

I. Introduction.

II. You have already crucified the flesh. v. 24,26

- A. This crucifixion of the fleshly nature took place when you were converted. v. 24**
- 1. What Paul speaks of here is already true of everyone who belongs to Christ Jesus. 2:20 1 Co. 6:20 1 Pe. 1:18-19 Acts 20:28**
 - 2. Elsewhere Paul speaks of the death of your old nature as something which was done to you. 2:20 6:14-15 Rom. 6:6,3**
 - 3. Here Paul speaks of it as something you did – when you repented of your sin and believed in Jesus. Mark 8:34**
 - 4. Your old sinful self died once and for all in union with Christ – good riddance! Rom. 6:2-6,10-11 Col. 2:20**
 - 5. You are also raised in union with Christ to newness of life. Rom. 6:4b-5**
 - 6. This newness of life is the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit Who leads us as we walk in Him. 5:16,18,25 Ro. 8:11,14**
- B. If our old fleshly nature has already been crucified in union with Christ, why do we still struggle against sinful desires? 5:17**
- 1. The flesh was decisively defeated and dethroned on the cross and we have been set free from slavery to our old fleshly nature. Rom. 6:6-7,17 1 Co. 10:13**
 - 2. The reign of the flesh over us has ended, but it will try to lure you back. 5:17**
- C. We who have crucified the fleshly nature are called to actively put to death (mortify) our sinful passions and desires. v. 24a Rom. 8:12-13**
- 1. We put into action what has already been accomplished upon the cross and received by faith. Ro. 6:11-14**
 - 2. You have an active role to play in your sanctification. 1 Co. 9:24-27 Phil. 2:12-13 Heb. 12:4 Titus 2:12 Luke 9:23 2 Pe. 1:3-11**
 - 3. Sanctification involves action, not just knowledge. Js. 1:22 Mt. 7:24-27**
 - 4. We put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit. Rom. 8:13**
- D. What can be done practically to mortify fleshly desires?**
- 1. Remember who you are in Christ. Ro. 6:11 Col. 3:5 1 Pe. 2:11**
 - 2. Recognize how sins works. James 1:14-15**
 - 3. Don't allow the old nature to revive by making provision for the flesh. Ro. 13:14**
 - 4. Evaluate your desires and feelings based upon Scripture. 5:17,26 5:19-21 Prov. 3:5-6 14:12**
 - 5. Take decisive action to utterly destroy fleshly desires and acts. Mt. 5:29-30 Phil. 4:8-9 1 Co. 15:33 2 Co. 7:9-11 Acts 19:19 Titus 2:12**
- E. Chief among the fleshly deeds which must be mortified is our mistreatment of one another. v. 26,20-21,15 Pr. 27:2**
- 1. The proud self-centeredness of the flesh pushes others down and ourselves up.**
 - 2. Though Jesus was truly great, He humbled Himself for us. Phil. 2:5-8 Isa. 42:3 Zech. 9:9 Mt. 11:29 20:28 John 13:5 2 Co. 10:1**
 - 3. Those who are in Christ have been set free to humble themselves and to lift others up in love. 5:13-14,22-23 Phil. 2:3-4 Rom. 12:10 1 Co. 1:31 13:6 1 Pe. 5:5**

III. Walk in line with the Spirit. v. 25

- A. Because the Spirit gives us life, we should keep in step with the Spirit. v. 25b 3:3 Ro. 8:11,13**
- 1. Again Paul is basing our action (imperative) on the truth of what God has done (indicative).**
 - 2. The word translated *walk* in this verse is used of soldiers marching in a straight orderly formation. 6:16 Ro. 4:12 Phil. 3:16**
- B. You need the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit if you are to mortify your fleshly passions. v. 16,25 3:3 Rom. 8:8 Ezek. 11:19 36:26 Jer. 31:33**
- 1. You will not mortify the flesh by false asceticism – denying legitimate bodily appetites. 1 Tim. 4:1-5 Col. 2:20-23**
 - 2. Nor will mere Law regulations will break the power of the flesh. 3:3**
 - 3. The Holy Spirit will give you power to overcome the flesh. 5:16 Jo. 15:5 1 Jo. 4:4**
 - 4. The Spirit not only enables you to resist fleshly desires, but He replaces them with superior holy desires. 5:17,22-24 Isa. 55:1-2 Ps. 34:8**
- C. How, practically, do we keep in step with the Spirit?**
- 1. We pursue the gracious means by which He leads us. John 14:26 16:13-15**
 - 2. We keep in step with the Holy Spirit as we let Him govern our thoughts and actions towards holiness. 5:18 Ezek. 36:27**
 - 3. The Holy Spirit leads us to find our greatest happiness in Christ. Ps. 119:97 Phil. 4:4 John 7:37 Mt. 11:28-29**
 - 4. He will lead us to find comfort in God’s promises when the fight of faith is hard.**
 - 5. Effort is necessary in order to stay in step with the Spirit. 1 Pe. 1:15-16**
 - 6. We walk in full awareness of our complete dependence upon Him for each step. Phil. 2:12-13 John 15:5**
- D. We know that we are in step with the Spirit when we are bearing fruit and that we are out of step when we are characterized by fleshliness. 5:19-23,26**

IV. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions

- 1. In what sense have you already been crucified with Christ? When did this happen?**
- 2. In what sense do you continue to crucify the flesh?**
- 3. In what sense is your crucifixion of the flesh active and in what sense is it passive?**
- 4. What specifically can you do to mortify your fleshly desires?**
- 5. How does the Holy Spirit help you to overcome the flesh?**
- 6. How can having a self-image based upon the gospel change the way you treat others?**
- 7. What can you do to keep in step with the Spirit?**
- 8. How can you know if you are walking by the Spirit?**