

Articles and Sermons :: Legal Suffocation

Legal Suffocation - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2012/2/16 0:07

Many believers who were once filled with power and unction to serve God are now cast down, confused, dry and ineffectual. They spend their days in powerless confession, having a form of religion that brings to them a sense of emptiness, shame and dejection. No fruit is to be found on their branches, no water to aid the thirsty, and no burning, prophetic Word of God on their lips to release people from bondage and infuse the very life of Him Whom they profess to serve.

Each day offers a fresh hope to break free from the lukewarm stagnation, but that hope is quickly dashed as they find themselves once again defeated inwardly and subject to a prevailing power that keeps them from experiencing New Covenant victory. The occasions of real joy and intimacy with God are far and few between; they are but the rare and cherished exceptions of a life where the norm is filled with abject failure and a brooding disappointment over reoccurring excursions into sin.

These believers have not yet been led by the Holy Spirit to mortify their minds, and because of this they can not take each thought captive to the obedience of Christ. They instead allow Satan to inject poison into their unprotected hearts - a poison masked with a bittersweet flavor and therefore swallowed with minimal resistance. Once inside the heart, the poison opens up like a virus to strengthen the flesh to rebel against the spirit. When the believer yields to his flesh and commits sin, God's peace is immediately recalled from his spirit until confession and repentance is made. If he continues in backslidden sin, a stronghold emerges.

Wicked spirits are given legal authority by God to erect strongholds in the hearts of all believers who fulfill the lusts of the flesh. When a believer acts upon a sinful impulse, he or she violates the law of God and forfeits the liberating power of His grace. The defiled conscience cries out for the cleansing blood of Christ, but the mind is now infected with a virus that cripples the believer's faith unto restoration. The virus leads to a stronghold taking hold of the heart, and if this stronghold is not demolished, it will grow into a cancer that will eventually destroy the believer from the inside out.

You can tell if someone has a stronghold by observing the activity of their speech. The merchandise of the tongue will sooner or later belie the content of the heart. When the Bible speaks of guarding our hearts against "roots of bitterness" from springing up, it is talking about these very strongholds. Roots, by nature, go deep down into the soil and infiltrate the ground. They are invading organisms; they suck life from the underground to give life to an above-ground manifestation. In the same way, spiritual strongholds go down deep into the dirt of the polluted heart to attach themselves to the spirit. When the spirit attempts to rise up and seek divine help without true repentance, the stronghold's clutch tightens and chokes the cry with legal suffocation.

Christians who are addicted to internet pornography, for example, are suffocating beneath a stronghold. Believers who love to debate and criticise are being choked as well. Deep down, they know they are dying. They know they have a virus; they know something is terribly wrong within. If we could see into their true spiritual estate, we would see chains of darkness encompassing their inner men. We would see strongmen digging claws into their minds.

This is why the Word of God exhorts us in so many places to not trifle with sin. The power of hell is like an open Venus Flytrap. The believer comes near to it, drawn by its deceptive sweetness and the hunger of his own flesh, and makes cautious contact to explore sin's pleasures. As he ventures deeper into the sweet darkness, the jaws suddenly close around his heart and he is caught. A virus enters his system as the old law of sin and death retakes dominion over his life and holds the believer captive against his own will. The peace of God flees from his soul as deep spiritual depression sinks in. He is ensnared by an angelic force that must be expelled by God.

For the genuine child of God, it is in this lair of sin where true brokenness and wisdom are fostered. For every believer encompassed by strongholds, if he will not doubt God's love for him there is an assured freedom awaiting his release. The Lord's timing is always predicated upon infallible wisdom which is bent for the Christian's perfect good. The believer must hold on and have faith for this. The repentance that incapacitates the strongman's claw must be granted by God. It cannot be worked up; nor can it be willed. In fact, the more we struggle to extricate ourselves, the tighter the bonds become and the deeper into the jaws we sink.

The Christian's duty is to continually cry for the deliverance of the Holy Spirit, and to hate with a holy passion those chains

ns which suffocate the inner man. To utterly abhor the diabolical law which incarcerates our joy and throws us into backsliding tailspins. Dear Christian, give the Lord's ear no peace until He at last frees your soul from the jaws of sin and opens your eyes to the New Covenant birthright given you freely through Christ.

On that illustrious day you will experience the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The claws will release you, the chains will burst, the flytrap will open wide. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ will set you, the captive, free. The power of God will transform your life. The wisdom of God will prevail upon you the daily necessity of Spirit-led mortification to prevent future strongholds. The love of God will sustain your spiritual gaze unto looking solely unto Christ, and the grace of God will protect you and deliver you from all virus-laden temptations with an ongoing efficacy.

- Brother Paul

<http://understandingmortification.wordpress.com/>

Re: Legal Suffocation - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2012/2/17 22:35

* Article edited to improve readability.

Re: Legal Suffocation - posted by HeartSong, on: 2012/2/17 23:02

Oh what a beautiful ending! It is a blessing to once again read what the LORD has poured forth through your ready pen.

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2012/2/18 6:54

Thanks Laura. It's nice to hear from you. I pray this article is a blessing to others as well. Marissa and the kids say hi. May God bless you.

Paul