

Tested in the Wilderness Part II

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing God's will over our own interests and desires, and the role of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual growth and self-knowledge.

Duration: 59:50

Scripture: James 4:1

Topics: "Wilderness", "Self vs. God", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the spiritual crisis that arises when self-interest takes precedence over our relationship with God, using King David's story as a cautionary tale. He illustrates how David's moment of selfish desire led to dire consequences, not just for himself but for others as well. The sermon encourages believers to recognize their own tendencies towards self-centeredness and to seek God's help in overcoming these desires through the Holy Spirit. Beach Jr. stresses the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions and the necessity of God's love to transform our hearts and guide our decisions. Ultimately, he calls for a daily commitment to prioritize God over self in every aspect of life.

Transcript

This insatiable, unquenchable commitment to fulfilling our own interests. And when something or someone crosses and prevents or hinders our power to fulfill our interest, we become angry, bitter, hateful, murderous even. Murderous.

You remember King David. When David was supposed to be out fighting in the war, he chose rather to lounge on his housetop. He chose to lounge on his housetop.

And during that time of lounging, somebody became more important than God to David. You see, David had a pattern in his life. He loved the Lord his God with all of his heart.

But something happened on the housetop. A change in David's thought pattern. A change in David's principles that he was living by.

Somebody became more important to David than God. Guess who that person was? David. David became more important than God did in his eyes.

And when our own interest, our own temporal desire, our whim becomes more important to us as human beings, even as redeemed Christians, we immediately come to what I'm going to call tonight we come to

what I call a spiritual crisis. Spiritual crisis involves one major decision. And this is the decision.

Self or God. David was confronted with an opportunity to either yield to the momentary desire that captivated him, which stemmed purely from his selfish, arrogant, proud heart. Or recognize what was happening.

Acknowledge the problem before God and resist it. We know through the story that David, rather than recognizing what happened, he yielded to self. And the consequences were very, very sorrowful in the life of David.

Not only David, but when we yield to ourself and place more importance upon self and the fulfilling of selfish desire, we not only incur consequences upon ourself, but it affects others. How many have discovered that given in to a desire, an interest, an aspiration, not even necessarily given in to it, but fighting for it, demanding that you get this particular thing that you want. How many have found that if God peradventure will grant you what you want, even though it's not something that he would prefer that you have.

How many have discovered that not only did it bring consequences upon yourself, but it affected other people. It affects other people. Now remember what we're doing now.

The greatest thing in all my life is loving you. Beloved, learn tonight that as a Christian, a genuine Christian, you're going to discover that all of your conflict from the very beginning when you say, Jesus be my Lord and Savior to the very end when God calls you home, whether it's by rapture or whether it's by release from this mortal body, the greatest conflict, the priority ministry of the Holy Spirit is going to be bringing you from one spiritual crisis to another in order to teach you to resist self and the desire that self would be causing you to want to serve and want to fulfill and choose by the help and power of God's Holy Spirit and God's Word, choose God's way. David's entire problem, and this is a lesson that you and I can learn.

David's entire problem can be seen by understanding that while he was up on the roof and he looked down and saw Bathsheba, self desired her and at that moment of spiritual crisis rather than humbling himself before God and saying, wait a minute, wait a minute, the reason why I exist is to serve God and love God and do His will. The most important person in my life is not myself and the fulfilling of my desires as they come and go because you'll discover that desires come and go as often as the night and day come and go. Desires will come, desires will go.

Whims will come and whims will go. So we must ask God to help us and to burn into our spirits, into our minds, into our souls, into our very thinking process so that it becomes a continual daily affirmation and acknowledgement that we never forget and that is the most important person in my life is not myself and my immediate interests and my immediate desires that spring from all manner of things but my most important person in the whole world is Jesus Christ and my relationship with Him and my fulfilling His will. There it is.

What motivates you on a daily basis? Whose interests are you seeking to fulfill on a daily basis? Whose will are you seeking to understand and then carry out? Self or God? Case example. I come home from work and something is not the way I like it. It could be dinner is not ready or maybe I have a certain book that I like at a certain place so that when I come home I can pick the book up and sit down and read it and it's not there.

You fill in the blank and immediately I am confronted by a spiritual crisis. I'm going to in a very quick time that's why the Bible says be on guard. I'm going to in a very quick time I'm going to make a decision and then act according to that decision in a moment's time.

What I'm going to do is I'm going to decide what is the most important thing in my life right now during this crisis? Is it my own desire? Dinner should be ready, I'm tired, I'm hot, I want to eat. Or is it God's desire? Which would be to approach the situation in a humble spirit an understanding spirit a gentle spirit a non-demanding spirit and just softly walk in and not even mention it. Say hi, what's up? What's going on? You see, my attitude at that moment in relation to who the most important person is in my life is going to directly affect my response to that situation.

It's going to directly affect it. If I expect people to cater to me when they don't, I'm going to be upset. But if my chief concern and goal is to grow up in God and to mature so that my life doesn't revolve around the unholy trinity Now how many here understand what the unholy trinity is? Me, myself and I. Many people worship that God day and night.

Now listen, they don't worship that God with their lips. They don't say outright, oh I love myself and I worship myself and I seek to fulfill my will and I go to all measures in order to do it. They don't say that with their mouth.

But their actions and their reactions seem to indicate that many times. Now, as Christians I want you to know that deep embedded in your self-life is a commitment that you have to your old corrupt ways. Now you can say, bless God, I love God and I'm not saying you don't.

But God, as we ministered on this morning God sees the depths of the heart that no man can see. Psalm 139, search me oh God, try me. See if there be any wicked way in me.

Deeply rooted within every human heart including the heart of the redeemed child of God is an allegiance, is a commitment, is an agreement with the desires of sinful flesh. And it is the ministry of the word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit that is intended to reveal to us this incredible allegiance that we have to ourself and to the fulfilling of our own desires to reveal it and then to loose us loose us from the captivity of self so that we can be free from following the dictates of self and self-will and be bond servants and bond slaves to the will and pleasure of our Savior Jesus Christ. Now this is a process, it's not a one time experience.

Many times people look for this in an experience and they think if I can just get this teaching or I can just get this revelation or I can just read this book or they're always looking to find the work that only God can perfect through daily walking with Him. They're looking to find it in a book or somewhere other than accepting Listen, accepting responsibility, spiritual responsibility. You don't grow in God without accepting responsibility.

You don't grow in God by hunting down someone or something and then finding and saying now I will be better. There is an entire generation of Christians who are looking for something and they're convinced that once they find they're not even sure what it is. But once they find it then I will become what God wants me to become.

Not so. The Bible says in 2 Peter 2 Peter 1 verse 3 According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and

virtue. I am no longer seeking.

You are no longer to be seeking to find something that is going to make you what you know God wants you to be. If you have discovered Jesus Christ if you have become acquainted with the person of Jesus Christ and He has redeemed you and washed you by His blood and has quickened you and made you alive in Him you are not to seek any longer for anything else for in Jesus Christ in the person of Christ in the plan of redemption you have found everything that you need pertaining to life and godliness and also the power that you need to escape the corruption that is in this world and to become a partaker of the divine nature. You no longer have to seek.

Now all you have to do as a Christian is to discover the fullness of Jesus Himself. All you have to do now is to discover the richness of God's word for it is by knowing Him and His word that we are perfected in Him. So now it's Him Jesus the Lord Himself He is the one our greatest enemy, beloved is self and our commitment to fulfilling the desires of the flesh which are in opposition to the will of God.

They are in opposition to the will of God and basically when we reduce it down to bread and butter it's this we need as Christians we need as Christians an ongoing outpouring of God's love into our life because it is love for God that empowers us. Now mind you, where do you get love for God? It does not come from your own heart. It comes from the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says in Romans chapter 5 that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Love is a fruit. Love grows.

Love is cultivated by the Holy Spirit. Now I'm not talking about a love that makes you talk it. A lot of people have love that enables them to talk it real well.

But I'm talking about a love that delivers you in crisis. How many understand? Am I making myself clear? Not a love that enables you to say with your mouth I this and I that, praise God. But I'm talking about a love that delivers you in crisis.

When somebody lets you down you still love them. When somebody crosses you you still love them. There's the love that is cultivated by the Holy Spirit.

It does not originate from self but it comes from the very divine presence of God himself in us. That's the love that comes to our rescue when we are confronted with a spiritual crisis that enables us to say no to self. See, as we can say no to self and yes to Christ we are growing in love for who? For God.

And we are lessening our love for who? Self. You see, love has an incredible principle that cannot be broken. Here's what it is.

You will obey and seek to please the one you love. That's just bread and butter. It's simple.

You will please the one you love. So consequently if I am going to please God more and more on a daily basis I must then be filled with God's love. Listen, God's love will free you from yourself.

Oh, the most glorious the most wonderful the most lovely thing that a Christian can have is an ever increasing ever abounding explosion of God's rich agape love. Love perfectly fulfills the law. Love does no ill to God.

Ill means harm. Love does not harm God. When you are motivated by God's love you can't hurt God and you can't hurt a person unless they are offended by love.

And if they are offended by the truth then there is nothing you can do. So God's love liberates us from self and the fulfilling of the desires of the flesh. Now, let me tell you you cannot have and experience God's love apart from relationship.

You see, just like when you get married or you know somebody your love for that person grows as you what? Get to know that person. You spend time with that person. And likewise you can't know the love of God apart from spending time with God and his word.

So love for God liberates us from love of self. Fills us with true love so that we can really love others. Lot of times people try and love others by their own love.

How many have discovered that your love is cheap? Your love doesn't work. Your love is the most impatient love in the world, isn't it? Not only is your love impatient your love demands that it gets something in return. And if it doesn't, boy I'm telling you it gets huffy, it gets puffy and it gets angry.

Huh? Listen, that's why people close up and harden up. That's exactly why right there. Because they're trying to love by their own love.

And when you do that you fall into a vicious cycle. And here's what it is. I love those who I get back from but those who don't give me anything back those who don't show appreciation for my love I close it right up and you are not going to be a part of my love anymore.

That's why people close up because they're still caught in flesh love. See, flesh love it's so subtle but it's corrupt. It's corrupt.

And many times it's our flesh that loves God. That's why when God doesn't give us what we want we say, what are you doing God? See, God is exposing to us and showing us that even our love for Him has to come from the Holy Spirit Himself. Has to come from the Holy Spirit Himself.

So, therefore we see that self-life the root of self is so deeply ingrained into us that we are incapable of knowing by searching our own heart and our own mind the depths of our self-life. And God doesn't want us to do that. God doesn't want us to try and be our own savior.

But God promises us that as we mentioned this morning as we become a genuine Christian something begins to happen. The prayer begins to rise up to God, our savior. And what the prayer is is we start beginning to cry out Ah, the Father! Ah, the Father! And God starts to pour into our heart the love of God.

He starts to give us love for Himself. That love will naturally cause us to love other people too. It is a love wholly independent of what we've conjured up in our own spirit.

It's completely supernatural, completely divine, completely of a heavenly origin. It never could have sprung out of our own heart apart from the influence of God's Spirit in our life. So here as a believer now we have this prayer.

Any true believer has this prayer going up. If people don't have this prayer going up you question whether they really met the Savior. They might talk about the Savior.

They might know all the language but the Bible says that those that are His they cry, Ah, the Father! And you know what Ah, the Father means in real everyday language? Yes, Daddy. Yes, Daddy. See? The very disposition, the very nature of our heart begins to change.

And now we're saying, Lord, I want to please You. But here's the crisis. We say we want to please God but God has to do open heart surgery.

To break our will from allegiance to self. So here we have in our heart the love of God. And what is it doing? Here it is.

Prayer. Lord, make me like Jesus. Lord, conform me into Your image.

Make me like Jesus. Oh God, change me, change me. And we showed this morning that when this begins to occur then what the Lord does is the Lord takes the responsibility of doing that.

And He does it through the wilderness. In the wilderness, God surfaced. Now listen.

God surfaced what was lurking within Israel's heart so that it could become known. What are some of the things that surfaced in Israel's heart while God was testing them and tempting them? Complaining. Now I know none of us ever complained so we can't relate to this.

What about grumbling? Now see, these are things lurking within the heart and we don't even know they're there necessarily. But God in His providence knows just the right person or just the right circumstance to get it right where it hurts. Doesn't He? How many have ever prayed for patience and came up against the most unlovable, impetuous person you can think of? And then what did you discover? How impatient you are.

But see, before you can become patient in Christ, you have to see that you've got absolutely no patience in your flesh. And that if you are to become a patient person, it's got to be holy and completely and entirely the life of Christ coming through you. But before Jesus' patience can grow in you, you have to become fully aware that you're perfectly impatient.

See, it's the same principle of salvation. Before you can be saved, you have to acknowledge you're a sinner. Before you grow in grace, you have to acknowledge your poverty in that area that God wants you to grow in.

If He wants you to be really filled with His love, beloved, I assure you, I assure you, that before you can really know God's love, you're going to have to taste the bitterness of your cheap love. Before you know the incredible long suffering and patience of God, you're going to have to wrestle with your impatience and your shortness. You say, well, how am I going to do that? You don't worry about that.

That's the Lord's job, see? Israel came out of Egypt and God had it all planned. He had it all planned. So the wilderness, here's what the wilderness is.

The wilderness is external pressures, people, circumstances, pressing up against us. It's the fire, okay? This is the fire. Now what does the fire do to gold? The fire surfaces dross.

The dross consists of all of those deeds in the flesh life that God wants to be put aside and reckoned as dead. But how can a man put to death and reckon as dead hatred if he doesn't know that his heart is full of it? Well, my heart's not full of hatred, brother Beach. Well, what kind of heart do you have? Is it a human

heart? If it is, it's full of it.

We taught on this several weeks ago. Mark chapter 7. Jesus told us what's in the heart of man. Mark chapter... Let me read it real quick.

Mark chapter 7. Oh, this is liberating. This frees us, beloved. God is orchestrating.

God is shepherding those that are truly His. Everything happening in your life is designed to give you, listen, give you self-knowledge of yourself. Because you can only know the riches of Christ after you have known the poverty of yourself.

See, the initial... It all starts when God convicts us that we're sinners. That's what qualifies us to become saved. If a man calls on me, that's the beginning, but it doesn't end there.

See, we become saved because we become aware that we're sinners and we need a Savior. Then God starts open heart surgery. So in order to grow in Christ, listen, listen closely, to grow in Christ means that we must grow right along in knowledge of ourself.

If you don't know who you are, if people walk around in self-deception, they don't know the frailty of what they are, but that's all right because, see, the Lord is the shepherd and He is committed to revealing to us in our own special way, with His own special design, He wants to give us self-knowledge, knowledge of ourself. Paul said, There's no good thing that dwelleth in my flesh. That is what we have to learn.

Now, most of us here will quote that, right? Well, praise God. I know the Bible says there's no good thing that dwelleth in my flesh. But until God, in His sovereign way that He deals with all of His children, until God makes you to see the depths of the wickedness in your flesh, you'll never know it.

You'll know it only up here. And as long as we know it up here, we can never know the riches of Christ experientially. See, there's a law in the Scripture.

Okay, there's a law, and here's what the law is. It's only the poor and the meek and the mourner who finds fullness in Christ. Now, that is not a one-time event.

We have to constantly be brought to the place by the Holy Spirit where we are gaining self-knowledge, which produces a mourning. Blessed are they that mourn. Oh, God! Oh, Lord! What lurks within me? God uses a person.

He uses a circumstance. Oh, I'm mourning. See, it's only as we mourn because of what God is showing us lurks within our heart that we can become a participant of the riches of Christ's character to take that place.

Now, let me just say this in passing. Okay? And then we're going to go on and develop this a little bit longer. But listen closely.

This is possibly the most important lesson for you to learn. You will never grow up in God until God teaches you to take responsibility for your actions. We preached on it a couple of times a couple of weeks ago.

We called it the blame game. Here's what the blame game is. When somehow God allows a circumstance or a situation to come into your life and it surfaces bitterness or hatred or discord or whatever, grumbling.

Here's what the blame game is. I see what I am and I blame it on someone. And say, I am what I am because of this or this or that person or because of this or that or that or whatever.

That's the blame game. The blame game is this. I refuse to take responsibility for my own sin.

I refuse to acknowledge that this that surfaced in me was not created because of something that happened to me. But it was there all along and God just allowed the circumstance to come in order to surface it. Now, what did Israel do in the wilderness? What happened when God allowed them to get hungry? They grumbled and what did they do? Moses, it's your fault.

What were they doing? They were playing the blame game. See, they were blaming their state on Moses. Can you believe it? Isn't that ironic? Here they were, miserable, complaining and grumbling and here's what they would not do.

They wouldn't take responsibility for their action. Number two, they wouldn't let God show them how corrupt they really were. They wouldn't do it.

They were too busy shifting the blame onto somebody else, onto somebody else, onto somebody else. And in shifting the blame onto somebody else, listen, here's what it did. They were deceived and God would not heal them from their grumbling hearts.

You see, sometimes people even, they live in what this is called, it's called denial. Denial is this, when the trial comes, wilderness, remember, wilderness, God's the one, God's the one that puts His children in the wilderness. Who led Jesus into the wilderness? The devil? Not so.

The Spirit of God. Who leads God's children into the wilderness? The Spirit of God. What for? To be tempted.

God doesn't tempt, but He leads us to be tempted. Why does He do it? So that what we are surfaces, so that we can acknowledge it, give it to God and grow. But here's what Israel wouldn't do.

They wouldn't acknowledge what they were. Now here's what denial is. Denial is when the circumstance, the wilderness, which could be a person, a place, a thing, an event, whatever, it happens and the depths of my flesh start getting on fire.

And those feelings, how many understand what I mean? You don't, Danielle? Those feelings start coming and here's what denial is. Oh, we're not there. Praise the Lord.

Nope, I'm fine. We just deny it all together. I don't know which is worse, denial or the brain game.

They're both going to lead you. Where are they going to lead you? Nowhere. That's the thing.

Here's what happens. Here's what happens when we deny and we blame. We stay in the wilderness and this is what we illustrated this morning.

Watch this now. We keep going in circles. We keep going in circles.

We never advance in God. You'll continue to go in circles as long as you deny or blame what you are. You can deny it or you can blame it.

As long as you do that, whatever that sin is that is surfacing through the wilderness, whatever it is, it'll stay there. Now, you might be delivered from this wilderness and go on and you'll say, praise the Lord. But don't think that it's over with because if God did not bring victory over this thing that surfaced in this test, guess what's going to happen down the road? Different test, the same problem is going to come.

Alright? So we go down the road here and we say, we have a smiling face. We think, ah, it's over with. We have a smiling face.

Wow. Thank God all that's over with. But the grumbling was never dealt with.

The complaining was never dealt with. So here's what God does. He says, alright, I love you.

I'll give you some breathing room. And then all of a sudden, whoo, we hit another trial and we start going around and around and around and we wake up one morning and we go, ah, I can't believe it. You see, remember this thing up here? See, when the trial goes away, this goes back deep inside and we forget it's there.

We pretend it's gone. See, so what happens? Uh-oh. Uh-oh.

That same old sin. Maybe even another one now. Maybe his sister come up.

I don't know. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. But here's that old wretched sin again.

And we go, oh no, not again. And then God sees what we're going to do. Remember the scripture this morning? Deuteronomy chapter 8. I brought you in the wilderness.

This is what God said to Israel. To try you, to prove you, and to see what was in your heart. To see whether or not you would yield or you would repent and turn from it and find my grace.

So what happens when it comes again? We have to make a choice. The blame or deny? Well, if we stop blaming, it's your fault Moses. We stop denying, everything is fine.

And we come to grips with God's dealing in our life. And we first of all acknowledge self-knowledge. And here's what self-knowledge is.

Wow. I am complaining. I am grumbling.

When you fill in the blank, what are you doing? Fill it in. Number two. I've been blaming and I've been denying.

And I have shifted the responsibility for this action onto someone or something. And now I'm going to grow up in God. I'm going to confess to God.

First of all I'm going to say thank you Jesus for this trial. Because without this trial, I never would have seen that. Now we go back to the prayer.

Remember the prayer that we had here? We go way back to the prayer if we can find it. Remember the prayer here? That rises up? What is the prayer? Oh Jesus, make me more like you. How many of us interpret this as an answer to our prayer? We never do.

But see, we should. The devil is a liar. He doesn't want us to see this as an answer to our prayer.

He wants us to play the blame game. Or the deny game. See, this is the very answer to our prayer.

God knew that it would have taken this in order for the prayer to be answered, which is gaining knowledge of who we are. Okay? So here's what happens. We stop playing the blame game, we stop denying, and we take responsibility.

We acknowledge our sin and we humble ourselves. See, God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. We humble ourselves and we find grace.

Oh Lord, deliver me from this. I'm looking to You. Now, mind you, if you're a child of God, the presence of this sin does not constitute the fear of damnation.

That's the joy of being a Christian. You are delivered from the damnatory effects of your sin. That's what the song is.

Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow.

Even though there is sin that lurks within self-life, the Lord has loosed me, not from the presence of that sin. We're always going to have the presence of sin in the flesh. But He loosed me from the damnatory effects of that sin.

There is therefore now no condemnation. So see, when God is doing this in your life, don't let the devil lie to you and make you feel like, oh my God, oh this thing is in my heart, God's going to cast me off. Not so.

He redeemed you for this purpose so that you can approach Him and your sin without being afraid. See, He's doing it so that you can deal with it and be delivered from it. So you don't have to worry about being condemned.

You don't have to worry about going to hell. Because you've been redeemed from hell. Now if we resist the dealing of God and continue in our sin, it will bring about consequences and we might reap consequences, but that's the Lord's chastening.

Despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary when thou art corrected. So what God does then is He allows us to go into wildernesses, to the surface of sin, we don't deny, we don't blame somebody, we take responsibility. That's the beginning of spiritual growth in God.

Here's what people want to do, and you cannot do it. We want to become spiritual without taking responsibility. Never happen.

It'll never happen. There's no being spiritual in God without being personally responsible and taking responsibility and humbling oneself before God and sometimes before people. Sometimes before people.

So that's what ends up happening as the process by which God works and deals in our life. Now like I said, I was going to read in Mark chapter 7. Mark chapter 7 verse 20. That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

Now notice these things that I'm reading. Jesus did not say that these things are not within our hearts, but then when circumstances come, the circumstances make us like this. No, no.

That's secular philosophy. That's psychology. Modern psychology functions on a false principle and that is this.

You are basically good and society and people make you evil. So consequently, when a person goes for counseling to a psychiatrist that doesn't believe the Bible, they're told, well, you're good and you're miserable right now, but you know why? It's because this person made you like that and this person made you like that and this circumstance and what they do is they teach you how to blame. Then they say, now you've got to forgive them, but see, how can you forgive someone when you haven't received the Lord's forgiveness yet? See, you've got to get to the root of the problem.

The root of the problem is not what happened to you. The root of the problem is what you are. You are sin by nature, a sinner by nature and only when we take responsibility for what we are, go to God, receive His forgiveness, can we then see the circumstances and the people in the proper perspective.

Then we can be released from feelings toward them because the feelings toward them are stemming from the sin in our own life. But we think we have a right to feel the way we do. That's our problem.

Somebody does something wrong to you, you go like this, I have a right to be mad. No, you don't have a right. You don't have a right.

Jesus said, be followers of God as dear children. So, we don't become because of a circumstance. We are, and the circumstance surfaces what we are.

See, Mark chapter 7. That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man, for from within, ah, see that? Now, where's the attention now? Within, not without. Not what's happening to us, but what we are as a result of being the seed of Adam. For within, out of the heart of man proceed, here we go, evil thoughts, adultery, fornication, murder, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, bad stuff, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

Watch this. All these evil things come from where? Within, and defile the man. But now here's a question, all right? What is in the believer, other than these things? Christ in me.

The hope of glory, right? So here's what the Holy Spirit is doing. Those corrupt desires of the flesh need to be reckoned as dead, crucified with Christ. What that means is this.

They are not to have dominion over you. Paul did not say that sin does not dwell in you any longer, now that you're a Christian. He never said it, and it's nowhere in the Bible.

What he did say was, now that Christ is in you, the sin that dwells in you ought not to dominate you anymore. Now, rather than the ugly sin dominating you, you can choose to allow Christ to dominate you, and as Christ dominates you, then all of those things, they are reckoned as dead, crucified with Christ. Our old man is crucified with Christ.

The body of sin is destroyed, Paul says in Romans chapter 6. Doesn't mean it's annihilated. Doesn't mean it's not there. The word destroyed is a Greek word that means rendered inoperative, made powerless.

How is sin made powerless in you? How is it made powerless in you? Here's how. When it surfaces through the trials, rather than yielding to the sin, you yield to Christ and triumph over the sin. See, in Christ, sin cannot fulfill its desires in me.

When I'm in Christ, sin cannot reign. Who reigns? Jesus. What happens then? Ah, the fruit of the Spirit.

Fruit of the Spirit starts to grow in my life. This is Christian character. Christian character is built within the believer when the believer goes from one crisis to another and learns to resist sin and trust Jesus.

That's how we grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, our Savior. So all of these things lurk within the heart of man. Now, I'm just going to read one more list and I want everyone to listen carefully.

Here's some more subtle, listen, here's some more subtle things that lurk within self that God is committed in surfacing in your life. Now remember, when they're surfaced, you're either going to blame, you're going to deny, or you're going to face up to the facts and go to God boldly because of the blood. Because of the blood, you're not condemned for what you are.

See, because of the blood, you're secure, you're okay. Now, there's things in there that need to change, but the presence of those things is not producing condemnation in your soul. Thank God.

Thank God. If it was, we'd all be hopeless. We'd all be hopeless.

So, when God does this, we accept, we come to grips, we humble ourselves, because pride will not let you humble yourself. That's obvious. Pride by nature denies.

Here's what pride does. It denies and it blames. Now listen to this.

Here's some of the more subtle works of the flesh that we all need to overcome. And listen, the people in your life right now, the ones God's using in your life, the circumstances in your life, they are intended by God to surface these very things so that you can accept responsibility and find grace and be changed. Watch this.

Putting one's own comfort and personal interests over that of another person's. Now, beloved, how many here are married? You're going to find that your mate is designed by God to reveal that sin in your heart. Your biggest struggle until you grow up is going to be the utter grief that you experience when your interests are not being fulfilled.

Your desires are not being fulfilled. Something is there preventing you from getting your bottle. I get a kick out of Sarah.

Oh, she just sucks her thumb. And oftentimes when I look at her, I chuckle because I realize that her chief concern right now is herself. She's so young, and that's the way it is with all children.

And when she's getting her own needs met, she's as happy as a bee. But you tell her, you just wait. You want something, you wait.

I'm doing something. What? How dare you? You mean to tell me that I'm not the most important person in the world? Don't we act the same way? Sure we do. Are we going to accept it? Are we going to deny it? Or are we going to blame, I'm like that because... Next, placing undue attention upon your feelings and opinions rather than considering others.

Next, self-condemnation. Condemning yourself. Criticizing and judging others wrongfully.

Blaming other people for what you are and not accepting responsibility. Who did that? Who's the biggest character in the Bible you can think of? What happened in the garden? Adam, what did you do? It's not my fault, it's the woman's fault. Adam was blaming, wasn't he? Hey Eve, Adam tells me something happened.

Not my fault, it's the serpent. And then you know what happened? The serpent, he couldn't go to anybody because he's the father of lies. The blame game.

Alright, next. We're almost done. You're a really good class tonight.

Very good. Now don't blame me if you're getting impatient. You like that Tom, huh? I tell you, this is rich.

This is God's word. I mean, this will transform you. Here we go, we only have a couple more and then we're going to let you go and take a five minute break and we'll get into it again.

Alright, here we go. Competition. Being competitive.

You ever meet someone that wants to outdo somebody? You know, there's competitiveness in marriages even, when they're immature. Now remember, beloved, don't condemn yourself when you see yourself. Listen, if you're not a Christian, you better fear because there's only one way to be free from the consequences of these miserable sins.

They'll bring you right to hell, if you're not a Christian. But if you've trusted in Jesus and his righteousness, then you've got a perfect plea and that's Jesus' blood. And Jesus' blood will always cleanse us and we never have to worry about God saying, get out, you're too dirty.

No, no, no. He's just going to say, alright, beloved child, this is why I died for you. Come to me and I'll give you the grace to change.

Here we go. Self-defense. A defensive, we preached this a few weeks ago, a defensive heart.

Oh boy. How many people get a defensive heart when something is zeroing in on you? Leave me alone. Well, I got it right.

Self-defense. Always wanting to defend ourself rather than become vulnerable. What's wrong with being vulnerable? Esteeming self better than others.

Here's one. Overly affected by the opinions of other people about yourself. Overly affected about the opinions that other people have about yourself.

Now that's a deep, deep root in self-life. You know what the root is? Pride. Pride is offended when everything doesn't love it and doesn't speak highly of it.

See? Now remember, all these are deep rooted in one thing, self-love. Okay, we have a couple more here. Now here's one that's really, really gonna touch base.

Manipulating people to avoid the truth about yourself from being exposed. Manipulating people. Undue perfectionism.

Undue perfectionism. It's not wrong to be tidy. It's not wrong to have administrative tendencies where you like things neat.

But when it gets out to where it's undue perfectionism, there's an ego problem. There's an ego problem. And one last... No, that was it.

That was it. I have some here that I just don't wanna bring out now. And I have in my notes here, the answer to all of these sins is more and more of the love of God being shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit.

Well, beloved, I trust that the Lord encouraged you this evening. And I want to once again reiterate very quickly. God is allowing what's happening in your life.

Understand, it's going to do two things. It's gonna show you who you really are. It's gonna give you an opportunity to accept that.

But then it's going to show you the power and wonderful love of God. And through Jesus Christ, I can overcome and find growth in grace right in the midst of this fiery trial. And I trust that you'll choose God and His way as you go through your daily struggles.

Amen? Amen. Well, God bless you. Thank you again for being a very good class tonight.

And we will resume on Wednesday, God willing.

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