

East Cooper Baptist Church

January 15, 2017

"If You Continue... (the War Within)

Colossians 1:21-23, Romans 7:21-25

"²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister."

"²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin."

I AM IN AN ONGOING BATTLE WITH SIN BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT COMPELS ME TO OBEDIENCE.

Principles:

1. Sin is more and more WEAKENED and godliness is more and more STRENGTHENED by the intake of the Word and empowerment from the Holy Spirit.
2. Believers experience a continuous and irreconcilable war with sin and the devil.
3. Sin/disobedience may prevail for a season but...

"¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us."

1 John 2:19

"¹ Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ² Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. ³ For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. ⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. ⁷ You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance."

Psalm 32:1-7

Application:

1. Believers are at war.
2. There is a need for continuous supplies which bring strength and resolve (i.e. the means of grace).
3. The trajectory of my heart/emotions when embroiled in sin is a barometer of my standing in Christ.

“Sin also carries on its war by entangling the affections and drawing them into an alliance against the mind. Grace may be enthroned in the mind, but if sin controls the affections, it has seized a fort from which it will continually assault the soul. Hence, as we shall see, mortification is chiefly directed to take place upon the affections.”

John Owen, *Sin and Temptation*

Questions for Discussion:

1. If growth in Christ is progressive and if there is an unrelenting struggle with sin and if the “means of grace” (the Word and the Holy Spirit) are the channels of fresh supply...
 - a. What are these “means”?
 - b. How do we acquire fresh supplies?
2. What environment/mindset is most conducive in allowing sin to “prevail for a season”?
3. What is the “emotional trajectory “ of the heart? What was David's trajectory in Psalm 32?