

Apply The Word

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EIGHT^{ON} VIII
GOSPEL HOPE from ROMANS 8

Message Info

Title:

Led to Fight

Speaker:

Steve Heitland

Date:

April 10, 2022

Scriptures:

Romans 8:12-17

Theme: Fight as sons to receive the Son's reward.

Introduction: Apart from Christ, our lives are a moral failure. We are unwilling and unable to live as God commands, and we are dedicated to our own sense of pleasure and fulfillment. Yet when we come to Christ, we are transformed in every way, including morally. We now want to please God and we are able to do so. Yet we still have remaining sin in our lives, and so we are called to do battle with it until Jesus returns.

Paul gives us 2 categories of insights into our battle against sin:

1. The nature of our battle

Paul reiterates: we are not debtors to the flesh. We have no obligation to obey it. The flesh is the sinful desire for independence from God, seeking to live life on our own terms and for our own glory. Living for the flesh always leads to death. Christians, however, can put to death the deeds of the body—but only by the Spirit. All true Christian growth is by grace. Putting sin to death entails self-denial. It means saying no to things that may feel very powerful and attractive to us. We must mortify our pride so that we can obey God. If we trifle with our sins, we are fools. As Owen wrote, 'unmortified sin' hinders us in 2 ways: it weakens and darkens the soul. The Spirit leads us in another direction—to fight. The Spirit works in us so that we are willing and able to put sin to death.

2. The gifts of our reward

Paul identifies 4 gospel gifts that are meant to strengthen us in our battle to put sin to death.

- 1) *Adoption* (v. 15)—rather than hearing the call to put sin to death as a call to try harder, we must realize that our growth is by grace. And that grace is what motivates us to grow. We have not been adopted into slavery and fear, but into sonship and love. That is why we pray, "Abba! Father!", because we now *want* to cry out to God.
- 2) *Assurance* (v. 16)—in coming to the Father, we find that the Spirit is already at work within us. His work is to reassure us that we are God's children, and identity we have received as a gift.
- 3) *Inheritance* (v. 17a)—we receive all manner of blessings because we have been united with Christ, and we are blessed 'in him.' We receive what he deserves.
- 4) *Glorification* (v. 17b)—we are called to suffer with Christ. This is not to earn his favor or to purify ourselves from sin. Rather, it is our call in this life, even as we look forward with confidence to when we will be glorified with him.

Questions:

1. Are you discouraged in your fight against sin? How can you turn to your Father and rely upon his grace?
2. Are you suffering with Christ? How is he sustaining you? How are you weary?