

# THEOLOGY I: Overcoming Temptation

Session 5 - Dr. Jeremy Kimble

*John Owen On the Mortification of Sin - available at*

<https://banneroftruth.org/us/resources/articles/2011/owen-on-the-mortification-of-sins>

*Overcoming Sin by Kelly M. Kapic and Justin Taylor - contains 3 of Owen's works.*

*For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. Rom 8:13*

*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

*For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must **consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.***

***Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.** Rom 6:1-14*

## OUR CALLING

Put sin to death more and more increasingly and pursue godliness and be transformed into Christ-likeness throughout the years of our lives. It happens by the means God has given us... his Word, prayer, and accountability.

There is a demand on our lives that is there because of what God has done in and for us in Christ and what He's doing now in us through his Spirit.

How do we do that well?

*And we all, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Cor 3:18*

*praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. Eph 6:18*

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- **Be aware that sin usually arises out of a distortion of some legitimate need.** Sin is essentially not creative, but it takes God's good gifts and distorts them. Recognize this.
  - **Pride** is the distortion of the legitimate need for **right identity**. It occurs when we forget that all we have to do comes from God so that all the glory goes to Him or when we seek to compare ourselves to others to be better than them (Gal 6:4). Our identity is in Christ, it's not about me.

*For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? 1 Cor 4:7*

- **Laziness** is the distortion of the legitimate need for **rest** and **leisure**. The pattern of the Bible is 6 days of labor, and 1 day of rest. God created us to work, and it is part of our service to God to use our talents to glorify Him, to provide for our needs, to be able to share with others, and to better life for our neighbor (Prov 8:6-11, Col 3:23-24, Eph 4:28, Titus 4:14). Laziness can take mental and spiritual forms, too. When we lazily seek to get by with the minimum, rather than doing our best, we are guilty of the sin of laziness.
- The third distortion is outward, **rebellion**. Even this is a distortion of a legitimate need. We have a need for ambition, for effort, to use our mental, spiritual, and even physical muscles. The distortion occurs when we direct our energy **against** God, rather than for God and against sin and evil. (Eph 6:10-20, 2 Cor 10:3-5).
- Finally, **greed** is the distortion of the legitimate need for **food, clothing, shelter**, some of the things of this world. Greed is possible for both rich and poor, for greed is the opposite of contentment and confidence in God's provision (Matt 6:33, Phil 4:11-12).

*Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you. Heb 13:5*

- **Diagnose your sin.**

- Do I have confidence that I have been saved?
- Have I identified the sin I want to put to death? Be specific.
- Is it consistently easier to sin than to do what's right?
- Do I see my sin as a willful act of rebellion against God?
- Do I have a godly sorrow?

*Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 2 Cor 7:10*

- Do I desperately want to stop sinning?
- Do I desire God to be glorified in me?
- Do I know the occasions and situations when I am most tempted to sin?
- Do I battle my sin immediately?
- Have I meditated on Scripture and prayed accordingly?

*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Ps 119:11*

- Do I expect God to give me victory?

- **10 Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health** by Donald S Whitney

Do You Thirst for God? Ps 42, 63

Are You Governed Increasingly by God's Word?

Are You More Loving?

Are You More Sensitive to God's Presence?

Do You Have a Growing Concern for the Spiritual and Temporal Needs of Others?

Do You Delight in the Bride of Christ?

Are the Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life Increasingly Important to You?

Do You Still Grieve Over Sin?

Are You a Quicker Forgiver?

Do You Yearn for Heaven and to Be With Jesus?

## PUTTING SIN TO DEATH

### • EVALUATE

Is your sin especially serious and deep-rooted?

### • FILL

Immerse your mind and conscience with the guilt, the weight, and the evil of your sin.

### • LONG

Desire deliverance from the sin.

### • CONSIDER

Think on whether there is something in your makeup that makes you especially prone to this sin.

### • CONTEMPLATE

Think on and figure out the occasions in which this sin breaks out and guard against them.

### • BATTLE

Fight hard against the first awakenings of that sin. Never, ever allow yourself to play with sin.

### • MEDITATE

Pursue God in your thoughts to see his glory and your desperate inability. Think about God. Read his Word and meditate on it.

### • EXPECT

Desire to hear and know that God will speak peace to your soul (but do not speak it to yourself until he does).

## STOPPING OLD HABITS

## PUTTING ON THE NEW

### • REPLACE

Where you have a certain vice in your life, an especially strong temptation to sin, or an especially strong history of sin, you will have to work extra hard to put that sin to death AND to put on the opposite virtue.

### • PURSUE

We also need to generally pursue godly character. There are some areas where you are not particularly prone to sin, and in these areas, you need to generally pursue godliness.

### • AUDIT

We all need to audit ourselves from time to time to see how and where we need to grow. We need others to give an outsider's perspective on our lives to tell us where we are growing and where we are stagnant or even where we've declined.

## STARTING NEW HABITS



### ● FIGHT AND KILL SIN.

#### ANTHEM Acrostic John Piper

- A - **AVOID** as much as is possible and reasonable the sights and situations that arouse unfitting desire.
- N - Say **NO** to every sinful thought within 5 seconds. And say it with the authority of Jesus Christ.
- T - **TURN** the mind forcefully toward Christ as a superior satisfaction. Saying "no" will not suffice. You must move from defense to offense. Fight fire with fire. We must stock our minds with the superior promises and pleasures of Jesus. Then we must turn to them immediately after saying, "NO!"

- H - **HOLD** the promise and the pleasure of Christ firmly in your mind until it pushes the other images out. "Fix your eyes on Jesus" (Hebrews 3:1). Here is where many fail. They give in too soon. They say, "I tried to push it out, and it didn't work." I ask, "How long did you try?" How hard did you exert your mind? The mind is a muscle. Fight! For Christ's sake, fight till you win! If an electric garage door were about to crush your child you would hold it up with all our might and holler for help, and hold it and hold it and hold it and hold it.
- E - **ENJOY** a superior satisfaction. Cultivate the capacities for pleasure in Christ.
- M - **MOVE** into a useful activity away from idleness and other vulnerable behaviors. Find a good work to do, and do it with all your might.

## **PRACTICAL APPLICATION**

- Confess your sin and repent. Is sin forgiven without confession? If I forget to confess some sin, is it eternally held against me? What is the importance of I John 1:9?
- Sin breaks **fellowship**, but not one's relationship with God. Confession re-establishes the **intimacy** of fellowship with God, because you are now viewing your sin as God does, for confession means literally saying the same thing. You say about your sin what God says about your sin. Well then, how specific does confession have to be? Do I have to mention every detail, or will a blanket confession do? It is good to be specific about all that is on our minds, and to hear specifically God in Christ forgives you.
- Periodic evaluation, especially in preparation for partaking of the **Lord's Supper**, should be part of every Christian's life.
- But God is more interested in the **state** of our **hearts** than our memory. Confession should be as specific as your consciousness of something between you and God is. Whatever He brings to your remembrance, that's what you need to confess. Times of inward evaluation are good, the use of written confessions and guides can be good, but the point is to deepen fellowship until you can worship with no blocks between you and God.
- **Forgive**
  - Even among growing Christians there will be sin. Don't be disillusioned or devastated by the sin within the churches you serve, fellow Christian workers, or yourself. Learn to forgive and be forgiven, and start every day with a new commitment to seek holiness, even while we acknowledge our need for continuing repentance. Don't quit on the local church.

*Bear with one another and forgive any complaint you may have against someone else. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **Bear with each other and forgive one another** if any of you has a grievance against someone. Col 3:13*

***Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.** Eph 4:32*

- Christians should be constantly **growing**, not perfect, but becoming increasingly more like Jesus.
- Learn to know your own **susceptibility** to temptation. Analyze what day of the week, what time of day, what place or person causes you most temptation. Recognize how your physical and emotional well-being affects your spiritual health and vulnerability.
- Think of the definite historical link between **brokenness** over sin and **spiritual awakenings**.

*A God Sized Vision: Revival Stories that Stretch and Stir  
by Colin Hansen and John D. Woodbridge*

- A careful study shows that the key, central experience in revivals or spiritual awakenings is an unusually clear and vital awareness of the real presence of Christ among His people.
- And the first effect of that presence is overwhelming brokenness over sin, leading to deep, heart-wrenching confession, often involving public confessions of Christians to one another, sometimes involving dramatic and deep conversion experiences.
- When Christ appears in all His brilliance, the dark places of our lives are exposed. This type of in-depth conviction of sin cannot be produced by human means; it is the work of the Holy Spirit. But we must pray for it, preach for it, and teach for it. And one factor that can hinder it is a small, superficial, and deficient understanding of sin.
- Read, study, meditate on, memorize, and pray the Bible.
- Pray for and develop friendships that love you and take God seriously. Journey together to love God well and live in holiness, not in sin, and to help one another to keep growing.

*See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But **encourage one another daily**, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Heb 3:12-13*