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Sunday, February 25, 2018  
Did You Know?

## The Secret to Overcoming Sin

We've been mining the jewels of Gospel truths in the book of Colossians in our Wednesdays in the Word class. Last week we discovered an important truth on how to overcome sin.

Some of the common strategies we like to use to overcome sin in our lives are things like trying harder. We rebuke ourselves; we lay on the guilt and then we grit our teeth and resolve to try harder. Another common strategy is accountability partners. We tell ourselves, "Ah, that must be the secret. What I need is accountability." Have you used these methods? How effective have they been? What's interesting is that in all of the New Testament, I don't believe it is stated anywhere that this is the go-to method for overcoming sin. If it was so effective, I'm certain Paul would have included it in many of his letters, but it is strangely absent. Now, don't get me wrong, I do believe that some accountability groups and relationships, if they are done well, can be effective, but be honest with yourself for a moment; can you say that because of an accountability group you were in for a year or more -- that because of that group, you overcame a particular sin in your life? When I in my mid-20s, I was in an accountability group with 2 other young pastors and we met for around two years and we went deep. Every week we met and we confessed our deepest, darkest sins to each other, but at the end of the two years, I'm not sure if that group really contributed to my growth in holiness.

In Colossians we are told the secret. What is that secret? It is union with Christ. It's not what you expected, is it? Paul tells the Christians there that any fleshly attempt at godliness will "lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence." (2:23) Before that, he says that what these fleshly attempts actually do is make you lose "connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow." (2:19)

Paul then tells us the secret. He tells us, "You have been raised with Christ. You died with Christ. Your life is hidden with Christ. You will appear with Christ at his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming." (3:1-4) What the Gospel accomplished for sinners is not only the forgiveness of our sins, but the power to be released from the power of sin, through union with Christ. It's only after Paul explains the nature of our union that he tells us to be holy (3:5ff).

Meditate on these phrases from the Bible that paint a picture of our union. "Surely I am with you always." "Christ, who is your life." "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." "Remain in me, as I also remain in you." "Christ in you, the hope of glory." "I want to know Christ." "Eternal life is to know Jesus Christ." "Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us."

Accepting, by faith, that you are united to Christ is the beginning of your victory over sin. Grow your relationship to Jesus and as you do, you will begin to love what he loves and hate what he hates. Your love for Christ and your humble childlike trust in him will help you overcome sin.

Soli Deo Gloria.  
*Pastor Peter*