

*Christ over All:
Paul's Letter to
the Colossians*

“Putting Sin
to Death,”
Part 3

Colossians 3:5–11



COLOSSIANS 3:5–11

“Therefore **consider** the members of your earthly body **as dead** to I
immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to
idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come
upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when
you were living in them. But now you also, **put** them all **aside**; II
anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth. **Do not lie** to one III
another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put
on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the
image of the One who created him — *a renewal* in which there is no
distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.”

OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS 3:5–11

- I. Mortify Your Immoral Habits (vv. 5–7)
- II. Discard Your Hateful Expressions (v. 8)
- III. Forsake Your Deceitful Speech (vv. 9–11)

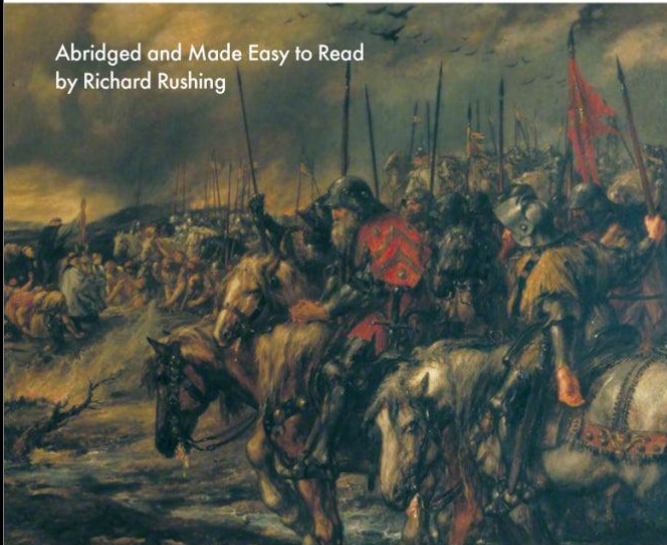
PUTTING SIN
TO DEATH

- Paul's list of sins to *mortify* or to *put off* is not exhaustive but paradigmatic.
- Yet, these three categories of sin do tend to be the most characteristic of fallen humanity—and the most destructive.

The Mortification of Sin

John Owen

Abridged and Made Easy to Read
by Richard Rushing



PURITAN  PAPERBACKS

“Every unmortified sin will certainly do two things; first, it will weaken the soul and deprive it of its vigor; secondly, it will darken the soul and deprive it of its comfort and peace.”

—John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*, 48–49

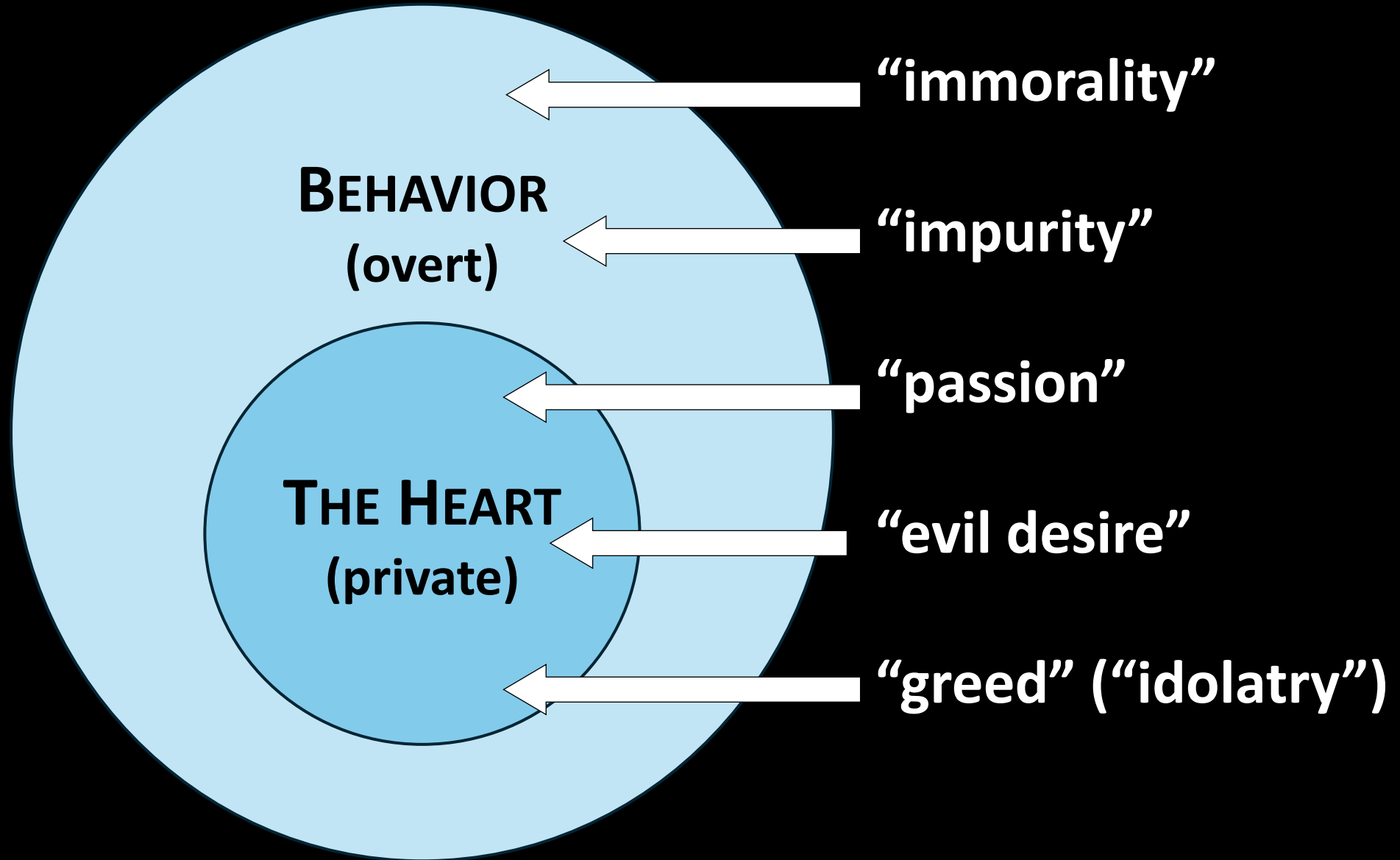
I. Mortify Your Immoral Habits (3:5–7)

“Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.”

A. The Basis of the Command (v. 5a)

B. The Substance of the Command (v. 5a)

C. The Focus of the Command (v. 5b)



“For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.”

D. The Reasons for the Command (vv. 6–7)

- **“The wrath of God”** – REASON #1: God’s righteous response to evil.
 - “The wrath of God is no vindictive passion, and it does not imply lack of control, as human wrath does. But whenever we apply any term to God, even love, we must make the mental reservation: without the imperfections that characterize the human” (Leon Morris).
- **“Will come upon the sons of disobedience”** – a guarantee; God will pour wrath upon unbelievers in the Day of the Lord, for sins like these.

“God, by the very perfection of His moral nature, cannot but be angry at sin – not only because of its destructiveness to humans, but, more important, because of its assault on His divine majesty. This is not the



mere petulance of an offended deity because His commands are not obeyed. It is rather the necessary response of God to uphold His moral authority in His universe. And though God’s wrath does not contain the sinful emotions associated with human wrath, it does contain a fierce

intensity arising from His settled opposition to sin and His determination to punish it to the utmost.” —Jerry Bridges, *The Gospel for Real Life*, 53

“For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and **in them** **you also once walked**, when you were living in them.”

ONCE

- “You also once walked” – REASON #2: the Colossians were once “sons of disobedience,” who participated in these sinful impulses and actions, and who fully deserved divine wrath.
- “In them” – in the sphere of these kinds of sexual sin.
- **Colossians 1:13–14** – “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
- **1 Corinthians 6:9–11; Titus 3:3–5**



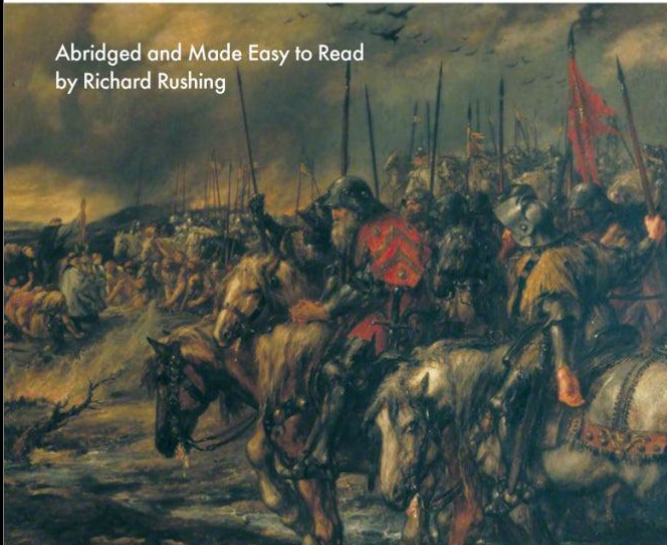
“This flesh of mine is ready to betray me into the hands of the world and the devil, therefore there must be a marvelous strong guard. I must not permit my affections to rove.”

—Richard Sibbes

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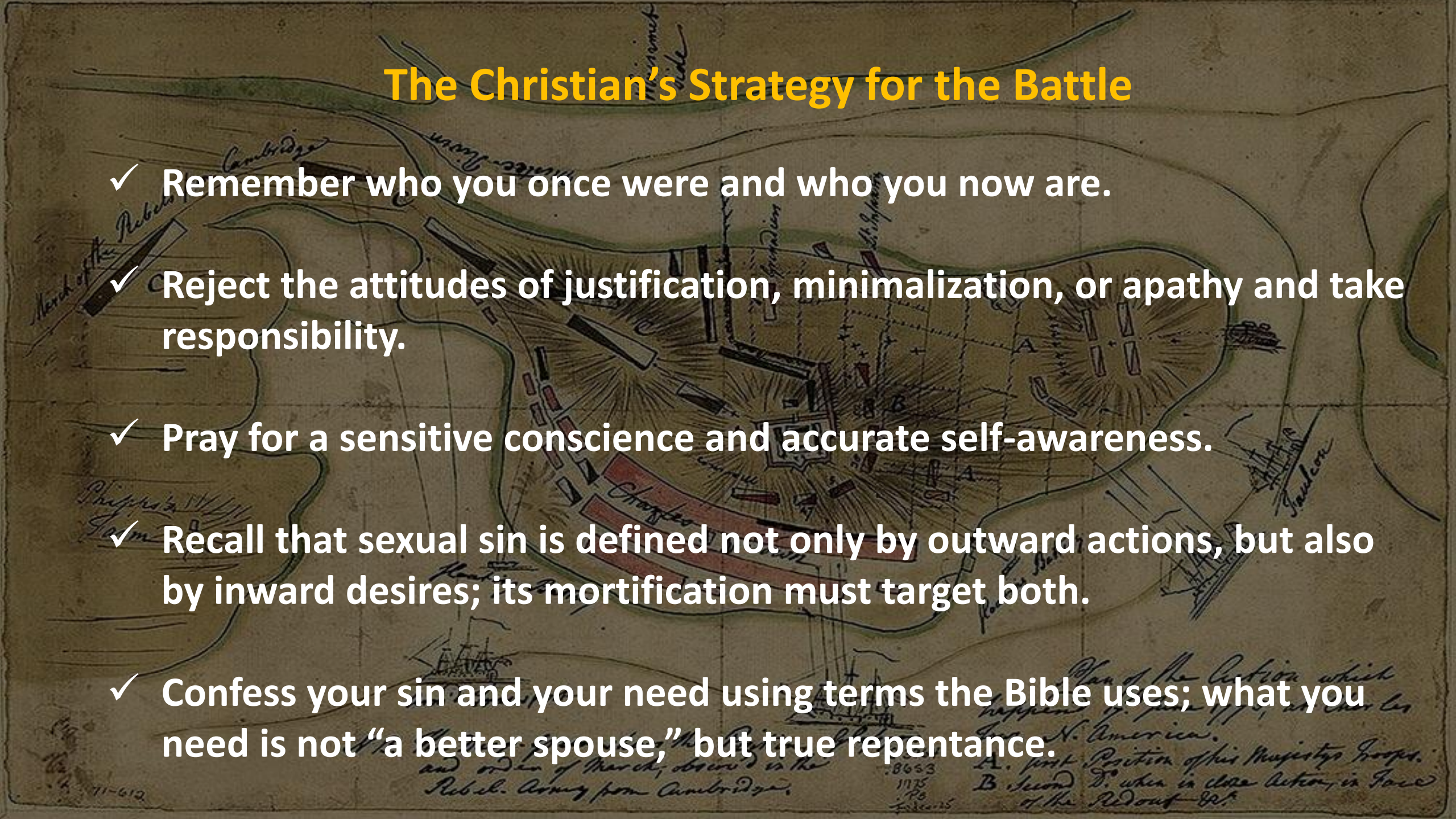
“Do you mortify? Do you make it your daily work? Be always at it whilst you live; cease not a day from this work. Be killing sin, or it will be killing you.”

“Let not that man think he makes any progress in holiness, who walks not over the neck of his lusts.”

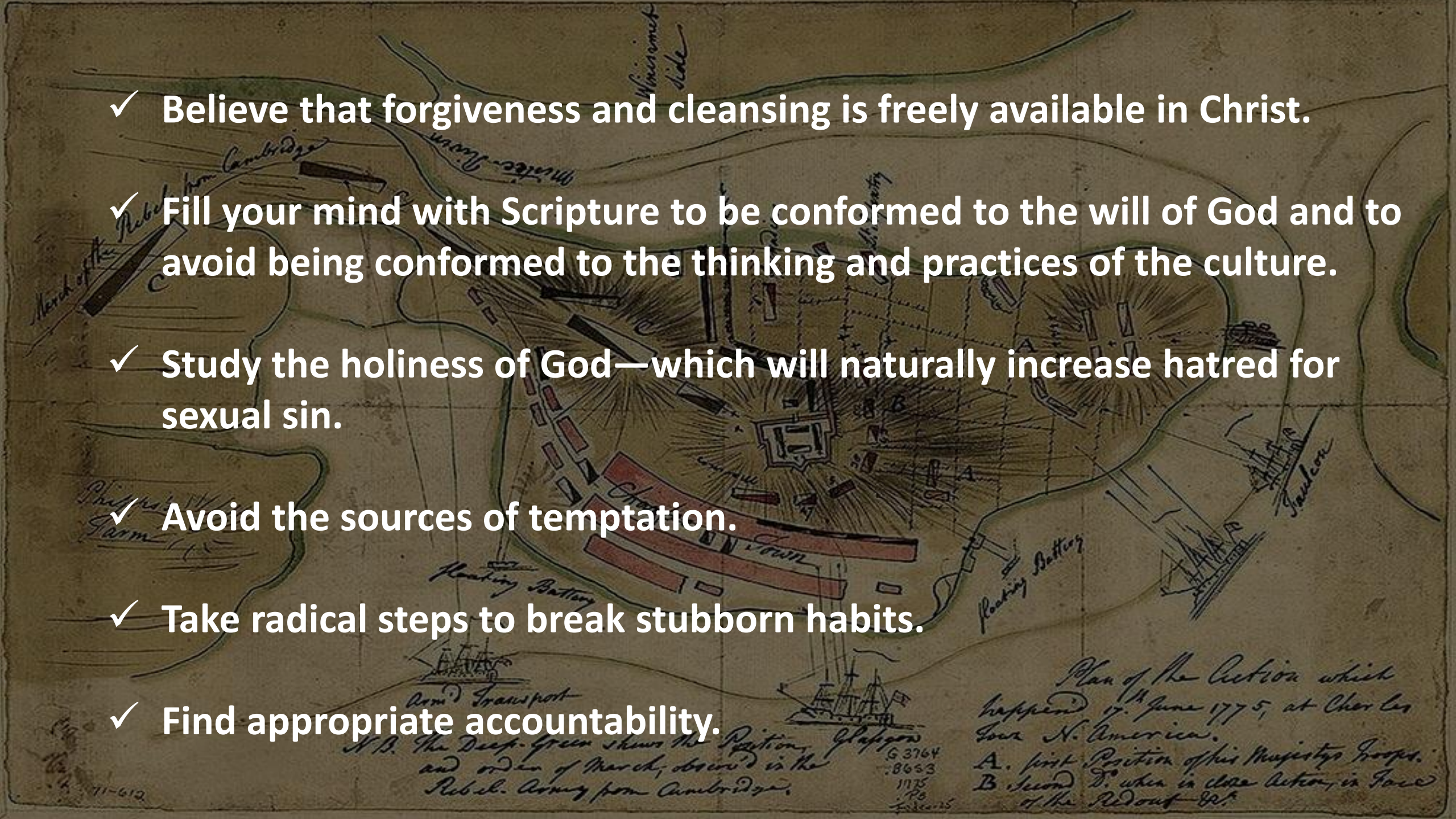
—John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*, 29, 34

The Christian's Strategy for the Battle

- ✓ Remember who you once were and who you now are.
- ✓ Reject the attitudes of justification, minimalization, or apathy and take responsibility.
- ✓ Pray for a sensitive conscience and accurate self-awareness.
- ✓ Recall that sexual sin is defined not only by outward actions, but also by inward desires; its mortification must target both.
- ✓ Confess your sin and your need using terms the Bible uses; what you need is not "a better spouse," but true repentance.



- ✓ Believe that forgiveness and cleansing is freely available in Christ.
- ✓ Fill your mind with Scripture to be conformed to the will of God and to avoid being conformed to the thinking and practices of the culture.
- ✓ Study the holiness of God—which will naturally increase hatred for sexual sin.
- ✓ Avoid the sources of temptation.
- ✓ Take radical steps to break stubborn habits.
- ✓ Find appropriate accountability.

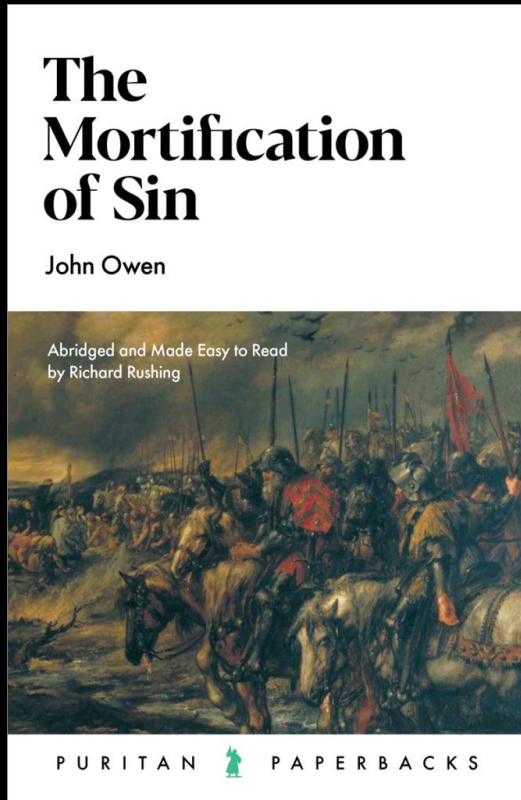


N.B. The Deep-green shows the Position, Glasgow
and order of March; observed in the
Rebel Army from Cambridge.

Plan of the Action which
happened 17th June 1775, at Charles
Town N. America.
A. first Position of his Majesty's Troops.
B. second " when in close Action, in Face
of the Redoubt &c.

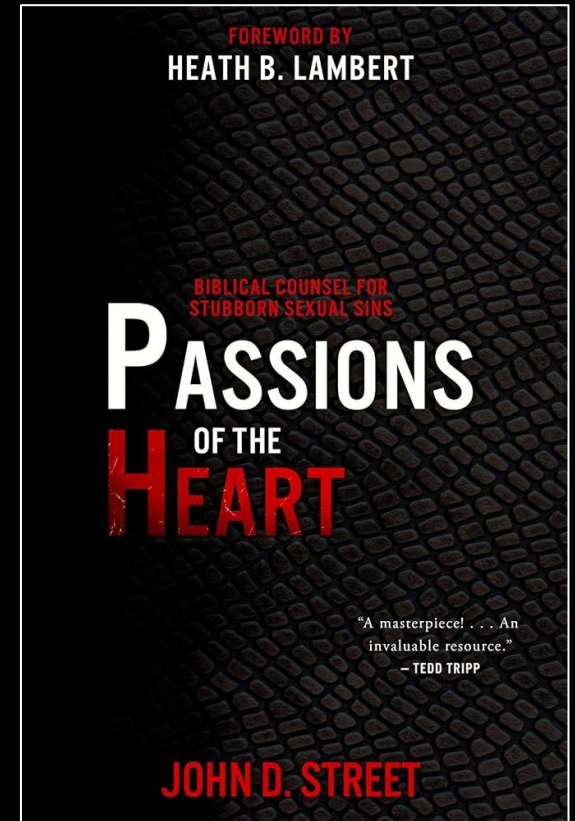
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Recommended Resources



John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*
(Puritan Paperback).

John Street, *Passions of the Heart:
Biblical Counsel for Stubborn Sexual Sins.*



II. Discard Your Hateful Expressions (3:8)

“**But now** you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

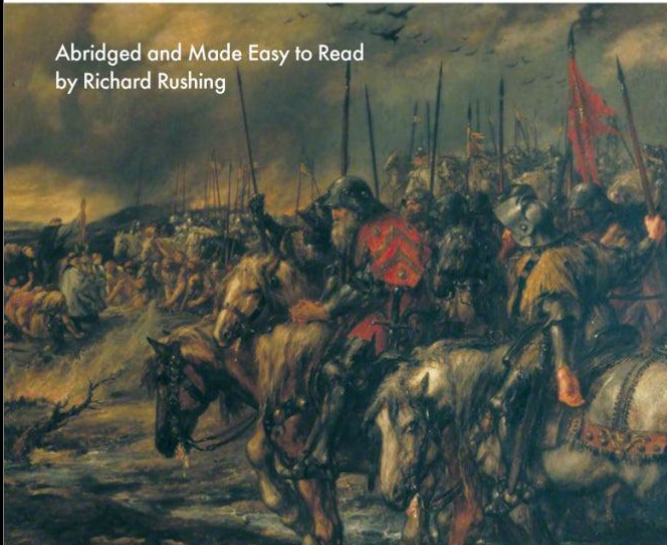
A. The Basis of the Command

- “**But now**” – the words emphasize a sharp contrast to a former reality.
 - **Colossians 3:7** – “and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.” See also **Colossians 1:21–22**.
 - Again, Paul emphasizes the new status of the believers; his current exhortation comes to those who have been freed from the domain of darkness—and are *able* to fight sin successfully.

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PURITAN  PAPERBACKS

“Unless a man be a believer, that is,
one that is truly ingrafted into Christ,
he can never mortify any one sin.”

—John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*, 69

“But now you also, **put them all aside**: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

B. The Substance of the Command

- “Put them all aside” – literally, “take off” or “lay aside”; the verb was used to describe *taking off clothes* (Acts 7:58), but used here to refer to *separation from* certain behaviors.

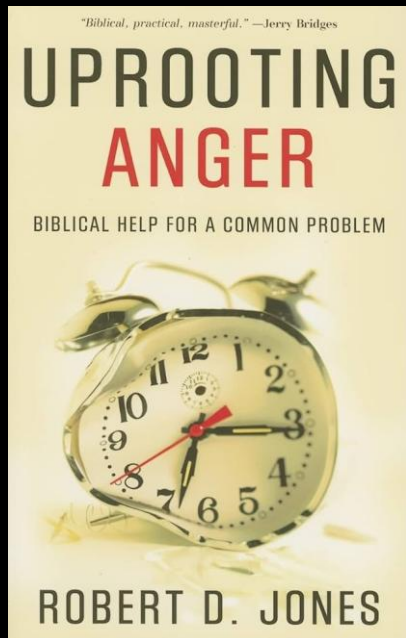


- The vices Paul now lists in v. 8 have to be *put off* like clothing which is inappropriate to your identity.
- **Romans 13:12; Ephesians 4:22, 25; Hebrews 12:1; etc.**

“But now you also, put them all aside: **anger**, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

C. The Focus of the Command

- Paul lists five *dispositional sins* that affect relationships; these are sins of *displeasure*, committed when *we don't get what we want*.



- 1) “**Anger**” – literally, “wrath,” “indignation”—the same word used in v. 6 to refer to “the *wrath* of God”; here, the term speaks of *sinful anger* (e.g., Matthew 5:21–22).
 - **an·ger**: “our whole-personed active response of negative moral judgment against perceived evil” (Robert Jones, *Uprooting Anger*, 15).

- 1) It is an ***active response***. Anger is not a product of one's genetic makeup or a subconscious personality trait. Jones states, "Anger is something we *do*, not something we *have*" (*Uprooting Anger*, 15).
- 2) It is a ***whole-personed response***. Anger is not merely a feeling; it involves the exercise of the mind, will, emotions, beliefs, and motives. "Angry people respond with their whole being—their thoughts, emotions, affections, words, actions, etc." (*Uprooting Anger*, 24).
- 3) It is a response ***evoked by an internal cause***. Most confuse the cause of anger with external things like a careless driver, a cold meal, or a stubborn spouse. But these are only *secondary causes*. "The root of anger lies in unsatisfied ruling 'I-wantsies,' unmet demands, and fallen heart-idols. Cravings cause conflicts" (*Uprooting Anger*, 57).

- 4) **It is a response to *a perceived evil*.** Anger identifies a person, act, or thing as a moral evil. It manifests what a person truly believes about right and wrong; it reveals a person's fundamental moral code. Anger is exercised—whether internally or externally—when a person assumes *the role of judge*.
- 5) **It is a *negative moral judgment*.** Anger does not stop with identifying a person, act, or thing as evil. It always involves pronouncing condemnation on that perceived evil. It insists that some form of consequence is necessary, and this consequence can be inflicted subtly (a cold shoulder, the silent treatment, slanderous thoughts) or openly (a harsh word, profanity, an act of violence).