consider** this fact to be true in your own life. **Present** your body to the Lord to be used for His glory. Now that we know these truths, consider them to be true in our life, and have yielded ourselves to God, we come to point of decision about how we will respond to whatever pull the flesh has on us at the moment. Are we going to deny God - say no to Him - or deny self? Are we going to mortify the flesh or indulge the flesh? Are we going to walk after the flesh or walk after the Spirit? Are we going to obey God or obey indwelling sin? This is an act of the will based on the knowledge we have of what Christ has done for us. It is an intelligent act of the will - not the impulsive decision of the moment based on some emotional stirring. (Berg, pp 89-110)

Now we finally come to the part of putting into practice what we have learned. We know that we are to put off "the old man" and we have learned that this means to mortify our "flesh" or the indwelling sin that still resides in us. But, you may be saying to yourself, "Make this stuff real to me. Bring it down to my level of day to day living. Sometimes we have a hard time seeing the



forest for the trees. In other words, we get so mired in details that we can't see the bigger picture. However, if I have had any success in the past four weeks in teaching sanctification, then we should have a clearer understanding of the bigger picture. We can see the forest. What I want us to be concerned with now is how we can apply these truths to "stuff" of life - the details of our relationships and interactions with people and our environment. I want to focus on the trees. We are going to allow preacher and teacher, Jay Adams, to help us understand the dynamics of putting off and putting on.

We have learned that the dynamic of putting off and putting on is an act of the will based on the knowledge we have of what Christ has done for us. Furthermore, it is an intelligent act of the will - not the impulsive decision of the moment based on some emotional stirring.

Information from Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*

Every day our lives are filled with decisions that must be made on the basis of obedience to God or surrendering to our feelings. There is much that we do not feel like doing. But there are only two ways to live. These two ways of life reflect two kinds of religion and two kinds of morality. One religion and life and morality says, "I will live according to feelings." The other says, "I will live as God says." When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden, they abandoned the commandment-oriented life of love for the feeling-oriented life of lust. **There are only two kinds of life, the feeling-motivated life of sin oriented toward self, and the commandment-motivated life of holiness oriented toward godliness.** The two ways of life are diametrically opposed to one another and force one to choose between them. Throughout the day, one's life consists of many such choices. The two life styles involve patterns of lust or love. They are oriented toward and motivated by our desires or god's commandments. They acknowledge two distinct sources of authority: self or the Bible. They focus upon separate goals: temporary pleasure or eternal joy. They acknowledge two masters: Satan or God. They offer two different ways of handling life's problems: the one resorts to running, covering up, lying and blame-shifting, etc., while the other insists upon facing, confessing, speaking truth, and assuming personal responsibility. They bring about their own results: the bondage of chaos in this life and eternal loss, or the freedom of structure and eternal joy. One was the way of the so-called Enlightenment, the other the way of the Reformation. Until recently the former was present in Western culture, but the latter was the "official" stance of most of the institutions of society and of culture. A reversal is now taking place in what has been called the rise of the new morality. It is not new. What is new is that the former hedonistic way of life is newly replacing the latter as the *official* stance of the Western world. **Living according to feeling is the greatest hindrance to godliness that we face.** Satan wants to tempt men to think that they cannot do what God requires because they do not feel like doing it. Or, that they must do what they feel like doing and can't help themselves. The basic error of feeling-oriented persons is that they (wrongly) believe that they cannot or should not *do* what they first do not *feel* like doing.

However, we are not to sit around waiting for proper feelings before obeying the Word of God. Feelings and behavior are separate things. Feelings are pleasant or unpleasant responses of our body chemistry to judgments we make about ourselves, or the situations we find ourselves in. These judgments trigger body chemistry to orient the body in a particular direction to meet a specific situation. This body orientation accounts for the feeling. For example, I may feel bad, or feel tired, or feel happy. If we complain, "I feel inferior (or stupid, or inadequate), it is important to point out that we are not speaking altogether accurately. No one *feels* inferior, stupid, or inadequate. What we are expressing is not a feeling but a judgment or attitude or conviction or belief about our self. We are saying, "I *am* inferior, stupid, or inadequate." On the basis of that judgment, we may *feel* sad or guilty or angry or embarrassed or depressed, etc. We *feel* sad (or

angry, etc.) because of the conclusion that we have reached about our own behavior, attitudes, character, or capabilities. We cannot *feel* inferior because inferiority is not an emotion. Distinguishing between the emotion and the conviction or judgment that triggers it is fundamental to finding solutions to our problems. Emotions are largely involuntary. Feelings and emotions will always flow out of our actions. That is why the Bible never tells us that we must feel, but rather, we must repent, believe, trust, and obey regardless of how we feel. If we are obedient to the Word of God, then proper feelings will always follow.

Closely related to feelings, but not the same thing, are our attitudes. An attitude is that combination of presuppositions, beliefs, convictions, and opinions that make up one's habitual stance at any given time toward a subject, person, or act. It is a mindset that strongly influences behavior. For example, we might say, "I don't care," or "I can't do it," or "But I've never done it that way before," or "what problem, there is no problem!" Attitudes usually involve habits of thought; habitual ways of thinking. Once a mindset develops, a whole way of life may grow out of it.

God gave us a marvelous capacity that we call habit. A way or manner of life is a habitual way of living. Whenever we do something long enough it becomes a part of us. For example, did you button your shirt up or down today? It may take you a little while to answer that, or maybe you can't remember. You don't think about it anymore, you just do it without thinking about it at all. Habits are hard to change because we have become comfortable with them, and because they have become unconscious responses. How have we developed habits? By disciplined practice. How does one establish a life style and live according to it? By habit. As sinful human beings bent toward sin, we have practiced sinful practices so that they have become a part of us. There is no question that the habit capacity is there. The problem is that it has been used for the wrong purposes. The capacity of habit works two ways. If we practice our own way of doing things, then sin will dominate our life. If we practice what God tells us to do, the obedient life will become a part of us. Habit works in either direction. We can't avoid habitual living because this is the way God has made us. God has given us the ability to live a life that does not demand conscious thought about our every action or response. Practice, itself, is indifferent. It can work either for us or against us depending on what we have practiced. It is what we feed into our life that matters, just like data fed into a computer. This is why we must take a hard look at our life styles. We must become conscious of our life patterns and examine our unconscious responses. As we examine our life patterns and responses we must evaluate them against the Word of God. Pattern by pattern, habit by habit, we must analyze them and determine if they have developed from practice in doing God's will or whether it has developed as a sinful response. The old, sinful ways, as they are discovered, must be replaced by new patterns from God's Word. That is the meaning of put off, put on. That is the meaning of disciplined living. Too many of us give up. We want the change too soon. What we really want is the changes without the daily discipline. There comes a point at which an activity begins to, and then does, become a part of us, but only when we stay with it long enough. It usually takes at least three weeks of proper daily effort to feel comfortable in performing a new practice. And it takes about three more weeks to make the practice a part of our self. Endurance is the key to godliness through discipline. Godly, commandment-oriented living comes only from biblical structure and discipline - regularly reading the Scriptures and prayerfully doing as they say regardless of how we feel. Now, all of this stress that we are putting upon human effort must not be misunderstood. We are talking about grace-motivated effort, not the works of the flesh. It is not effort apart from the Holy Spirit that produces godliness. Rather, it is through the power of the Holy Spirit alone that one can endure. We do good works because the Spirit is first working in us. Scriptures plainly tell us how He works. Since the Scriptures are God's inspired words, then it is the Holy Spirit, Himself, who is telling us how He works. He says in the Scriptures that He ordinarily works *through* the

Scriptures. The Bible is His book. He inspired it. Therefore, it is only by willing, prayerful, and persistent obedience to the requirements of the Scriptures that godly patterns are developed and become a part of us. When we read about them we must ask God by His grace to help us live accordingly. Paul mentions four things that the Scriptures do for the believer. They **teach** us what God requires. They **convict** us of sin. They **reprove** us, or "set us up straight again." And they **train or discipline** us in righteousness. The Holy Spirit gives help when His people read His word and then step out by faith to do as He says. He does not promise to strengthen us unless we do so. **The power often comes in the doing.**

The three most fundamental problems with a habit are,

1. We have become comfortable with the habit
2. We automatically respond to certain given situations or stimuli in a habitual way
3. We engage in the practice, or at least begin to do so, without conscious thought or decision

These three fundamental problems with a habit can be summed up by saying that the habitual practice has become "second nature." Breaking a habit is a two-sided enterprise that requires regular, structured, endurance in putting off and putting on. Adams calls this process "dehabituation/rehabituation." There are several elements involved in this process. They are:

1. Becoming aware of the practice (pattern) that must be put off (dehabituation)
2. Discovering the biblical alternative
3. Structuring the situation for change
4. Breaking links in the chain of sin
5. Getting help from others
6. Learning to see how particular sin habits affect our entire relationship to Christ
7. Practicing the new pattern (rehabituation)

It is critical for us to become fully aware of the nature, frequency, and the occasion for any practice. Unless we know exactly what we are doing, we will not know how to correct the practice. Only by discovering the frequency of the practice can we become aware of the severity of it. We may find that we are dealing with a life-dominating sin that is affecting all areas of our life. Unless we become aware of the occasions that trigger the practice, we will never be able to break the chain of reactions at its first link.

One thing that we can do is keep a record of the sinful practice that we want to put off. We could record, for instance, our outbursts of temper or anger, and their occasions on a morning, afternoon, and evening basis. As we analyze these records, we are looking for frequency, and patterns to see if our responses always occur to a particular stimulus, or several sorts of stimuli, or whether our responses are generalized to any sort of frustration or inconveniences we face in life. Once we determine these patterns, then we can gain better insight into what exactly needs to be put off. Then, recognizing that there is a proper practice, pattern, or habit to replace every improper one, we rearrange our environment, associates, schedules, activities, or whatever other impediments in this life might become an occasion for sin so that these, instead, become facilitators in learning God's new way of life. Our activities, surroundings, or associations must be consistent with our avowed desire to put off a sinful practice. For example, if a person is praying for deliverance from a smoking habit, then they should stop buying cigarettes. If a man wants to overcome an impure thought life, then he must stop buying porno material and stop surfing the porn sites on the web, or quit watching provocative TV shows or movies.



Equally important is to structure for the new practice that we wish to develop. For example, if we are seeking to develop regular habits of Bible study and prayer, we should schedule time for them and, if necessary, even post reminders in places where we will see it daily. If we want to learn to keep problems current rather than allow resentments to build up, we should appoint a time each day for settling matters with others.

Many people think of change only in terms of changing the problem. If we think this way, we may become discouraged. For example, a woman may picture herself virtually out of control, yelling and screaming at her children all the time. However, she didn't reach that point all at once. It came in stages. While even at its most spectacular point it is possible to get control over anger, it is much easier to break the earliest link in the chain of events that led to this point. There are at least two points at which we can stop an action - at the point of resistance and at the point of restraint. **Moment by moment we must learn to look beyond our own behavior and emotions and ask ourselves, "What is the ruling lust in my heart right now that is driving this behavior or emotion and in this thing or that thing before me, am I going to please God or please myself?"** (Berg, *Changed Into His Image*, p 58)

As John Owen taught us, we must watch our circumstances to detect the times of temptation and we must watch our heart to know when temptation might approach us. We must realize when we are vulnerable and seek to avoid getting into situations in which we are vulnerable. We must become mature in our thinking and let our thinking control our wills, not our emotions. The writer of Hebrews says that a person is mature because, through practice, they have had their senses trained to discern good and evil (Heb 5:14).

It is because we know God's will in the Scriptures that we are able to resist the wrong decision and choose the right one. This is why James says,

*James 4:17*

*17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

**The goal, therefore, is biblical action, not sinful reaction; control by the Scriptures, not by the situation.** While resistance is the desirable response, since that alone will keep us from sinning, we nevertheless have to learn what to do whenever we fail to resist temptation. **We need to learn self-control.** We do not have to allow our sin to run its full course. For example, we may sin by thinking angry thoughts about someone. Remember, a prominent feature of habit patterns is the essentially unconscious way in which we begin to respond to a given situation. Usually, it is our emotions that stir things up. However, we should not allow the sin to further develop into outward expressions as well. **Thinking before speaking or acting is an essential element in the restraint of evil.** If we can't speak coolly, we should wait until we cool down before speaking. If we've sinned in our heart, we should ask God's forgiveness right then and then ask Him for help in meeting the situation biblically. Restraint, then means to recognize our sin as it happens, seek forgiveness for it, and obtain help to discontinue it. To summarize, then, there are at least two points at which to break the chain of sin: (1) to prevent it, or, once begun, (2) to curtail it. **The more frequently we prevent sin, the less frequently we will need to curtail it, and the more frequently we curtail it, the sooner we will be able to prevent it altogether .**

Often times, we need reminders and encouragement in breaking sinful responses with biblical ones. Sometimes, in sin, we might think that such help is beneath us. Often, pride is behind the objection. But Christians everywhere are exhorted to help one another. No one who knows

Christ and wants to put off the old man with his temper, lust, lying, etc., need go without help. If we are willing to state our purpose and request help, we will find it among God's people. Only people who have not repented of their sins will feel that they do not need help. Repentant persons readily accept all the help that they can get.

*Genuine sanctification will show itself in habitual respect to God's law and habitual effort to live in obedience to it as the rule of life. It is a great mistake to suppose that a Christian has nothing to do with the law and the Ten Commandments because he cannot be justified by keeping them. The same Holy Spirit who convinces the believer of sin by the law, and leads him to Christ for justification, will always lead him to a spiritual use of the law, as a friendly guide, in the pursuit of sanctification. Genuine sanctification will show itself in a habitual endeavor to do Christ's will and to live by His precepts. A sanctified man will try to do well in the world and to lessen the sorrow and increase the happiness of all around him. He will aim to be like His Master, full of kindness and love to everyone, and this not in word only, but by deeds and actions and self-denying work according as he has the opportunity. Genuine sanctification will always show itself in habitual attention to the passive graces of Christianity, which are submission to the will of God and bearing and forbearing each other. These are the graces that have the greatest influence on the world. It is nonsense to pretend to sanctification unless we follow after the meekness, gentleness, longsuffering and forgiveness of which the Bible makes so much. People who are habitually giving way to cross tempers in daily life, and are constantly sharp with their tongues and disagreeable to all around them, spiteful people, vindictive people, revengeful people, malicious people, do not know about sanctification. (Ryle, Holiness, pp 27-28)*