

## The Enemy Within

Harmony M.B.C., March 22, 2009 (Morning)

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Col 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Col 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Col 3:4 When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Col 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Col 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

Col 3:7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

Col 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Col 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Col 3:10 And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

I have lived long enough to witness the devastating impacts on humanity that occur as a result of man's predisposition to follow the basic depravity of human nature. I have learned that if there is an offense against God, humanity, or the earth in general, there is a human somewhere who is willing to commit it. When we sit down to the 6 o'clock news each evening we are witness to a running account of what people have done to themselves or others as they followed the bent of human nature. We listen to stories about crimes of passion such as murder, suicide, assault and battery, and worse; stories about large scale theft and scamming, armed robbery, extortion, kidnaping, child molestation, drug smuggling, and a thousand lesser offences. We walk down our streets or drive through the country-side and watch people work small scale wickedness as they party away their lives, recreate themselves into oblivion, waste themselves on drugs or alcohol, neglect their children, neglect their parents, defy the law, curse, blaspheme, despise and abuse their fellow man. We sit before our computers and see postings of every manner of wickedness, see evidence of the burden on society from unknown hackers who hack the internet in hopes of violating your rights and your privacy, or destroying your computer, see postings of advertisements that are scams aimed at relieving you of your money.

Willingly or unwillingly, all of us are part of this maelstrom of human expression. Truly we who trust in the Lord today find that our souls are vexed by the hearing and seeing of the multitude of unlawful deeds. But, what we are witnessing is the natural expression of humans acting out who they are. And, that is what makes it so significant for us as believers. This fleshly characteristic is shared by all humans. This means that each of us, whether saved or lost have the same predisposition to feed the flesh and thus keep it alive. So, the scriptural instruction to "mortify our members which are upon the earth" presents a totally antithetical proposition to us. It commands us to do just the opposite of what our natural man wants to do.

In presenting us with this proposition, this spiritual guidance sets up a conflict within us. On the one hand we have the old creature clamoring to be fed carnal things so it can stay alive and even flourish, and on the other hand we have the Holy Spirit through the Word telling us to subdue (= figurative meaning of mortify here) and deaden the propensities of our bodies. This conflict is what the Christian ethic and ambition is all about. If there is no opposition in us to the carnal person that we are, then there is no new creature. But if we find who we see ourselves to be resisting the carnal temptations and tendencies, it is proof to us that there is a new creature in there fighting for dominance.

When we look straight on at this charge from the Lord: (v.5) “mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth...” and we see the battle going on within us, we realize that sometimes we gain ground, sometimes we seem to lose ground. We will also realize that we need to be equipped to deal with the conflict on a personal internal level. So, to get a better edge in this war, let’s look first of all at the fact that:

### **I. Not Achieving This Is The Root of Much Spiritual Conflict, Disappointment and Sense of Failure In The Lives of God’s People**

Now, as a second thought let’s realize that:

### **II. Embracing This Spiritual Objective Creates A Powerful Resistance Against Sin and Its Associated Disappointment and Sense of Failure**

- The Spiritual Vision to Be Understood is Described: Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
- The Action Is Described: Eph 4:22-24 That ye **put off concerning the former conversation** the old man, which is corrupt according to the **deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man**, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

And, last we want to ask:

### **III.. How To Accomplish This Objective? (Go back to vv. 2-4)**

- Manage Your Affection - v.2 (affection here = disposed toward; interest oneself about)
  - > Focus on spiritual things
    - Mat 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
  - > Sentence the things of the flesh to death and then begin the execution (crucifixion is the beginning of a process of execution that ends in death)
    - Gal 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.
- Remember what state you are in - v.3 (“ye are dead” = literally or figuratively to die off)
- Remember what lies ahead - v. 4