

How to Kill Persistent Sin – Warnings and Encouragements

Hebrews 3:13-14 – *Message Discussion Guide*

Connect

- What persistent sins do you think form the most common struggles among Christians today? How is this different from one age group to another?

Discover

- Which statement or experience stood out to you from the worship service?
- Read 1 Peter 2:11 and Hebrews 3:13.
 - What are the two or three reasons these verses give that we should be urgent in our battle against persistent sins?
 - How is sin deceptive?
 - What does it mean that sin can harden a person? How does sin harden a person? Why is it hard for a Christian to tell whether he has been hardened by sin?
- Read Romans 8:13 and Galatians 5:16.
 - According to these verses, what is the role of the Holy Spirit with respect to overcoming persistent sins?
 - Galatians 5:16 commands Christians to “walk by the Spirit.” What does this mean? How do we do this?
 - What is the promise in Galatians 5:16?
 - How does Romans 8:13 connect our attitude toward sin with the assurance of the genuineness of our faith?
- Read Galatians 6:1-2, Colossians 3:16, and Hebrews 10:24-25.
 - What do the Galatians and Colossians passages say our responsibility is toward our fellow believers?
 - What important element does the Hebrews passage add to how we encourage other believers?
- Read James 5:16.
 - Why does James encourage Christians to confess sins to other people and not just to the Lord?
 - How can this confession happen from a practical standpoint?

Respond

- Why do Christians so often view their faith and walk with the Lord as a private matter? According to Scripture, what are Christians missing out on when they fail to foster close spiritual connections with other believers?
- What are some practical ways believers can connect with other believers and live the Christian life together? What are the most common obstacles we face? How can we overcome those obstacles?

Bonus for Thinkers

- What hints does the Bible give for why the Father established our faith such that we need the assistance of other believers to experience the fullness of the Christian life and of the sanctifying work of the Spirit?

First Baptist Nacogdoches Bible Reading Plan

Day	Scripture
Monday (11/18)	Heb. 13:12-14, Gal. 6:1-10
Tuesday (11/19)	John 18:1-18
Wednesday (11/20)	John 18:19-40
Thursday (11/21)	John 19:1-27
Friday (11/22)	John 19:28-20:10

Daily Devotion Questions

Monday (11/18) — Hebrews 13:12-14, Galatians 6:1-10

- Review the “Respond” questions on the reverse side of this devotion guide.

Tuesday (11/19) — John 18:1-18

- In 18:10, Peter acts without thinking or asking for wisdom. In 18:11, Peter is admonished by Jesus. Write down a couple ways you have acted hastily and regretted your actions. Talk with the Lord about how you can make sure those kind of hasty decisions or words do not happen again.
- In 18:17, Peter denied being a follower of Jesus. See if you can write down three reasons he might have done that. Look back at your three reasons. Is there a lesson for you to learn in each of those? Talk to God about how you can be more consistent in your witness for Jesus.

Wednesday (11/20) — John 18:19-40

- In 18:25-27 we see Peter’s second and third denial of Jesus. This reminds us that it is easy for one sin to turn into a string of sins. When Peter denied Jesus the first time (18:17) and certainly felt the pain of guilt, what are a few things he should have done to keep that from turning into the beginning of a long slide into sin?
- In 18:28, the Jews who were trying to kill Jesus for no reason were extremely concerned that they did not break some silly law about ceremonial cleansing. If that were not so sad, it would be funny. But we often do something similar. We often make big deals out of really minor things, and excuse some major errors and sins. Take a minute or two and ask the Lord to help you see if there are areas like that in your life.
- Barabbas was a robber in prison waiting to be executed. In 18:40, he learns that Jesus is going to take his place on the cross. Barabbas, the guilty one, is to be freed while Jesus, the innocent one, is going to take his place on the cross! Write three sentences describing how you think Barabbas must have felt and what he must have thought when he got the news. Then thank the Lord that he has done the same thing for you.

Thursday (11/21) — John 19:1-27

- Pilate believed that Jesus did not deserve to be executed and he wanted to release him, but he was pressured by the Jews to order Jesus’ crucifixion anyway (19:12). Peer pressure is as old as the Bible. Write down some times in the last two weeks you have felt pressured to do something you knew was wrong. Talk with God about how you responded.
- The account of the trial and crucifixion might make someone believe God had lost control of the whole situation. But the minor fulfilled prophecy we see in 19:24 concerning the garments is a reminder that God had planned all of this out and was in complete control. Is there some area of your life that seems out of control? Write that down. Ask God to help you remember that nothing catches him by surprise. Ask God to remind you that he is wise, strong, and capable of getting you through any difficulty.
- It is a touching thing to see Jesus in the height of his agony still concerned about the welfare of his mother (19:26-27). What can you do before the week is over to show your closest family members that you love and care for them?

Friday (11/22) — John 19:28 – 20:10

- In 19:30, Jesus said, “It is finished.” Write down a couple sentences about what you think Jesus was saying. Why did Jesus not say, “I am finished?” Spend a minute or two thanking him for this wonderful sacrifice.
- We see the actions of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus in 19:38-40. These men appeared to be secret followers of Jesus. They kept their faith hidden. While they did a very good deed of service in these verses, the Bible teaches us that we should not be secret followers, but rather bold, public followers. Write down three ways you are a secret follower. Talk to the Lord about each of these and how you can be more bold for your faith.
- We can see how excited/fearful/confused/grieved Peter and John were by reading of their foot race to the tomb in 20:3-4. What do you think was their primary emotion? Why were they racing to the tomb? How did their emotions change when they finally realized that Jesus had risen from the grave? What kind of emotions does knowledge of the resurrection stir in you?