

“Contrary Obligations”

Romans 8:12-13

May 16, 2021

I. We Are Not Under Obligation to *Serve* the Flesh (8:12-13a)

- A. Our obligation to the flesh has ceased despite how often we forget this or excuse our remaining sin.
- B. Living obligated to the flesh results in *death*:
 - 1. Eternal judgment for the unbelievers/false Christians.
 - 2. Sometimes physical death for wayward believers.

1 Corinthians 11:30-32 - ³⁰ For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

Revelation 2:22-23 - ²² 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. ²³ 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

- 3. “Death” to our relationships, joy, and spiritual vitality.

“Sin un-tunes...the heart itself, by entangling its affections. The soul that is entangled with worldly pursuits cannot be full of God. Sin will also darken the soul and deprive it of its comfort and peace. Sin is like a cloud that intercepts all the beams of God’s love – John Owen

II. We Are Under Obligation to, by the Spirit’s power, *Kill* the Flesh (8:13b)

- A. We need to always be putting to death our fleshly attitudes and actions.
 - 1. We should be actively killing *all* of them, not just the ones that trouble our conscience the most.
 - 2. We do this execution of the flesh through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- B. How do we kill the deeds of the flesh?

Through repentant confession of our sin to God:

- a. We need to confess our sins regularly.
- b. We need to regularly confess *all* of our sins.
- c. Through confession we are spiritually enabled:

Hebrews 4:16 - Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- 2. Through avoiding known opportunities to sin:
 - a. Like Joseph did (Gen. 39:12), flee temptation.

- b. Avoid tempting people, places, situations, entertainments, anything.
- c. This is often difficult.

"You cannot 'mortify' sin without the pain of the kill. There is no other way!" – Sinclair Ferguson

- 3. Through replacing fleshly attitudes and actions with godly ones:

Romans 12:2 - *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

- a. This involves scripture reading, meditation, and memorization.
- b. This involves contemplating the glories of Jesus seen in all of God's word.

- 4. Through watchful prayer:

Matthew 26:41 - *"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

- a. This is prayer for strength against unexpected temptation.
- b. We are constantly in need of enablement to respond to any situation.

- 5. All of the above must be done in prayerful reliance on the Holy Spirit.

- C. Killing the flesh is worth it because it leads to true life.

John 10:10b - *I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*