

A Way To Stand Against Sin

Scripture

“Therefore, putting away lying, “[Let] each one [of you] speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with [his] hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.” (Eph 4:25-32 NKJV)

Devotion

In the verse immediately preceding these, Paul told the Ephesians to put on the new man. Now he gives some specifics as to how this is done. The list is not as important in that it is not exhaustive. However, the way Paul contrast sins and virtues is important. From this structure we may discern a way to battle sin effectively, a way to put on the new man.

Very simply Paul says the way to battle lying is to speak the truth; the way to battle the temptation to steal is to work; and the way to avoid corrupt communication is to edify others. At first this may not look like a prescription at all. However, when we understand the principle of exclusivity as it relates to the Spirit, we see this is the only way for victory.

“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.” (Gal 5:16-17 NKJV)

If we practice good communication by the Spirit of God, then the flesh is beat down and mortified when it comes to our communication. Even beyond this, practicing holiness renders the flesh weak in all areas. However, targeting specific sins can be effective with one word of warning. Don’t come at the sin from a negative perspective.

What I mean by that is, don’t focus on the sin. Rather, “. . . brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things [are] noble, whatever things [are] just, whatever things [are] pure, whatever things [are] lovely, whatever things [are] of good report, if [there is] any virtue and if [there is] anything praiseworthy— meditate on these things.” (Php 4:8 NKJV) That doesn’t mean never pray for victory, but you are to reckon yourself dead indeed to sin (Rom. 6:11). What you want to avoid is always thinking about the sin. Think about the opposite virtue instead.

My dear friends stay motivated in this battle. Never stop growing in grace. There is a misunderstanding among Christians that you can just coast every now and again. The truth is when you coast you are going downhill.

“For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” (Gal 6:8 NKJV)

