

TRUTH COMMUNITY

- TEACHING GOD'S PEOPLE GOD'S WORD -

How to Motivate a Godly Heart #1

Selected Scriptures

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We are going to return this morning to our study of 1 John. This is a different kind of message for me. Turn to the book of 1 John as we begin this morning. We are going to examine a few different passages of scripture.

As we have said throughout our study of 1 John (I think this is the 18th message that I have done out of this book so far) we said in part that John wrote this letter because he was concerned to promote their personal holiness. He wants them to grow in righteousness, he wants them not to sin. Look at chapter 2:1, this is one of his purposes among others that he writes in chapter 2:1, he says:

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

John has the heart of a pastor who loves God, who loves Christ, who sees something of the implications of the holiness of God for the way that people of God should live. And he understands that Christians will know the deepest extent, or the fullest extent I should say, of God's blessing on their life, their soul is going to enjoy the greatest prosperity if they walk in obedience to God rather than stumbling along in sin and unrighteousness. And as part of that emphasis on holiness, last week we looked at verses 15-17 in part. Look at chapter 2:15. John calls them to separate themselves from worldliness, to separate themselves from ungodly desires and ungodly ambitions that are tied to the environment in which they live—and this instruction is applicable to us today. Look at what he says in verse 15:

Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father, but it is from the world, and the world is passing away and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

The desire to have things, the desire to indulge in things, the desire to acquire things as someone helpfully summarized it for me after I preached last week, John says don't give yourself over to those things that are rooted in the world environment in which you live. The world environment is dominated by the evil one. Don't mistake the superficial allure of these temptations and these lusts and these ambitions, don't mistake those as something that are good and profitable for you, they come from the devil himself, they come from the world system that he orchestrates and oversees.

And John, as he is writing, he is helping them see through the temptations, see through the ungodliness of it in order to have clarity of thought so that they will more naturally resist it and turn away from it and embrace the godliness that he is laying out for them in this letter. He is appealing to their mind and to their understanding. He says these things are from the world's system and in verse 17 he says these things are passing away. And so, he says, therefore, as a result of the reality of these things, he says don't give yourself over to them. Instead, invest yourself in the will of God so that your obedience will bring eternal reward and blessing to you—blessing now, blessing throughout all of eternity, give yourself over to the things of God, he says, so that you spare yourself the harm and the disaster and the sadness and the ruin of pursuing these things—lust of the eyes and the flesh and the boastful pride of life.

Now, preparing for that passage sparked in me a number of thoughts that I wanted to include last week, but I couldn't because I knew I was already going to preach too long as it was. But I was intrigued by John's method of appealing to them. I was intrigued by the way that he strengthens us against sin because in telling them don't love the world, he doesn't leave it as a bare command, he says here is why you should not love the world. He appeals to their understanding, he appeals to their mind and wants to open their mind for an understanding because he knows that if they embrace these things in their mind, it will change the way they view the temptation and therefore they will be less likely to fall prey to the temptation when they see it for what it really is—he is appealing to their understanding.

What I want you to see is that that is the scriptural pattern, that is the scriptural pattern for strengthening yourself against sin. What we need to overcome sin in our lives is so much more than having an accountability partner (at the risk of rocking a few people's worlds in saying that) what we need is more than having an accountability partner, we need more than someone saying don't do that. We need to have our mind cultivated in the rich truths of God which will attract our heart toward obedience rather than toward sin. I want to show you a couple of things to help lay the groundwork for what I am going to do here. We are talking about a method of thought, we are talking about how to cultivate a mindset that is established against sin rather than walking through life with desires that rise and fall depending on how strong the temptation is. We need an anchor that keeps us from being tossed to and fro and that anchor is a mindset that is rooted in a love and an affection for the true and lovely and holy things of God. It is more than this external stuff, it is about what is going on in your mind, what is going on in your heart, that is what will transform you—I can't say it any more simply than that. Romans 12:2 for example says:

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed...

How Paul, am I transformed? How can I be transformed when I am living in the midst of this world environment that is everything that I see and is all around me?

...be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Over in the book of Philippians 4:8, listen to how Paul addresses it to the church of Philippi, he says:

Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

He points their mind to truth, to purity, to the good and lovely things of the holiness of God and you cultivate your mindset toward these things. Now, in those verses essentially what Paul is saying is don't be conformed to the mindset and the values of your environment.

Beloved, if you want to get serious about holiness, if you want to get serious about cultivating practical righteousness in your life, understand that it is your mind that is where the battle is, it is your mind where you carry out this battle, the things that happen externally are simply an overflow of what is going on in your heart and what you are thinking about. I realize that there is a conflict of desires, we need the power of the Spirit to lift us above those desires, to help separate us from sin, but what the Spirit uses are these principles and these truths from the word of God that change our perspective.

So, if someone, a professing Christian, is walking around and externally things look okay, we know how to show up on Sunday morning spiffed up a bit and externally everything looks okay, but if inside that person is filled with ungodly passions, pride, greed, bitterness (I pause there because I know that's an issue) laziness, ingratitude towards God, understand that those things are the soil in which other kinds of sin grow and you have to deal with those heart issues. Those things that are going on in your mind, you have to be able to set those aside and replace them with true and godly thoughts and principles that guide your thinking and guide your passions in order for serious Christian character growth to occur. Proverbs 4:23 says:

Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 27:19 says:

As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects man.

What you are on the inside is who you really are, it is where your character is, that is what you are, that is who you are. And what you think about and what you treasure, what is important to you, what you set your affections on over time, that is what shapes your character. When you think on true and holy things as a true believer with the Spirit of God dwelling within you, you will increasingly desire to conform your life to those holy things and then your behavior becomes conformed as well. You must meditate on certain truths, you must think on them, you must work through them in order for this kind of transformation to take place.

And so what we are going to talk about today is so much more and so much deeper than how to overcome a bad habit. These things that we are going to talk about will help you over time to overcome a bad habit, but what I want you to see is, as we start, what I am talking about, what I

am going after for in your heart is a comprehensive matrix of the way to think about life, how to think about yourself in light of the fact that you are living in the presence of God and what it is that you set your affections on as you walk through this world. These things are what should influence your motivations as you submit to the work of the Spirit of God in your heart.

Now, what I am going to give you are nine—count them, nine biblical truths that should motivate your heart toward holiness and away from worldliness—nine of them. And listen, you might think that's such a long list—I'll never remember that Pastor Don, how can you lay nine on me all at once? Well, if you knew that I actually had 15 (laughter) you would be commending me rather than wondering what in the world I was up to. Here's the deal. I don't expect you to absorb all of this this morning. Instead, what I want to give you is an expansive list, not even an exhaustive list, an expansive list that you can think about and that you can meditate on different aspects of it in the days to come. What we are going to talk about are not anything new really, but we tend to think about these truths in isolation, we think about them abstractly rather than seeing them as interconnected with other things that should influence our heart toward holiness and away from sin.

Fundamentally, we ask this question, why is it that I should resist sin and pursue a holy frame of mind? Why should I resist sin and not give my mind over to sin? Why should you not indulge in fantasy thoughts? Why should be not so wrapped up in this world?

What I want to do is give you nine reasons that will, I trust, being used by the Spirit of God to come home with power in your mind and let you see them. I want you to think about these familiar truths in the context of loving holiness and pursuing holiness and recognizing sin for the foul, festering boil on your soul that it is. These nine truths, when you think about your life in light of these nine truths, holiness is going to be attractive. Obedience and submission to Christ are going to be attractive to you and sin by contrast as a violation of these nine truths is going to be something that you see as utterly unthinkable.

Nine—we need to go fast I guess. When you are thinking about pursuing a holy life and resisting sin, consider:

1. The Person Who Saved You

Consider the person who saved you. Now, I think you are still in 1 John, you could go all over the New Testament with this, I am just going to one verse. Again, I am just trying to stimulate thought in a particular direction here rather than be comprehensive and exhaustive on everything that could be said. 1 John 4:9-10, remembering that he is writing to encourage these people not to sin, he is writing to encourage them toward obedience, this is part of the motivation for that, he says in verse 9:

By this the love of God was manifested in us that God had sent His only begotten Son in to the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

If you think about living a holy life, about living a sanctified life, pursuing holiness and resisting sin and temptation, consider the person who saved you. God Himself intentionally exercised specific love towards you. Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, left the glories of heaven, walked on this earth, knowing that He was headed toward a cross of shame and procured your salvation at the cost of His own life. He endured the agony of Gethsemane, He endured the shame of the cross, He endured separation from His Father, He drank the bitter cup of wrath and He did that on your behalf, out of (get this) out of a pure and holy and lofty love toward those who would believe, toward you who name the name of Christ, by name, your name written on the nail-scarred hands of Christ. The love that motivated Him to do that, the love that He sat upon you while you were still in your sins. As Paul says in Romans 5:

While we were still enemies, Christ died for us.

While you were an enemy of God, an enemy, hating Him, detesting His law, knowing all of that, knowing the total and utter depravity of your heart and that you would never take a step toward Him on your own, unaided by His Spirit, Christ steps down from heaven and as it were, walks to the cross and stretches out His hand and gives His life for you because of the special and particular love that God has on His people.

When you think about the wonder of the sacrificial love of Christ on your behalf, it should make as a fundamental premise of the way that you live life it should make sin unthinkable to you. And understand that it is much, much more than saying don't break this rule, don't look at that bad thing—it is so much more than that what we are talking about here. What we are saying is that when you sin, either externally or just in pursuing sinful selfish thoughts in your heart, when you sin like that, you are betraying a personal relationship to a loving Christ who died for you—you are violating a relationship God at the expense of the blood of Christ purchased, motivated by the eternal love of God that He set upon you. I ask you, how can you sin against that? How can you violate that kind of love with an indifferent disregard and conscious violation of pursuing what you want in your life?—that's shameful, that's unthinkable.

But on the positive side, realize that as Christ said:

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Understand that obedience to Christ is expressing love to Him, it is manifesting faithfulness to that love, it is manifesting gratitude, thankfulness for that love which purchased your salvation at the cross. And you are saying in your heart and what is framed in your heart is "Lord, my obedience flows from recognition of your love and a mutual love that I respond to you in return. This is about your love for me and my love back for you and your lordship over my life and therefore, I am happy to obey in response to the person who saved me."

In Psalm 51 when David was confessing his sin with Bathsheba to the Lord, he said:

Against thee, thee, only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.

I violated a personal love, a personal fidelity and Lord, I'm crushed by the wickedness of my heart that I confess it to you now. The thought of violating love should motivate you away from the momentary fool of sin. The thought of honoring that love, of returning that love with the love of your heart should motivate you toward holiness. That is one of the things that you consider as you work through the way that you are going to approach living out life in the presence of God.

Another thing that you consider is:

2. The Purpose of Your Salvation

You consider the purpose of your salvation. And for this again, there is a lot of places that we could go. Turn back a couple of pages to the book of 2 Peter. I want you to see two or three verses there. Go back to the book of 2 Peter which is just before the book of 1 John. Consider the purpose of your salvation, here's what I mean by that. One of the primary reasons that God saved you was because He was saving you so that you could live on to holiness and be separated from sin—this is all that we are talking about. The Bible makes it so clear that the purpose of your salvation was to deliver you from sin and on to holiness, from the kingdom of darkness and in to the kingdom of His beloved Son. The purpose was to set you in an entirely different realm than where you had been living when you were under the wrath of God, doomed to destruction and dominated by the devil. The whole purpose of being saved was to get out from under that bondage and be delivered on to the gracious rule of Christ where you would live out a holy life—that's the whole purpose of your salvation. Look at 2 Peter 1, beginning in verse 3 where Peter says:

Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence, for by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises so that by them, you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason, because you have escaped the corruption, for this very reason therefore, applying all diligence in your faith, supplying moral excellence...

The purpose of your salvation is for you to be holy. Now if you wondered and wrestled at a philosophical level about why am I here, here you go. You are here in order to live out a holy life in the mist of the circumstances and relationships that God has given to you. It is very fundamental, it is very simple, when you understand and embrace your purpose in life and your life is to be holy before a holy God, to be holy as He is holy and you see that and you understand it and you embrace it, and that is a bedrock principle through which you do life whereupon which you build life, it changes the way that you view temptations, it changes the way that you view those things when you come in to your path, when evil thoughts insinuate themselves. Tempting though they may be, you know they are wicked. One of the things that gives you strength to resist that, to stop it in its track is to say "Oh, no, no, that's not the purpose for which I was saved, I was saved out of that, I want to resist that because I was saved on to holiness, not just holiness of conduct, but holiness of character and I'm going to turn from that kind of sinful

thinking and come back to thinking on my glorious Lord, the person who saved me, the one who loved me at the expense of His own life. My life has a different purpose. Christ saved me so that I could flee from lust, therefore, I will resist this temptation in my mind, I will not act on it in my person, I will resist it rather than indulge it so that I can fulfill the purpose for which I was saved.” The time for pursuing that kind of pride and sensuality is passed, salvation delivered you out of that. Listen to 1 Peter 4:1-3:

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose because he who suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lust, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

The time for those things is over, the time for cherishing those lusts in your bosom is over—it’s over beloved. So put them to death and replace your concentration on those kinds of things with the holy things of God including the purpose of your salvation.

I just want a little pastoral note here. Don’t make the mistake of thinking that giving in to sin, giving in to temptation will make the pressure of your temptation go away. The truth is that sinning once makes it easier to sin the second time. It is easier to give in when you have already been giving in, so matter how low you are in the ungodly realm of thought and conduct in your life, make your stand right where you are at and say “I’m going to take my stand here and I’m going to start from here living away from it.” And if it is I know to be true of so many of you, you have been pursuing a godly life, you have made progress in holiness, you look back and say “I’m not the same person I was six years ago or ten months ago, things have changed” oh beloved, I say this with reverence, for the love of Christ, don’t sacrifice that progress, don’t step back in to the muck that you have been working so hard to get out of, continue on, pursue it because that is the purpose of your salvation. Don’t resurrect former lusts in a moment of weakness and give them new life in your mind and conduct. If you have truly buried them, keep them buried, pile more on that grave rather than digging it up to see if you can find the coffin of sin lying under there some place so you can spring it loose—don’t do that. Cherish the work of God, cherish it, love it that has brought you to a point where your life has changed, you don’t want to go back.

So you think about the person you saved you, you think about the purpose of your salvation, thirdly: (These all start with “t” I don’t know if I mentioned that. And remember, there were 15, all of them starting with “t”)

3. The Purity of Your Conscience

Consider the purity of your conscience. (I’ll have to start going more quickly here) I have often been strengthened personally to pursue holiness and resist temptation by realizing and remembering that I did not want to deal with the burden of an accusing conscience on the other side of the sin—that’s miserable. So, protect the purity of your conscience.

Couple of verses for you from 1 Timothy; 1 Timothy 1:5 for example says:

The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Chapter 1:18-19:

This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

If you are here, you confessed every sin that you know of, you are not conscious of carrying any unconfessed, unrepentant sin and you are enjoying the purity of a clear and clean conscience, treasure that. Recognize that as being one of the purposes of your salvation is to maintain that pure conscience so that when temptation comes the next time, you say “No, I’m not going to indulge in that because I want to keep a good conscience, I want a pure conscience. I know that that’s going to violate it and I am mindful of the warning of scripture that when people sacrifice their conscience, they suffer shipwreck in regard to their faith.” If I could personalize temptation for a moment, say “No, I’m not going with you because my conscience is too important to me. I’m not going to leave behind the good conscience that I love, that God has given to me out of obedience and the purity and the salvation that Christ has given and has purified my conscience—I’m not leaving that to go wallow in the dirt, it’s just too important to me. I love the purity of conscience too much” you say to yourself.

And therefore, you stiffen your resolve, you establish firmness of purpose in your mind that says “I’m not going to sin because I don’t want to deal with the accusing conscience that comes afterward.” No my friends, avoid that, turn from that which would violate your conscience in the first place and pursue those things of scripture, those things of God that would strengthen your conscience and affirm the rightness of your life in the God-given faculty that helps you determine right from wrong in those situations.

So, the person, who saved you, the purpose of your salvation, the purity of your conscience, these things are so formative:

4. The Prayers of the Righteous

Consider the prayers of the righteous, there is a couple of different places that I want to go with this. You need to consider your pursuit of sanctification, your pursuit of holiness. You need to consider the cultivation of a godly character in the context of the prayers of the righteous. Here is what I mean by that. In Matthew 6:13, part of the model prayer that Jesus gave to His disciples, the model prayer that should determine the things by which you pray before God. One of the key principles He stated, one of the things that we are to ask God for, Matthew 6:13 says, our Lord Himself taught us to pray this way, He says:

Do not lead us in to temptation, but deliver us from evil...

Now, think about this with me, if you are sincerely praying that way as a matter of life pattern, part of your heart desires before the throne of God is in line with what Jesus says, you are praying “God, I just pray that today you would not lead me in to temptation, but you deliver me from evil, that you would help me live righteously.” We have talked about that so much in GraceLife over the past few years. And you are praying that way and you earnestly seeking that as you pray before God, let me ask you a question if that’s you, the question designed to strengthen you in your pursuit of holiness. How is it that you could pray that way in one breath “God, lead me not in to temptation, but deliver me from evil. In Jesus’ holy name I pray, amen.” You pray that way and you mean it.

How could you then step over here in your next breath and pursue something that you know is wrong and you know you are pursuing temptation? How could you begin to tolerate that kind of duplicity in your soul that on the one hand you pray to God and ask Him for something then on the other hand with your self-will you are pursuing something that is in direct contradiction to what you were asking God to give to you—that’s totally absurd. Recognize the duplicity of that, recognize the shame of that—that is shameful to be that way. Recognize the shame of that and learn to hate sin all the more because you are motivated by the prayers of the righteous. You are motivated by the way that Jesus taught us to pray and you see how ugly and awful sin and the festering sins that you carry in your heart and say “I’ve got to get away from that, I have to turn that away, I reject that from the bottom of my soul, I reject that because it’s so shameful. Instead, I want to embrace that which is consistent with the way Jesus taught me to pray.” “I’ve been praying this way” you say to yourself “therefore, I’m going to pursue that which is consistent with righteous praying.”

One other thing I would say about this as you consider the prayers of the righteous. I want you to think about this as well. For those of you that identify yourself with Grace Community Church, you are members here or you consider yourself as part of the life of this church, I want you to understand I know for personal fact that often the elders of this church pray consistently for your growth and holiness. They pray that this church would be marked by obedience to Christ, growth and sanctification, that your life would be pure and a pleasing sacrifice to God through Christ—they pray that way for you, we pray that way for you. I ask you in light of that, in light of the prayers of the righteous, would you truly interfere in their prayers by pursuing your own sinful rebellion? Would you know on the one hand that the leaders of this church are earnestly beseeching God to cause you to grow in sanctification, would you take that and know that and say “Let me just interfere, I’m going to sin here?”—that’s unthinkable. You have to see yourself as part of the broader context, when you sin, you are not sinning in isolation, you are sinning within a context of the person who saved you, the purpose of your salvation, the purity of your conscience and you are sinning against the prayers of the righteous, even your own.

And the darkness of sin stands out in such bold contrast against the pure, snow-driven whiteness of these holy things that are shown to us in the word of God, things which if you are true believer, your heart affections were leaning this way anyway. If you are a true Christian, everything that I am saying here are so basic you are saying “Yes, that is me, that is what I love

and I am going to pursue that which is consistent with those higher loves, those higher motivations rather than sacrificing them on the altar of sin and self.” Stop recognizing these things and setting your heart to pursue them. As you consider the pursuit of holiness and resistance of sin, you need to:

5. The People of God

You need to consider the people of God, this point builds on the last one. You need to understand that your sin, even your private sins, just your thoughts and your imaginations, these sins affect the people of God, they affect believers. Your sin puts a stumblingblock before them. When you sin, you make it easier for other people to sin, they say, “Well, Tom sins, so why not me?” No, you can’t live that way, you can’t be so selfish, we can’t be so selfish in the way that we live our lives. You discourage other people when you pursue sin. You make it easier for them to justify their own sin, you make it easier for people who are struggling or questioning their faith—Look at that hypocrisy, how could Christianity be true if that’s the kind of hypocrisy that those people live in. You enable those kinds of mocking, struggling questions when you pursue sin in your life. You need to think about the people of God.

In Psalm 73, you can turn there if you want, I have to go through this quickly. In Psalm 73, the psalmist was struggling with the issue of prosperity of the wicked and he was discouraged because he was pursuing a righteous life and struggling while he looked and saw wicked people prospering and things were going well with them. In Psalm 73:13, he is thinking this through in his mind, he is wrestling through these issues in his mind and he is about to come to a conclusion in verse 13, this is the conclusion that he almost reaches, he says:

Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence. (He says, this has been a waste of time to pursue a pure life) For I have been stricken all day long and chastened every morning.

This is what he is thinking in his mind. I have wasted my time pursuing righteousness because it has led to heart ache for me while people who are wicked are off in prosperity. Look at what he says in verse 15, this is how he considers the people of God, he says “If I had said, I will speak thus...” in other words, He is saying, if I had spoken and verbalized these doubts that faith was in vain, if I had done that, look at verse 15:

If I had said I will speak thus, behold, I would have betrayed the generation of your children.

I can’t say that because I would have betrayed my brothers in the faith, I would have discouraged them, I would have encouraged them down the same path of despair—he says, I can’t do that. Whatever else I do with this internal struggle, I can’t verbalize that, I can’t declare that as a fact because I know what it would do to the people of God.

When you are considering a life of obedience versus a life of inconsistency of pursuing sin, you have to think about the people of God. The way that you live your life affects others. I wish you

could see in some of our elder meetings the grief that the elders feel when we are pursuing discipline against someone who is sinning openly and we have to deal with that and be faithful to our responsibilities before Christ and the scripture, but it is a grief. It is so sad to deal with people that we have been within the walls of the church for 10, 15 years and have to bring them to a point where we have to discipline them for sin in order to try to bring them to repentance—that is a grief, that is just a microcosm of the people of God. There is so much more blessing to the people of God when you are obedient and when you are joyful, because when one man sins, the rest of us feel it.

Let me say this. Even if you are only indulging private sins in your mind, understand that you compromise the luster of your own testimony because you withdraw, you don't want people to know that you are that way and so you withdraw so that you are not going to be exposed. You diminish the light of your own walk even if you think it is just the matter of something in your own mind. "The righteous are bold as a lion, evil flee when there is no one pursue it." Consider the people of God.

6. The People of the World

The whole world, lost in the darkness of sin, God saved you so that you would be a light to that dark world. Matthew 5:14 says:

You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

(V 16) Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Your obedient life, your godly, righteous, joyful life sets forth a testimony that others see and are attracted to, when you sin, you cover that up. Would you really, would you really, really now, would you really pursue that temptation? Would you continue in that sin at the expense of your testimony to people who are otherwise headed to hell—would you do that? Would you really (listen to me) would you really diminish the gravity of sin in their eyes by indulging in it yourself—would you do that? That's unthinkable, you can't live that way. And the whole point here is to cement ourselves in conviction, to have fundamental thoughts about the way to approach life, the way to think about Christ and the way my life impacts others, the way that my life intersects with the prayers of the righteous, to do that in such a fundamental way that it gives you a garrison, it gives your mind a fortress from which to defend yourself against sin and temptation.

Do you see that we are talking about so much more than how to overcome a bad habit? If you cannot, I want you to see that maybe you don't see that. This is so much more than dealing with one individual sin. This is about how to approach life, this is about forming the deepest affections of your heart and saying "I will live in accordance with those affections and convictions."

That was sixth and I am out of time. I am going to be back in GraceLife the week after Ian

Murray comes, and finish this message. Maybe I'll resurrect those other six to make the full 15, I don't know. I may have to do that just to prove that I could. But we will come back, there is so much beloved.

What I want you to see, what I want you to walk away with is that the power for pursuing holiness lies in loving God and loving these truths more than you love sin.

Let's pray.

Father, we commit all of this to you, so much said and so much left unsaid. Fundamentally at the core of it, we realize that the holy God has saved us so that we might walk in obedience to you and to reflect your holiness in our lives. Help us dear God to do that. Form in us a depth of conviction that would lead us to pursue righteousness and resist sin in every form that it takes. For each one here Father that deals with a particular besetting sin, whatever that besetting sin may be, may these truths strengthen them to rise above that which enslaved them, has caused them to stumble, that has entangled them, Father, may the surpassing purity and greatness of these truths motivate us all, deep in our hearts, deep in our character, to live in accordance with that which we say we believe.

For those that are here that do not know Christ, who know nothing about these affections Father, save them as well. Extend your mercy just a little further, extend your mercy to the one resisting, extend your mercy to the one so bound up in sin. Open their eyes to the glories of Christ, the perfect work of redemption on their behalf so that they would repent and put their faith in Him for eternal salvation and join the chorus of the redeemed who sing your praises. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.