

OVERCOMING OUR SINFUL NATURE BY KEEPING THE FAITH

2 Corinthians 13:5-6 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? - unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

God's will for us in Jesus is to become cleansed from our past sins through accepting Jesus as our Savior, receiving His forgiveness for our sins and beginning to live a new life under His Lordship.

In the Baptismal Covenant we reject Satan, and the spiritual forces of evil that corrupt and destroy us. We also renounce our own sinful desires that draw us away from the love of God.

What we realize very quickly is that our decision to turn to Jesus as our savior is relatively easy. But to deal with sin and follow Jesus as Lord is quite another matter. Our propensity for sin needs to be understood and dealt with on an ongoing basis. One quickly concludes that human effort is not enough. We need the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the knowledge of scripture, the sacraments of the church, especially Holy Communion and Confession and accountability in the community of faith to stay the course.

Unfortunately, most of us are still influenced, and to some degree, governed by the old nature. And in today's culture a prominent thought, first articulated by Plato and Aristotle, teaching Man is basically good due to progressively attained virtues. Contrary to contemporary thought and philosophy, man was born with a sinful nature that emanates from Adam:

Romans 5:14

Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

This morning we will look at God's call to a new life with Him and the particular challenge of.....

Overcoming The Nature of Adam

Colossians 3

v. 1-3 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

v. 5-7 Therefore, consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, and in them you also once walked when you were living in them.

v. 8-10 But now you also put them all aside; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.

v. 12-14 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you. And beyond all these things, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

What are we to seek? **THINGS ABOVE**

Where are we to set our minds? **THINGS ABOVE**

How are we to consider our earthly bodies regarding sin? **DEAD TO SIN**

What attitudes are we to put away? **ANGER, WRATH, MALICE**

What characteristics are we to “put on”? **HEART OF COMPASSION, FORMOST LOVE (AGAPE)**

Ephesians 5

v. 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

v. 3 – 5 Do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving thanks. For this you know with certainty that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

v. 8-11 For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth) trying to learn what is

pleasing to the Lord. And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.

Who are we to imitate? **GOD**

What is not to be named among us? **IMMORALITY, IMPURITY, GREED**

Who will not inherit the kingdom? **THOSE WHO DO NOT IMITATE GOD**

What are the limits to our conversation? **NO FILTHINESS, SILLINESS, COARSE JESTING**

What are we to learn? **WHAT IS PLEASING TO GOD THROUGH PRAYER AND READING**

What are we to expose? **UNFRUITFUL DEEDS OF DARKNESS**

I Peter 4

v. 2-5 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, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. And in all of this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excess of disobedience, and they malign you; but they shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

How are we to live the rest of our time in the flesh? **WILL OF GOD**

What behaviors should now be over? **FOCUS ON SENSUALITY, LUST DRUNKENNESS, IDOLATRIES**

Who will be surprised? **OLD ACQUAINTANCES**

Romans 8

v. 5-8 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

The mind set on the flesh brings forth **DEATH**.

The mind set on the Spirit brings forth **LIFE**.

The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward **GOD**

The mind set on the flesh does not **SUBJECT ITSELF** to the law of God.

The mindset of the flesh cannot **PLEASE** God.

Romans 12

v. 1-2 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

How are we to present our bodies to God? **LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY, ACCEPTABLE**

We are not to be **CONFORMED** to this world.

We are to be transformed by the **RENEWING** of our minds.

Galatians 5

v. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”

v. 16-17 But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

v. 19-21 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing and the like, of which I warned you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

v. 24-25 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit let us also walk by the Spirit.

How do you avoid carrying out the desires of the flesh? **WALK BY THE SPIRIT AND READING HOLY SCRIPTURE**

There are three categories of sin in the passage above:

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| Physical | Drunkenness, immorality, impurity, carousing, sensuality |
| Spiritual | Sorcery, idolatry |
| Emotional | Envy, disputes, outbursts of anger |

If we belong to GOD through Jesus we have **CRUCIFIED** the flesh with its passions.

So what have we learned?

- We need to keep our minds on the things above and seek the things above.
- We need to renew our minds through the study and application of scripture.
- We need to put off the “old nature” – acts of obedience and decision of the will.
- We need to put on the “new nature” – acts of obedience and decision of the will.
- We need to crucify the flesh and its passions.
- We need to walk by the Spirit.
- We need to be filled with the Spirit.
- We need to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
- We need to expose the works of darkness.
- We are not to conform to this world but to be transformed.

- Sin is serious.
- It took Jesus to the cross.
- It is to be repented of and forsaken.
- This is not a casual reality.
- The wages of sin is death.

Our effort to overcome the nature of Adam is ongoing, difficult and requires a desire to please God:

Galatians 1:10

For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man I would not be a servant of God.