

"The Doctrine of Sanctification"

Romans 5:12-8:13

Part 25

Introduction: Last week in our study of Romans we were looking at how the cross is to be applied to our everyday lives in order for us to live unto God.

Notice Romans 8:1-4

We looked at the command which Paul gave to the church in Philippians 2.

Philippians 2:5-8

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

⁶ *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

⁷ *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

⁸ *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

It is God's will that the life of Jesus Christ be seen in our lives. But the problem is that the flesh/sin nature often prevents this from happening. We are saved and we have been crucified with Jesus Christ, but we still have the sin nature. Paul referred to our sinful flesh as a body of death.

Romans 7:24

²⁴ *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

Now the only way to gain victory over the flesh is with the cross. We cannot gather up enough strength to overcome the flesh and we cannot gather up enough strength to cast the flesh aside. Self cannot cast out self. But God made a way for us to have victory over the flesh. This is what we have been looking at in Romans 8. Jesus Christ did what the law could not do. He saves and He sanctifies us. The means is the cross and the cross must be applied to our lives every single day.

Luke 9:23

²³ And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross **daily**, and follow me.

The cross speaks of death and so every single day we must die to sinful self. We cannot allow the flesh to get off the cross and to climb back on the throne within our hearts. That is his desire, but we must NOT permit him to do so and the only way to defeat the flesh is the cross. So, as we walk through this world, we must carry our cross and when the flesh decides he is going to sit upon the throne in our heart, we must apply the cross.

This TRUTH is so important in our lives for two reasons:

1. If we live in the power of the flesh, then we do not have God's power in our lives. We can be busy "serving" but if we are controlled by the flesh it is all powerless.
2. If we do not apply the cross and learn to die to the flesh, there will be no spiritual fruit in our lives.

John 12:24

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: **but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.**

Life comes from death and therefore fruit comes from death. In order for a grain of wheat to produce fruit it must fall into the ground and die, then it produces fruit. The very same principle was seen in the life of Jesus Christ. He had to die so that we could have life. We are the fruit of His sacrifice. The very same principle is true in our lives. We must die to the flesh before there will ever be any spiritual fruit. We often talk about spiritual growth in our lives, but I am not sure we truly understand what spiritual growth is. It is not being busy doing all we can do.

Spiritual growth could be defined as, "**LESS OF ME AND MORE OF JESUS**".

Galatians 2:20

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; **yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Last week in our study I reminded all of us that one of the keys of dying to self is to understand the sovereignty of God. He permits situations to come into our lives that are difficult. They are situations which the flesh will desire to fight against. You see, the flesh likes to be pampered and he despises anything that we encounter that causes us to be humbled. The flesh will complain, he will seek vengeance, he will attempt to inflict the same pain upon those who have caused our pain and heartache. The flesh will cry out

"THIS IS NOT FAIR, I DESERVE BETTER THAN THIS!". This is where the CROSS comes in. We must live by the CROSS if we are going to have victory over the flesh and live unto God. The flesh must be kept upon the cross in these times.

This brings us to where we are tonight.

I. The Importance of Surrender

Last week I explained to you that the teaching of the cross is contrary to nature. The flesh despises the cross and it despises any uncomfortable situation. But surrender to difficult situations must happen if we are going to live unto God. These difficult and painful situations are the crosses we are given to carry. They are opportunities to die so that we might live unto God. Let me share with you the words of Madame Guyon:

"No man can be wholly the Lord's unless he is wholly consecrated to the Lord, and no man can know whether he is thus wholly consecrated except by tribulation. That is the test. To rejoice in God's will, when that will imparts nothing but happiness, is easy even for the natural man. But no one but the renovated man... can rejoice in the Divine will when it crosses his path, disappoints his expectations, and overwhelms him with sorrow. Trials therefore, instead of being shunned, should be welcomed as the test-and the only true test-of a true state. Beloved souls, there are consolations which will pass away, but true and abiding consolation ye will not find except in entire abandonment, and in that love which loves the Cross. He who does not welcome the cross does not welcome God."

In James chapter 1 we see the exhortation to surrender.

James 1:2-4

² My brethren, count it all joy **when** ye fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

⁴ But **let** patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

We are to LET/ALLOW patience have her perfect work. This is a surrender to the trials which we face in our walk. Notice the words of Maxwell:

"Many people become nervous wrecks through holding out against and resisting some providential suffering or sickness. They persist in viewing their suffering as the work of the Devil and therefore to be resisted. Poor souls, they know not that, in most all such providences, the way of victory and peace is to accept the difficulty as from the Lord. Certainly, if they are His, the trouble must get by Him to get to them. God's way of peace

is to accept the difficulty in the spirit of their Master. As Jesus said in an hour of great turmoil, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

Let me show you from the Old Testament the results of surrender to a very high-pressure situation. In Daniel 3 we read of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and their refusal to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, so they are called before the king.

Daniel 3:13-25

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

¹⁵ Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

¹⁸ But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

¹⁹ Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

²⁰ And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

²¹ Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²² Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

²⁵ He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

This was a pressure greater than anything which we have ever experienced. To face a flaming furnace is beyond what we can imagine. The flesh of these men would have desired to compromise in order to escape the furnace, but all three of them died to self's desire and accepted the fiery furnace as God's will. I can assure you this was not easy! It was then that a fourth Person was seen, and He was the Son of God. This is exactly what happens when we die to self and we surrender to the will of God. It is then that Jesus Christ is seen in us.

Let me share with you another example of resisting and surrender to the will of God.

Jonah 1:1-3

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

² Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

³ But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

Jonah was called to go to the Assyrians and warn them of a coming judgment. But he refused. The flesh did not want to go. Jonah did not want to see these people spared because they were enemies of Israel. He may have also been fearful because of the reputation of the Assyrians. Either way he followed the desires of the flesh and refused to surrender to the will of the Lord. God then sent out a great storm and after the lots were cast the mariners found the storm was due to Jonah's choice. He then told them to cast him overboard and it was then that he died to self. He was cast over the side and was in the belly of the great fish for three days.

Jonah 1:17

17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

So, when Jonah finally died to the flesh, we can say that Jesus Christ was seen in his life. Notice the Words of Jesus:

Matthew 12:39-40

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Now let me show you what happened when Jonah died to the flesh and surrendered to the will of God.

Jonah 3:1-5

And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

Here we see the power of God in his ministry. The entire city repented from the greatest to the least.

Let us notice the words of Mrs. Penn-Lewis as she tells of a crisis in her life which came after her deliverance from the dominion of sin. While enjoying her happy, joyous experience, she began to read a volume on the Cross. She says,

"As I read the book, I clearly saw the way of the Cross, and all that it would mean. At first I flung the book away, and said, "No, I will not go that path. I shall lose all my GLORY experience." But the next day I picked it up again, and the Lord whispered so gently, "If you want deep life, and unbroken communion, with God, this is the way." I thought, "Shall I? NO!" And again I put the book away. The third day I again picked it up. Once more the Lord spoke, "If you want fruit, this is the path. I will not take the conscience joy from you;

you may keep it if you like; but it is either that for yourself, or this and fruit. Which will you have?" And then by His grace, I said, "I choose the path for fruitfulness," and every bit of conscience experience closed. I walked for a time in such complete darkness - the darkness of faith- that it seemed almost as if God did not exist. And again, by His grace I said, "Yes, I have only got what I agreed to," and on I went. I did not know what the outcome of this would be, until I went to take some meetings, and then I saw the fruit.

From that hour I understood, and I knew, intelligently, that it was dying, not doing, that produced spiritual fruit... **The secret of a fruitful life is - in brief - to pour out to others and want nothing for yourself: to leave yourself utterly in the hands of God and not care what happens to you."**

Conclusion:

It is only when we surrender to the Cross that others are then able to see Jesus Christ in us. Maxwell says,

"There is a sense in which Christ must be lifted up in flesh and blood before the eyes of the world. Only thus can He still, "draw all men."

John 12:32

³² *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*

"There is only one way in which you and I can draw souls to Jesus Christ. That is by the way of the Cross, the way of sacrifice, the way of death. A Spirit-filled evangelist, much used and abused, said concerning the secret of his fruitful ministry: "We personified Someone, and that was the attraction. I have not the insufferable conceit to suppose that it was anything in me that drew them. I said to Jesus: "I will suffer anything if you will give me the keys: And if I am asked what was the secret of our power, I answer: first, love; second, love; third, love. And if you ask how to get it, I answer: first, by sacrifice; second, by sacrifice; third, by sacrifice."