

Living Out A Practical Holiness

by Donny Coulter

This sermon emphasizes the importance of believers actively pursuing holiness by putting to death their earthly desires and focusing on heavenly things. It highlights the urgency and decisiveness required to mortify sin, drawing parallels to the need for complete destruction as seen in the story of Agag and the Amalekites. The speaker challenges listeners to be willing to confront and eliminate sin in their lives through the power of God's Spirit, not relying on their own strength.

Scripture: Colossians 3:1, Ephesians 1:18, Romans 5:1

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of believers actively pursuing holiness by putting to death their earthly desires and focusing on heavenly things. It highlights the urgency and decisiveness required to mortify sin, drawing parallels to the need for complete destruction as seen in the story of Agag and the Amalekites. The speaker challenges listeners to be willing to confront and eliminate sin in their lives through the power of God's Spirit, not relying on their own strength.

Transcript

We are on a quest together to try to understand and to live out a practical way of holiness. That is, a practical way of being, living, set apart. Of being other, living differently for every believer.

We have said, and I hope it becomes your goal and intention in life, that there should be as little change from this life to the next. What a wonderful goal, huh? That you would desire to be so close and so drawn in to God, in serving Him, in loving Him, in being conformed to the image of His Son. So much, that when it comes to the point in life where you move from here into eternity, whether it be by rapture or by death, that there would be just as little change as necessary.

As we'll see today in our text, someday we will appear as He is. We will appear with Christ, who is our life. And so, why not act that way now? I mean, why not? You have learned over this long series, that you have been given everything that you need to do so.

So, everything is yours, available to you, right now. The question is, that we have to ask ourselves, is are we willing to open ourselves up to the horrible, beautiful conviction of the Holy Spirit in our lives? To the point that we would be sensitive to even the smallest of sin. Be careful, the track you take, in asking for God to do a work.

God is good, and this week, I had an experience on a couple of occasions with God, doing this very work in my own life. We talked about malice, do you remember talking about malice? That's one of those relational sins, we talked about it three weeks ago now, we talked about the word malice. That is an evil desire within me, to want something bad to happen to somebody.

I dislike them, and hold a grudge against them so much, that I'm okay with something bad happening. This week I was in the gym, I told you a couple of weeks ago, a few weeks ago, about a neighbor that came and swore on my porch twice. And called me on the phone, and ripped me up and down, because of my dogs.

First time, I felt they could have come a little nicer. The second time, I was okay with how they came, because my dog shouldn't have been there a second time. But the one on the phone, the owner of the sheep was pretty mean.

I got the phone call while I was sitting at supper with Dana and Sophie at Dairy Queen. And I had to walk outside, so that we could talk. And because I believed that I had been praying for this, and looking for the opportunity to respond correctly, I was able not to find myself falling into the flesh during the conversation, even though the other end was full of some really mean stuff.

Right at the end of the conversation, I remember saying, you know what, I don't understand. And I was about to go off into a bad place. And then I was able, God, through His Spirit, gave me the ability to catch it.

And I said, no, it's okay. And He said, what do you don't understand? And I said, no, really, it's okay, I do understand. And anyway, I was in a gym this week.

And a lady says, did you hear about the grizzly bear? And I said, no, I had never heard anything about a grizzly bear. And she said, oh yeah, there's a neighbor down the road from you that lost eight sheep to a grizzly bear. And I'm being transparent with you, there was a part of me that leapt for joy.

Ha, ha, ha, ha. You get what you deserve, buddy. Now that's what's happening inside that didn't come out on the outside, but there was a part of me.

And I had no problem with it in the gym until I got home. I sat down to eat my breakfast and I turned on some worship music. And Tis So Sweet came on.

And that part where it says to cease from sin. Man, I'm telling you, it was just like this big giant snowball rolling down the hill of heaven in the form of the Holy Spirit that said, malice! And I had to repent of malice. Do you want to be holy as He is holy? To my camp crew and kids, I did the same thing this week.

I spoke out of turn. And I said some things that were off color and out of place and definitely out of character. And I apologized and asked forgiveness.

But it was a public sin. And therefore, I say to you, I'm sorry. Forgive me.

That's not just a job for the preacher. It is not just the preacher's job to make himself available to the Holy Spirit to bring conviction. And then respond to that conviction.

That is not just my job. Every one of you who have faith in the forgiveness of Christ and have been called the son and the daughter of God have exactly the same responsibility. God did not do that for me because

I'm the preacher.

He's done that because I'm saying, Lord, I want to be conformed. I want to live out your command. And that's what you should be doing along with me.

It is, as I said yesterday to Renee, I really hate the conviction of the Holy Spirit. But I love it because it's horrible and beautiful all at the same time. Are you willing to walk that road together, individually and together? Are we willing to do that so that God can clean us up? So God can conform us to the image of his son.

Are you willing to be so worked on between now and the time that you leave this place that there is as little change as necessary? Read with me Colossians chapter 3. We're going to read all the way through verse 17. We are going back today to the old fashioned way of doing things. If you're online and you're watching, you've got to get your Bible out.

And if you're here today and didn't bring it because you got lazy because I've been putting them up there, you're out of luck. Yeah, there's Bibles in the back. Colossians chapter 3. We're going to read through verse 17 because over the next couple of weeks we're going to be going through this.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Christ is no longer in the grave. He is not on a cross.

He is on the throne at the right hand of the Father. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. Take note of the word earth.

Set your mind on things above where Christ is, not on the things of the earth. For you died. Why do we need to put our mind on things that are above? Because you died.

Your old flesh nature, your earthly nature has died in Christ. Look what he says. For you died and your life, your life is hid in Christ.

In God. Hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

So why wait until then to live like it? Verse 5. Now you're going to notice as we get to verse 5, you're going to notice a list of 10 negative things. Things that you should not do. Okay? There's a list of 10 things that we as believers should not do.

And remember last week I said there's a positive negative duty and a positive duty in most all of these sections of Scripture that we're going to be covering. And so you're going to see that today because there is a negative as we read through. We're going to just get through verse 6 or 7 today.

6. No, I'm sorry. 8. No. 7. That's right.

We'll get there. Verse 7. We're going to get through verse 7 today. But you're going to see that there's this list of 10 things that we are not to do.

That's the negative. And then there's the list of 10 things that we ought to be doing in the positive. And almost every Scripture you see God gives a list.

It's always that way. Positive. Negative.

Do. Don't do. Okay? So let's read.

Verse 5. Therefore, put to death or mortify your members which are on the earth. Let those words sink in. Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry.

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked. Do you hear what Paul's saying? Wrath is coming on the sons of disobedience. But you are no longer one of those sons.

Therefore, mortify the deeds of the flesh. Now watch what he says in verse 8. But now you yourselves are to put off all of these. Now we're going to go to these relational sins once again.

Wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of him who created him. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, bearing with one another and forgiving one another. If anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so also you must do. But above all these things, put on love which is the bond of perfection and let the peace of God rule in your hearts to which also you were called in one body and be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. If you didn't know that you had a mandate to sing, they have a mandate to try to make us not sing. We have a biblical mandate to sing.

Verse 17. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for your word. I pray that you would have your way with us, in us and through us. God, may your Holy Spirit be our teacher.

May you anoint the words that come and the words that are brought into the ears and to the heart, may they be anointed by him so that they can have an eternal work in us. God, I pray that you would shape us, mold us and make us every day more like Jesus. May we be sensitive to the sins.

God, that you have felt strongly enough to list in your scriptures that we should not be doing as believers. I pray that we would pay attention to what you say. We ask these things now in Jesus' name.

Amen. Let's look first. He says, therefore.

Look at verse 5. Therefore. We always want to find out what the therefore is there for, correct? So, therefore is going to point us back up to verses 1-4. So let's nail down why we need to live like this, or why we need to mortify, why we need to kill the deeds of the flesh.

Let's look at that first in verses 1-4. First of all, he says, you were raised with Christ. The first point is you were raised with Christ.

Look at it. Verse 1. If then you were raised with Christ, you were raised. You have been given this new life.

Now watch. Think with me. If I have been raised with Christ, something else has also happened.

What else has also happened? There you go. I have died with Christ. So if I have raised with Christ, then I recognize and know that I have also died with Christ.

I have died. As a matter of fact, in chapter 2 and verse 12, it says that you were buried with Christ. In Galatians chapter 2, verses 19 and 20.

We have died to the law. We have been crucified with Christ. We have died.

You can't raise if you haven't died. Do you understand where I'm coming from? So there is this death that we experience. Romans chapter 6. I have died to sin.

I have been baptized into his death. I am buried with Christ. And now verse 8 says, and now if we died with Christ, we also believe that we shall live with him.

So, we have to understand that there is a death of the old self, the old person, the old man, and there now we have been raised with Christ. And if we have been raised with Christ, look what he says, since we have been raised with him, then we need to seek those things which are above. That's verse 1 again.

Seek those things which are above where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Verse 2. Set your mind on things above and not on things of the earth. So, you as a believer need to be thinking about heavenly things where Christ is as opposed to always filling up our minds with all of the earthly junk that exists around us.

Okay? So there's this idea that, I don't want to spend a lot of time on this, but we are to seek those things which are above. Set your mind on those things, the things that are Christly motivated, as I wrote in my notes. The things that, I don't even know if that's a word, Christly.

Christly motivated. We need to seek those things that are motivated by Christ himself. Why? Because you have died and your life is hid in Christ.

Look at verse 3. For you died. Now that's the answer to how we are raised. He says, you have died.

And your life is hidden with Christ in God. Now let me take a moment to illustrate this. I love to use this illustration when it comes to presenting the gospel to some people that have a very difficult time with the life that they have lived in the past.

Because what this verse says is that the life that you lived in the past is gone and forgiven. It is covered. It is hidden in Christ.

I have with me Christ. For a moment, I want you to pretend for just a moment that you are God. Okay? I know that's way out there.

But I want you to pretend for just a moment that you are God. Who do you see? You can say this out loud. You can help me out, okay? Who do you see? I know that's a stretch too.

It's a tougher way to live. But hey, it's what we got, alright? You seek Christ, alright? You're God. You seek Christ, right? Here's you.

Here's you. Just a donkey. As we say for some that I have worked with in this illustration, just a piece of junk.

This is you. Apart from Christ. Piece of junk.

Who do you see? Who do you see? Say me. You see you. Me, alright? Who do you see? Who do you see? Alright.

Now, what this verse tells us is that my life is hid with Christ in God. Okay? You're God. Who do you see? Who do you see? Wait a minute.

But, where are you? You're hidden. You are in Christ as Ephesians teaches us, right? And so your life is hid in Christ. Hidden with Christ.

And when God looks at you, He sees His glorious Son. Son. Oh, a thought that is too high for me to attain as we read in Psalm.

Does that not blow your mind? It does to me that when God looks at this old sinner, that He sees His Son. Now, that out of the way. Because your life is hid in Christ.

Number one, you've been raised with Christ. Number two, you are to seek those things which are where Christ is, that are motivated by Christ. Number three, you seek those things because you have died and your life is hidden in Christ.

And number four, one of these days He's going to appear. And what is Jesus like? You have to ask the next one. What is Jesus like? Who is He? And what is He like? And all that He is, everything that He is, the verse there says that He is our life.

He is our life. Not only is our life hidden in Christ, but He is our life. Everything that He is, is you.

That's what the Bible is teaching us. Our life raised from the dead. It's our life right now.

Look what it says. Look at verse four. When Christ who is our life.

It didn't say who will become our life, who may be our life, someday can be our life, or was our life. What does it say? He is our life. Christ who is our life.

And so everything that Christ has and everything that Christ is, is ours right now. It is not something I have to wait till heaven for. It is something that I can experience right here, right now.

He is my life. He is your life. Now based on that, Paul gives a therefore.

Based on the fact, since you have such a wonderful salvation. That's what we talked about when we were walking through 1 Peter chapter 2. We have such a wonderful salvation. Chapter 1 verse 3. Chapter 1 verse 22 in 1 Peter.

And chapter 2, excuse me, verse 1 through 3. Since we have such a wonderful salvation, since Christ is your life, since you will appear with him someday, and since you have died and Christ lives in you, and

since your mind is on heavenly things, therefore put to death. What a powerful word that's used here. Put to death your earthly desires, your earthly members.

Put it to death, he says. The word that he uses here in the Greek, it means, literally means to slay utterly. It means to kill, mortify.

You might see if you, I believe it's in the King James Version, it uses the word to mortify the deeds. So here, literally, it means to slay it completely. We are to kill everything that is earthly in us.

All of those earthly desires, we are to kill those. Because we are already dead and raised in Christ, now we are to kill those things that are earthly in us. We are to kill those things.

Chapter 3, verse 1 and 2 speaks of the things that are above. So, verse 1 and 2 there, it speaks of things that are above. But we're talking, verse 5 speaks of the earthly nature.

So we're talking about a heavenly nature and we're talking about an earthly nature that is bent towards sin. Romans speaks of yielding your members as instruments of unrighteousness. That whoever you yield your members to, you become its slave.

And so he says, kill those earthly desires. Utterly slay them. Well, we're going to offer excuses to that.

We're going to say, you don't understand pastor, you really don't understand, I just can't beat it. I just can't overcome that. It's pull is way too strong in my life.

I just can't quit. I don't know that you can't. Is it that you can't? Or that you won't? Because Ephesians chapter 1, turn back just a few pages to Ephesians chapter 1. Oh, I hear the sound of pages turning.

I love it. We'll jump up to verse 17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened that you may know what is the hope of His calling and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance and that you may know, that you may know, that you may know what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe according to the working of His mighty power. Now we've covered this. But I want to remind you once again that you have been given everything you need to do exactly what the Word of God has told you to do.

When the Word of God tells you to mortify those fleshly, earthly desires, when it says to do that, it is not saying that with a pie in the sky, I hope they can get it done. It's saying that with authority that you have been given the power from God, by God. It is His power and you can overcome.

You can do exactly what the verse says that we are to do and that is to kill utterly those things. You've been given that power. You've been given that access.

And if you say, I can't, I can't, I can't, then you are not plugging in to the power source, to the generator. You're not plugging in. And it's not because you can't, it's because you won't.

I want you to keep in mind too, that this is not about keeping or maintaining your salvation. I want to consistently and constantly repeat this. This is not about keeping or maintaining your salvation or your position in God.

That is kept by God. Remember we talked about that last time. That our position, our place, our salvation is kept by the power of God.

And whether I live the sinless life or whether I live a defeated life, it doesn't change the fact that God has saved me. And He is keeping my salvation. He has reserved that in His own power.

He has taken care of that. Ebenezer Erskine says, the Christian mortifies sin because he is at peace with God. You hear what he's saying? The Christian kills sin because he is at peace with God.

The legalist mortifies to try to be at peace with God. You see the difference? We're not trying to be at peace with God. Understand me? We're not trying to be at peace with God.

We are already at peace. Romans chapter 5 and verse 1. Because of faith I have been justified in Christ and I now have peace with God. I am at peace with God.

And this is not some attempt to maintain that peace with Him or to fix that peace with Him. Because that's already there. I do not have to legalistically go after every sin that I have so that I can keep the peace with God.

I have peace with God. And it's because I have peace with God that I am working out my salvation to be holy as He is holy. So he says, put to death.

We're not going to get very far today. I still got two pages of notes to go. Put to death.

Mortify. The verb put to death or mortify is used now again, I hate getting technical with you, but it helps to understand. It's used here in an aorist tense.

And that means, which means do it. The aorist tense means do it. Do it effectively.

Producing a definite result. Okay? That's what it means. The way it's written is get it done.

Do it. Put it to death. It's not an optional thing.

It's get it done. It's in the active voice which means that you are to make a choice of your will. This is not something that somebody else does for you.

This is something that you are doing for yourself. And it is a choice of the will. It is a decision that you make.

I am going to destroy, utterly slay, the earthly desires in my life. That's what it's... You make this choice. And it's also in the imperative mood which means that you're going to do it without hesitation.

So you get it? It's get it done, make the choice, and don't hesitate. Alright? Let me summarize that. It's an unreserved decision of the will.

I must, I will put to death. It is decisive action with urgency. That it's not something where, well, you know, I hear what he's saying, but I need to consider some other things first.

There is an urgency about this call to mortify the members of the body, the earthly members of the body. It says it's urgent. It needs immediate attention and urgent action.

And do you know this? Listen to me now. Be careful how you hear this and accept it. Sin will not die on its own inside of you.

It must be killed. The price has already been paid. Jesus has conquered sin.

Now, there is a war inside of you as a believer that is raging. The spirit and the flesh. And which one will get control? Which one will have the power? And if we don't kill it, then it will take control.

Let me give you, before I go there. To be able to do this, so that you don't mistake my, this is not something we just go, yeah, I'm going to kill sin. Come on sin, let's go.

Look, you're going to come at it that way, you're going to fail. Over and over and over and over again. You must come at this in the appropriated power of God that is already yours.

You have to come at it that way. Again, Ephesians 1 verse 18 and 19 says that we have access to this incredible power. So if you're going to do this, if you're going to kill, mortify the deeds of the flesh, if you're going to mortify the earthly sensual desire in nature that is still raging within, if you're going to mortify that, then you have to do that.

We have to do that in the power of God. We have to plug in to the generator. If we do not put sin to death in a practical sense, it will corrupt and overcome.

Let me take you back to the story of Agag and the Amalekites. Do you remember that story? God had said to Samuel, you tell Saul to go there and you kill them all. Sound familiar? Utterly kill.

Utterly destroy the Amalekites. Nothing. Do not leave anything.

Kill it all. People, animals, don't take from the spoils. Kill it all.

Well, they went to battle. Won the battle. Saul saved old king Agag, didn't he? He spared his life.

His little trophy. And they took the best of everything. And when Samuel came, he said, what have you done? Oh, don't worry about it.

We took all that stuff so that we could make sacrifices to the Lord. We did all that so we could make sacrifices to the Lord. Remember what Samuel said to Saul? God is not interested in your sacrifices.

God is interested in your obedience. Obedience is better than sacrifice. And then, what did Samuel do? I know it's ugly.

And we don't even want to talk about it. But you know what he did? He brought king Agag out, took a sword, and he hacked him to pieces. That's the way it says it in the Scripture.

He hacked him to pieces. I can't imagine. But the reason why that they had to utterly destroy was because if they didn't utterly destroy, it would creep in.

Their ways and their desire for power over the Israelites would creep back in and take control. And so, he had to be utterly destroyed. The same picture that Paul is drawing for the Colossians.

Destroy these things. Destroy your earthly nature that has a propensity to do all the bad stuff. That's what he says.

Back to Colossians. He says, Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth. The idea here is that you put to death your fleshly propensity, nature, earthly nature, put your mind on heavenly things.

Your heavenly nature needs to be pointed towards the heavenly things where Christ is. And down here in this earthly nature that has this drive to pursue sin, he says, kill it. Kill it.

I'm going to stop here and pick up next week on the list of sins that we are to kill. But are you willing? Are you willing to take the steps that are necessary to deal with the sin that nature, that propensity to pursue sexual immorality, to pursue uncleanness and impurity, to pursue malice and anger and all of those others. Are you willing to step up, take the king out of the prison and hack it? Are you willing to do that in your life? If you're not, then you're going to have a struggle with obeying the Scripture that says, Be holy for I am holy.

Are you willing to do that? Are you willing to experience the conviction of the Holy Spirit and when it comes, then you go through the power of God, not through anything in and of yourself. Are you willing to do that? I pray that you are. Next week we will talk about the sins, but I'll have some practical things.

I don't have enough time. Some practical things that we can do to kill sin. Okay? Just a few practical things that we can do to kill sin.

So hold on until next week. Father, thank You for Your Word. Wonderful Word.

Thank You that Jesus has accomplished everything. It is finished, He said. Everything is accomplished.

He now sits at the right hand of the Father. Thank You for all of the benefits that come along with that. Too numerous to name.

We praise You for those things, God. Father, we pray that You would help us to be so concerned about heavenly things. To be so filled with faith that we have died and we have raised with Christ that we would go after this earthly nature that runs towards sin.

I pray, Father, that You would help us to do that so that we can be obedient to Your Word. I pray, Lord, that we would be the kind of people that can't get away with anything. That Your Holy Spirit is there at every moment, all the time, convicting of even the smallest of things that are offensive to You.

And may we respond in a proper way to that conviction. Lord, we're going to trust You to do this work. We have to.

Because we can't just make a decision and do it. We have to be empowered by You. And we have that power.

So we're going to trust You and Your power to help us go through.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/-zmSKyW4f4I.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/donny-coulter/living-out-a-practical-holiness/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net