

The Supremacy of Christ
04/23/2023 (Week 12) Colossians 3:5-11
Execute What's Earthly in You

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

Introduction & Review

- Please turn in your Bibles **to Paul's letter to the Church in Colossae, Chapter 3 verses 5-11.**
- Now as the Lee/Astfalk small group, who are currently studying Paul's Letters could tell you...
- Paul (Inspired by the Holy Spirit) wrote **at least 13** of the **27 New Testament Books.**
- There is some debate about Hebrews.
- **And** one of the things that marks his writings **is that** Theology (doctrinal truth) comes first and then is followed by **practical instruction.**
- Paul calls **his readers** to live out the **theological truths** he proclaims.
- Some of you might remember this from our study of his Letter to the **Romans.**
- In **Chapters 1-11** Paul presents deep majestic Christ centered theology which culminates in this tribute to **God:**

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36)

- And this is immediately followed by a very practical call in the next verse:

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God... (Romans 12:1)

- **First**, theology then **second**, practical instruction for living that theology out.
- And this same pattern is found in most if not all of Paul's writings, including **Colossians.**
- As I mentioned last week, **Chapter 3** marks this transition.
- In **Chapters 1 and 2** Paul's primary focus was **theological in nature.**
- He wrote of the **Supremacy, Preeminence of Christ in All things.**
- He explained **the nature of the false teachings (false theology)** that was seeking to divert the Colossians from Christ.
- And he **proclaimed** the believer's identity in Christ, who **they and we** are in **Christ.**
- Then in Chapter three, he transitions to the **practical instruction for living out those theological truths.**

- We saw this last week in **verses 1 & 2...**

¹ If then you have been raised with Christ,

- Based on who you are in Christ, that you have been raised with Christ...
- Then practical and foundational application...

seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (Colossians 3:1-2)

- Why should those who have been raised with Christ seek and set our minds on the things that are above...
- **Verses 3 & 4.**

³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4)

- Again, based on the **theological truths of Christ's Supremacy and our identity in Christ** which Paul has already detailed in **Chapter 2**.
- We are called to obey the **foundational command** to pursue what's above.
- **So that was last week.**
- And this week and beyond we'll continue to see **practical, positive instruction** based on the theological truths.
- Beginning in **verse 5**, Paul gives another **single command**.

1. The Instruction to Execute What's Earthly in You

- In **verse 5** Paul writes...

⁵ Put to death therefore

- Therefore, Based on the theology that has gone before,
- Based on who Christ is and who you are in Christ.
- Based on your death and resurrection with Christ,

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Colossians 3:5)

- **Last week** we talked about many earthly, temporal things.
- Paul instructed us to **pursue** the things **above not the things of this earth**.
- Whether **those earthly temporal things** are good or bad, sinful, or not,
- our focus must always be on the **eternal things, the above things, the things of God**.
- As Jesus said, **Seek ye first the Kingdom of God**.

- Now here in **verse 5**, Paul focuses not on **all earthly things**,
- but specifically, ***what is earthly in you (and me)***.
- You see, even though as Paul wrote in **verse 3**...
- ³ ***...you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.***
- Your **old self** has died, and you've been raised with Christ to a new life hidden with Christ in God.
- **Even though that is true**, there remains a **residue of your old self**, often called **the flesh**.
- But because of what Christ has done for you, and the fact that you are with Christ in God,
- that **old self (the flesh)** is not who you truly are, **and ultimately has no power over you!**
- **However**, this side of heaven, God in his wisdom and Sovereignty for his purposes,
- **including the testing of our faith**, allows the **residue of our old self** to remain.
- And therefore, instead of living out our new life in Christ, instead of being who we truly are,
- We **can** still (at times) give in to our old sinful self.
- Therefore, ***what is earthly in you and me***, the **residue of our old self** must be dealt with.
- And Paul is **clear** about what to do with it...
- Like James Bond, we have a **license to kill**, put to death what is earthly in you.
- That phrase ***"Put to death"*** is the Greek word ***necro*** where we get the word **necrosis** and other death related works.
- ***It means... to make dead, to slay, to mortify (deadened), to destroy.***
- Paul **then** goes on to list what is earthly in **you**,
- The **you** refers specifically to the **Colossian believers** but it also refers to all believers.
- This is what is earthly in you and me.
- Paul gives two lists of sins, one in **verse 5** and the other in **verse 8 and 9**.
- Now these lists are not exhaustive, they don't cover every sin imaginable,
- but they do cover several areas that I assume the Colossians were struggling with and I know we struggle with.
- In **verse 5**, Paul specifically addresses four elements of **sexual sin** which must be executed.
- The **first** is **"sexual immorality"** which is one word in the Greek (***porneian***), from which we get the word **pornography**.
- It includes every kind of **immoral sexual relation**.
- **Fornication** (sex outside marriage)
- **Adultery** (sex between two people when at least one is married to someone else)
- **Homosexuality** (sex between people of the same gender) **Etcetera...**
- Because of the Godless nature of our current culture, what many, even in the church, have forgotten is that God's word again and again calls his people to **Chastity**.
- Which is a **seldom heard word** that means refraining from **sex outside of marriage**.

- Now in the ancient Greco-Roman world of the Colossians,
- all kinds of **sex outside of marriage were common, accepted even.**
- In fact, **sex** played a part in their religious life.
- For example, there were **temple (religious sites) prostitutes (those who were paid for sex).**
- So, the Bible's call to **Chastity** was **radical** in the pagan culture of Paul's day,
- And unfortunately, it's just as radical today,
- When we advocate for **sexual Biblical morality**, we are labeled as **judgmental or old fashioned.**
- Chastity is no longer a value in our "modern pagan" culture.
- Which means as a believer it becomes more difficult and more crucial to put to death, **destroy** the **earthly sexual immorality that is in you.**
- The **second sexual sin** which we're to kill is **"impurity,"**
- This refers to **moral uncleanness.**
- It certainly includes **sexual immorality**, but it is broader and subtler.
- In not only involves impure actions but also, impure **thoughts and speech,**
- Sexual fantasies, coarse jokes, flirting...
- All of which originates in **polluted heart or filthy mind.**
- And Paul says, put to death, **kill** the earthly **impurity** that is in you.
- **Third** is **"passion,"** this refers to inordinate **affection or lust,**
- This is a sin of the mind, to **sexually desire** someone who is not yours to desire.
- Remember Jesus said...

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)

- God not only wants our **actions** to be **pure** but also our thoughts.
- God cares about our heart.
- Therefore, Paul says, put to death, **slay** the **earthly passion** that is in you.
- We see this also in the **fourth and final element** of sexual sin is **"evil desires."**
- Like passion (or lust), this speaks to the emotions, longing for what is forbidden,
- What is evil, wicked, self-serving, especially in the area of sexuality.
- And Paul says, put to death, rid yourself of **earthly evil desires.**
- So, we've summarized the **four sexual sins** that Paul has listed.
- Certainly, these were part of what the **Colossian believers** struggled with,
- Otherwise, Paul would not have listed them.
- He would not have had to call for **their death** if they were not alive in some way.

- And we all know that these sins are alive and well in our day.
- It seems to me that this area of sexual sin is more prominent in our society than ever before.
- And therefore, **more in need of being executed in the lives of believers.**
- I think back to my childhood and even my teen years, I was certainly exposed to **sexuality**.
- But compared to what my son, and daughter had to face, with the continual lowering of sexual moral standards and the rise of the **internet** with its touch of a button sexual images.
- What I faced was minor compared to what my kids faced,
- And it's just getting worse, we need to **pray for our children and grandchildren** as they grow up in a world gone **sex crazy**.
- One commentator wrote, ***it's conceivable that on a given evening of TV watching, you can see more sexual sensual sights than your grandparents did in their lifetimes.***
- **And Way back in the January 1984** issue of Psychology Today,
- a magazine not known for promoting Biblical values,
- stated that pervasive cultural **desensitization** has taken place through films which feature sexual violence and suggested that such films be packaged with warning labels (as are cigarettes)!
- That was in **1984**, speaking only of movies, that people had to choose to go to and pay for.
- Today, **much worse images** are **cabled into our households**,
- They are on our TVs and computers and phones and tablets.
- All available at the touch of a button.
- Now that's the culture we must live in...
- And that's the culture seeking to lead us down the path of **sexual destruction**.
- But unfortunately, this culture is impacting the church.
- There is (it seems) an amazing capacity for **self-delusion** among "**Christians**" with respect to sexual sin.
- I've known professing, Bible-carrying "Christians" who convinced themselves that God was okay with their specific **fornication**.
- I've known Christian who were involved in ministry, but at home watched things that were filled with sexual immorality.
- Even more tragic, the delusion is so deep that "Christians" often see no inconsistency in their behavior.
- Justifying their choices with the lame excuse that the acting and story are amazing!
- Or they need to keep up with what is happening in our culture if they are going to minister to non-believers.
- We say we live for the **God of the Bible**, but our lives often show we live for **the God of entertainment**, regardless of the **sinful sexual nature of that entertainment**.

- Look, I'll be honest with you, I have a TV and I sometimes watch it.
- But I've pretty much given up on anything produced in the last 20 years or so.
- Currently my go to show is Gunsmoke, which is fairly wholesome but does include saloon girl scenes.
- So, I pray for myself and for each one of us here today that we will take God's word seriously and ***Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire,***
- And to that Paul adds...

and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Colossians 3:5)

- The word for "**covetousness**" here could also be translated **avarice or greediness**,
- It means not merely the desire to possess more than one has,
- but more than one ought to have, **particularly that which belongs to someone else.**
- Now covetousness certainly has its lustful sexual aspects.
- But we can also covet many other things, **that's why the 10th Commandment is clear...**

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." (Exodus 20:17)

- We want what our neighbor has, we not only what his **wife** but we want his stuff as well.
- **Covetousness** points to the great sin of **materialism** or **earthlyism**.
- We desire what is earthly. And Paul says it is **idolatry**.
- It turns the earthly things, the temporal material things into gods.
- It's trusting in what you have, what you own, what you have saved, above the God who created you.
- It is true that whatever you put your trust in is what you worship.
- And unfortunately, materialism is the true religion of thousands of **confessing Christians today**.
- There is a sense in which **covetousness** is even more dangerous than sexual sin,
- because it can pass as respectable.
- So often it is the **successful covetous person** whom we honor.
- As the proverb goes: ***If a man is drunk with wine, we kick him out of the church; if he is drunk with money, we make him a deacon!***
- Now this is serious business, because as verse 6 says...

6 On account of these (sexual sins and covetousness) the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. (Colossians 3:6-7)

- Paul's message is clear on two fronts...
- **First**, God hates these sins, his judgmental wrath will be felt by all who continue to practice them.
- I am not totally sure what that looks like or when that wrath will come but I don't want to experience it.
- And **second**, we once walked in, lived in these sins,
- They were once part of us.
- But notice and understand that Paul uses the past tense.
- This is who you were, not who you are.
- Remember the theology, you died, were buried, resurrected, and ascended with Christ,
- This is no longer who you are, this is no longer where you need walk.
- And yet there are sinful things that we must deal with,
- **namely**, Sexual sin **and material sin, Covetousness.**
- We are to put them to death.
- And **there is more, Verse 8...**

But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another... (Colossians 3:8-9)

- Do any of these sins hit home with you?
- Do you struggle with **evil attitudes and evil speech?**
- Do you sometimes give in to "**anger, rage, malice.**"
- "**anger**" involves internal violent passion.
- "**wrath**" is that anger boiling over.
- "**Malice**" speaks of a desire to see harm come to another.
- It is the hateful attitude which plans evil and rejoices when it falls on the one it hates,
- And to these Paul adds **slander** — hurtful speech which defames the character of another.
- And "**obscene talk from your mouth**" —foul, filthy, abusive speech.
- And finally, Paul concludes his list of sins by saying... "**Do not lie to one another**" (v. 9a).
- Lying is a great sin against God, against the Church, and against love.
- Just ask Ananias and Saphira, New Testament "Christians" who were struck dead for their lies.
- As Christians we are to speak the truth in love to one another and to the rest of the world.
- We are to be people of honesty, integrity, and compassion.
- So, Paul says to the Christians of Colossae and Riverside.
- Put to death, put away, rid yourself of, destroy, kill, sexual sin, covetousness, evil attitudes, and evil speech.
- And again, the fact that Paul calls us to execute these things means they exist in us, in the church.
- We've seen them in other believers, and we've seen them in ourselves.
- And we must put them to death, **more on how to do that that later...**

- But regarding these and other sins, Paul does not want us to feel defeated.
- He wants us to know that we, by the power of God, can overcome these earthly things in us.
- Therefore, he gives us hope and help, he gives us...

2. The Incentive to Execute What's Earthly in You

- Following the list of sins to be executed, Paul **writes these encouraging words...**

⁹...seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Colossians 3:9-10)

- This is a reminder of the theology Paul has already proclaimed.
- We can put off the evil practices of our former life because,
- When we came to Christ we died to our old self, and we were raised to new life,
- we were born again.
- We were given a new self, we spiritually "took off the old self" and "put on the new self."
- That old self with its sinful ways, is not who you truly are, in Christ you are new.
- As Paul wrote to the church in Corinth...

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

- All authentic believers have a **new self**, with new spiritual desires and abilities,
- and therefore, wonderfully new possibilities in this life.
- Again and again, this new self (not the old) is who we truly are, and this new self

which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator (v. 10).

- There is constant renewal taking place in the believer's life as he or she grows in true knowledge of who God is.
- This knowledge of God, leads to progressively being conformed to the image of the Creator,
- and thus, becoming more like him.
- What an amazing thought!
- Paul says similarly in **2 Corinthians 4:16**,

¹⁶ So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. (2 Corinthians 4:16)

- And again, in **2 Corinthians 3:18**,

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

- The more we put execute the old self, the greater freedom we have for the renewal of our new self-according to the image of God.
- **What an incentive!**
- If you want to be more like Jesus, then destroy the things in your life that are not like Jesus, sexual sin, covetousness, evil attitudes, and speech just to name a few.
- Now the **final incentive** for executing what is earthly in you is that the **new self** brings a renewal that is so radical, it changes all human relationships.
- Paul says in **verse 11**:

11 Here (in the church) there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, (Sith-E-Un) slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:11)

- If we make a practice of putting to death our sexual sins and covetousness,
- If we lay aside evil attitudes and speech, we will fully experience this astounding removal of barriers in human relationships.
- The "**new self**," lived out, brings the destruction of **racial barriers** ("Greek or Jew"),
- **religious barriers** ("circumcised or uncircumcised"),
- **cultural barriers** ("barbarian, Scythian" Sith-E-Un),
- **and social barriers** ("slave or free").
- And when all these barriers are broken, **all we are left with is Christ...**
- We are bound **together by Christ**,
- For Christ **is all**, Christ is **our life**, Christ is what we live for.
- And Christ is in all, **he is in every member of the body of Christ**.
- And if we want to experience the fullness of Christ and his Body.
- Then Put to death the earthly things in you...
- **For its these** earthly things that hinder both your relationship with Christ and your relationships with His body.
- We must therefore put to death, put away: sexual sins, covetousness, evil attitudes and speech.
- Again, **Why?**
- Certainly, because they are sinful and they will bring on the wrath of God,
- they will separate us from one another and Christ.
- But also, because they are not who we truly are!
- We have a new self "which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."
- We have new relationships "Here there is no Greek or Jew ... but Christ is all, and is in all."
- **What incentive to put off the old and put on the new!**
- So, we know what to execute and we, I pray, are sufficiently incentivized to do the executing.

- But that leaves us with only one more step, one more point...
- How do we do that. Well, you must take...

3. The Initiative to Execute What's Earthly in You

- Again,

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry ⁸ ... put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another... (Colossians 3:5, 8-9a)

- So how do we obey this command?
- Well, first we need to state the obvious, implied in the command to put to death is the fact that we need to act, we need to make a decision and do something.
- We need to take the initiative **to kill the sin that is in us.**
- 17th Century theologian **John Owen** famously warns Christians,

Be killing sin or sin will be killing you. (John Owen)

- His book ***The Mortification (subduing or killing) of Sin***, which I would recommend to anyone who feels good about reading 17th century English.
- There's also a modernized version, I have listed it in your notes along with several others that I believe are helpful in killing sin.
- Owen's book is an exposition of **Romans 8:13**,

¹³ For if you live according to the flesh (what is earthly in you) you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, (what is earthly in you) you will live. (Romans 8:13)

- So, more incentive, putting to death (Killing) what is earthly in you, (the deeds of the body, Sin) is crucial if we are to live, if we are to experience new life in Christ.
- So how do we do that?
- Well, it's clear that we cannot physically kill sins, because they're not physically alive.
- They do manifest themselves in very physical ways, but the sins themselves are internal.
- Part of our mind or heart if you will, it is part of your old self with its sin nature.
- So, Paul is speaking **metaphorically.**
- **"Put to death," or as he says in verse 8 Put away**, means to discard, destroy, to rid yourself of.
- We see this in the modern phrase **"you're dead to me"**
- If someone says that to you, it means, as far as they are concerned you no longer exist,
- they want nothing more to do with you.

- And the same should be said of the sin in our lives,
- to put sin to death means as far as you are concerned it no longer exists,
- you want nothing more to do with it.
- Like **Joseph facing Potiphar's wife**, we must **run** from sin.
- So, putting to death or putting away sin in your life, **is an act of the will**.
- You must decide that you are no longer going to live based on what is earthly in you.
- Now to be sure, the only way you can make such a decision **and live it out** is by the work that Christ has done in you.
- Because of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead,
- Because of His Supremacy over, his defeat of Sin and Death,
- those who trust in him have died to our old selves and are raised into a new life.
- Plus, we've received the gift of the Holy Spirit and therefore we by the Spirit's power can now put to death what is earthly in us.
- We can take the initiative to **kill our sin**.
- And I believe we must **take the initiative** in two ways...
- We attack the earthly in us from two directions.
- The Positive and Negative if you will.
- Paul, in **verses 1-4** gave us the positive.
- **Put to death** what is earthly in you by seeking and setting your mind on the things that are above, the things of God, his plans, and purposes.
- As we talked about last week, we have no time or capacity for the things of this earth if we spend our time in **Bible Intake, Prayer, Worship, Evangelism, Discipleship, Giving** and other **Spiritual disciplines**.
- Also, and more importantly it's through these activities that our faith and relationship with God grows.
- The things of this earth are put off and the things of God are put on as we engage in Spiritual Disciplines.
- And to add to that, it has been my personal experience that in the moment of temptation to give in to what is earthly in me, **there is a clear decision to make**.
- Will I seek and set my mind on the earthly thing that is tempting me
- or will I turn away from the earthly and seek and set my mind on the things above,
- the things of God,
- Specifically, **God himself**.
- Will I turn to **God in prayer** and ask for his help to overcome my temptation.
- And I will tell you this, I have not always been perfect,
- but every time I made the decision to turn away from the temptation and turn to God.
- I have not fallen to what is earthly in me.

- I think that's what Paul means when in **1 Corinthians 10** he writes.

13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

- God provides a way of escape, and that way is Himself, seeking and setting our minds on him.
- **We will have this reinforced for us next week** when we look at **verses 12-14**.
- In **verses 5-11** Paul says to Put to death and put away sin,
- And in **verses 12** he tells us to **put on a series of virtues**.
- The Christian life is not primarily about the negative don't of sin, **although that is important**,
- but as we will see next week, we are called not just put off sin,
- but to put on the things of God that we might experience the new life in Christ.
- And one final thing we should understand about this **positive approach to killing the sin in our lives**,
- it brings great joy, satisfaction and meaning to our lives.
- You see when we sin, we are saying (if not with our words, with our actions) we are saying that we believe this sin will bring us something, joy, happiness, satisfaction, pleasure, meaning purpose, whatever.
- But the fact is, sin with its **fleeting pleasures**, ultimately brings us nothing but death,
- **the wages of sin is death**.
- Sin brings feelings of shame, guilt, emptiness, depression and worst of all separation from God.
- However, when we put to death the **sinful things** in our lives,
- and instead seek and set our minds on God and his things and his purposes,
- That's when we find true lasting joy and satisfaction and meaning and purpose and even pleasure.
- As David wrote in **Psalms 16...**

11 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalms 16:11)

- So that's the **positive aspect** of putting to death what is earthly in you.
- Seek, set your mind on, put on the things of God where we find true joy and more!
- But there is also a negative aspect that we must pursue,
- and by negative I do not mean bad or wrong.
- I mean difficult, painful, taking much effort.
- We can't forget that even though when Paul says "**Put to Death**" he is speaking **metaphorically**,
- The metaphor he uses is violent and expresses pain and effort.
- He didn't say take a break from your sins, or set them aside, he said Kill them.
- Killing naturally means **pain, blood, sweat and tears...**

- As Jesus said...

²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. (Matthew 5:29-30)

- Jesus is not advocating self-mutilation,
- He like Paul is speaking metaphorically.
- You see, it's not our eye or our hand that is the cause of our sin.
- Sin comes from what is earthly in us..., the residue of our old self.
- **And here is the POINT!**
- **Both Paul and Jesus are teaching us the great importance of ridding ourselves of sin...**
- **So much so that we must execute what is earthly in us whatever the cost!**
- Proverbs 6:27 says,

²⁷ Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? (Proverbs 6:27)

- Which has morphed into the common saying ***if you play with fire you will get burnt.***
- Many Christians are daily playing with fire of sexual sin, conventions, sinful attitudes, and speech, and are being profoundly scarred.
- Therefore, we must proactively take the initiative and **Be Killing Sin.**
- Practically speaking that may involve a number of things...
- Some general, some specific to your life.
- For example, with regards to sexual sin, we need to be like Job, who said,

¹ I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin? (Job 31:1)

- We need a covenant with our eyes to not gaze upon the **sensual things all around us.**
- Unfortunately, it's impossible to filter it all out, it's often before our eyes before we can turn our head.
- **But the question is will you continue gazing or will you turn to the sin or turn away to God.**
- We need to make some difficult choices in our lives,
- We need to go before the Lord and allow him to convict our hearts about the earthly that is in us and then we need to **ACT based on that conviction.**
- Again, we like Joseph need to run from whatever tempts us.
- There are books and magazines we must discard.
- Some of us need to toss out TVs.
- Some of us need to figure out how to filter the sexual images from our phone, tablets, computers.
- Some of us need to do the very hard thing of confessing our sins to a brother if we are male.
- or sister if we are female and asking for help, for accountability.

- In the area of covetousness, we need to counter our materialism by practicing the Spiritual Disciple of Giving.
- There is nothing that kills earthly idolatrous materialism than giving to others.
- Now some of you might be thinking, Pastor aren't you being legalistic.
- Well, just to be clear, as we talked about a number of weeks ago, legalism is when you believe and act or teach that obeying certain laws is how you are saved.
- That is not what we are talking about, we are talking about obedience to the word of God.
- Obedience to God who loves us and knows what's best for us.
- God's Word (specifically Colossians 3:5-11) instructs us today to put to death, put away, what is earthy in us.
- We've seen the meaning of this **Instruction** to Execute what is Earthly in US.
- We've given the **Incentive** to Execute what is Earthly in US.
- And we've been encouraged to take the **Initiative** to Execute what is Earthly in US.
- The only question that remains is will we respond.
- Will we live based on who we are, our new life in Christ, or who we were our old sinful self.
- Will we go to God, and by the power of His Spirit will we Execute what is Earthly in US.
- Will we put it death by seeking and setting our minds on what his above.
- And will we put it death by making hard (spirit lead) choices,
- By God's power, doing whatever is necessary to rid ourselves of the sin that so easily besets us.

Would you pray with me to that end.