

The Mortification of Sin

by John Owen

Study Guide

edited by Joshua Schwisow

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Study Guide

The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

This study guide is based on the Puritan Paperback edition of John Owen's classic work (ISBN: 9781800402683). This version is simplified and abridged by Richard Rushing. However, readers may also use the original, unabridged edition, which contains the same 14 chapters.

Introduction

This study guide on *The Mortification of Sin* is a supplementary tool for the reader. It provides summaries, vocabulary definitions, key quotes to review and meditate on, and some content and application questions.

This study guide also contains a section called "Golden Nuggets." Puritans such as John Owen were known for their pithy, Scriptural, illustration-rich language. For this reason, we have chosen some of the finest quotes from each chapter for the student to return to in their meditation, or to share with others for their edification. The student is encouraged to also be on the lookout for their own golden nuggets by underlining or highlighting portions of the book as they read.

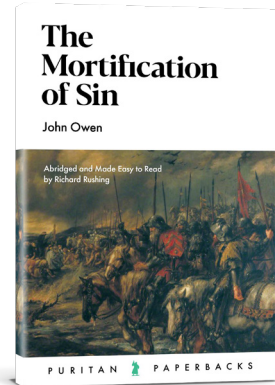
To make the best use of this study guide while reading this Puritan classic, we recommend the following approach:

1. Before reading the chapter, read the summary of the chapter and review the vocabulary words and definitions.
2. Pray that the Lord would bring applications from the chapter to your heart. Pray that God would correct you, or strengthen you, or comfort you, and lead you in the way of wisdom and righteousness.
3. Read the chapter and underline or highlight key quotes to meditate on for further application.
4. Review the "Golden Nuggets" section for each chapter in this study guide and respond to the questions.
5. Write down your own favorite "Golden Nuggets" in the space provided.
6. Respond to the review questions with written answers.

Definitions for the vocabulary terms are drawn from Webster's 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language* or the modern *Oxford American English Dictionary*.

Schedule

It is recommended that the student read 1 chapter per week for a total of 14 weeks of reading. The student may read the chapter in one day or spread the reading throughout the week. Some chapters in *The Mortification of Sin* are quite short. The reader is encouraged to read slowly, meditatively, and to look up the Scripture passages Owen references in each chapter.



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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Chapter 1: Introduction

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen provides an interpretation and explanation of the foundation verse for the book: Romans 8:13: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Owen's doctrinal Summary of the verse is as follows: "The choicest believers, who are assuredly freed from the condemning power of sin, should also make it their business all of their days to mortify the indwelling power of sin."

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- "It is a work of the Spirit, and it is by him alone that we are to experience victory. Mortification from a self-strength, carried on by ways of self-invention, to the end of a self-righteousness, is the soul and substance of false religion in the world."
- "To 'mortify' means to put any living thing to death. To kill a man, or any other living thing, is to take away the principle of all its strength, vigor, and power, so that it cannot act, or exert, or put forth any proper actings of its own."
- "The vigor, power, and comfort of our spiritual life depend on the mortification of the deeds of the flesh."

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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Chapter 2: Why the Flesh Must Be Mortified

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen lists six reasons or motivations to believers explaining why they must engage in the essential work of mortifying their sins. Through these biblical considerations, Owen helps us to understand that we must be engaged in this battle. Either sin will have the mastery over us, or we will kill our sins in the power of the Spirit.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “Always be killing sin or it will be killing you.”
- “If sin is always acting, we are in trouble if we are not always mortifying. He that stands still and allows his enemies to exert double blows upon him without resistance will undoubtedly be conquered in the end . . . There is not a day but sin foils or is foiled, prevails or is prevailed upon. It will always be so while we live in this world. Sin will not spare for one day. There is no safety but in a constant warfare for those who desire deliverance from sin’s perplexing rebellion.”
- “The basic characteristic of an unmortified course is the digestion of sin without bitterness in the heart. He who is able to swallow and digest daily sins in his life without conviction in the heart is at the very brink of turning the grace of God into lasciviousness and being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. List Owen's six reasons why we must mortify sin.

2. What is an "unmortified professor"?

3. What are the two evil effects of "unmortified professors"?

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Chapter 3: The Work of the Spirit in Mortification

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen explains the necessity of the Holy Spirit's work in true believers to enable them to mortify sin. Owen is further expounding the key phrase in Romans 8:13, "if ye through the Spirit."

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- "There is no self-endeavor that can accomplish mortification. Almighty energy is necessary for its accomplishment."
- "As we abound in the graces of the Spirit and walk according to them, the fruits of the Spirit restrict the fruits of the flesh, because the works of the flesh are contrary to the works of the Spirit."
- Speaking of one who is without God's Spirit: "This is the saddest warfare that any poor creature can be engaged in. A soul under the power of conviction from the law is pressed to fight against sin, but he has no strength for the battle. He must fight, but he can never conquer. He is like a man who thrusts himself on the sword of the enemy on purpose to be slain. The law drives him on, and then sin beats him back. Sometimes he thinks he has foiled sin, but he has only raised a dust, so that he cannot see the sin."

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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Review Questions

1. What sort of external methods of mortification have been practiced in Roman Catholicism (see Owen's list)?
2. Are praying, fasting, watching, and meditation important in mortifying sin? What caution does Owen give about these things?
3. How does the Spirit mortify sin? List the three ways Owen mentions.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Chapter 4: How Life and Comfort Depend Upon Mortification

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen explains how mortifying our sins is important if we would experience peace, joy, and comfort in our spiritual lives.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “In our ordinary walking with God, and in the ordinary course of his dealing with us, the vigor and comfort of our spiritual lives depend much on our mortification. Mortification not only bears a cause-and-effect relationship to our joy, but it works effectually to bring it to pass. The vigor of our spiritual lives is not possible apart from mortification.”
- “Sin darkens the soul. It is a cloud, a thick cloud, that spreads itself over the face of the soul, and intercepts all the beams of God’s love and favor. It takes away all sense of the privilege of our adoption; and if the soul begins to gather up thoughts of consolation, sin quickly scatters them.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. Is it possible for a true believer to be engaged in the mortification of sin but lack comfort and peace in the midst of that battle? What Scriptural example does Owen provide to answer this question?
2. What two negative effects does every unmortified sin cause to the soul? List Owen's two points.
3. In your own words, summarize Owen's illustration of the "field" as it relates to the human soul.

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Chapter 5: What Mortification is Not

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen clears away common misconceptions about mortification. By doing so, Owen brings further clarity to what mortification truly consists in according to the teaching of Holy Scripture.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “In our ordinary walking with God, and in the ordinary course of his dealing with us, the vigor and comfort of our spiritual lives depend much on our mortification. Mortification not only bears a cause-and-effect relationship to our joy, but it works effectually to bring it to pass. The vigor of our spiritual lives is not possible apart from mortification.”
- “Sin darkens the soul. It is a cloud, a thick cloud, that spreads itself over the face of the soul, and intercepts all the beams of God’s love and favor. It takes away all sense of the privilege of our adoption; and if the soul begins to gather up thoughts of consolation, sin quickly scatters them.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Question

1. Is it possible in this present life to completely eradicate all sin from our lives?

2. Should we aim to eradicate all sin from our lives?

3. Explain, in your words, Owen's statement: "Mortification is not just the changing of some outward aspects of a sin."

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Chapter 6: What Mortification Is

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen positively sets forth the biblical meaning of mortification providing additional clarifications on this important spiritual task.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “We need to be intimately acquainted with the ways, wiles, methods, advantages, and occasions which give lust its success. This is how men deal with their enemies. They search out their plans, ponder their goals, and consider how and by what means they have prevailed over them in the past. Then they can be defeated. Without this kind of strategic thinking, warfare is very primitive.”
- “When a man is not very concerned and see his lust as a trivial thing, it is an indication that he is not mortified or even heading in that direction.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. List the three things that true mortification consists of.
2. Read Galatians 5:24. What language does the Apostle Paul use here in relation to our flesh?
3. What does Owen mean by "a degree of success in the battle"? Put this in your own words.

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Chapter 7: Only Believers Can Mortify Sin

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen explains that it is only true believers who have the ability to mortify sin. This is so because union with the resurrected, living Christ is essential for true spiritual life. Apart from Jesus, we can do nothing (John 15:5).

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “Unless a man is a true believer, and grafted into Christ, he can never mortify a single sin.”
- “If we are Christ’s, and have an interest in him, we indeed have the Spirit, and have the power for mortification.”
- “Mortification is not the present duty of unregenerate men. God calls them to conversion first. He calls them to the conversion of their whole soul, not just the mortification of this or that particular lust. You might laugh at a man that would build without a foundation. Each day that he builds his previous day’s work falls down. Look at him as he continues in the same course day by day. So it is with those who seek mortification without salvation.”
- “Be sure to get an interest in Christ; for if you attempt to mortify any sin without it, it will never be done.”
- “There is no death of sin without the death of Christ.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. Read Romans 8:1-12. Note any verses that speak about the believer's union with Christ (i.e., being in Christ). List your observations below.

2. How does trying to kill sin without going to Christ cause a false sense of peace?

3. What advice does John Owen give to preachers in this chapter?

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Chapter 8: God Requires Universal Obedience

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen lays down this general rule: you cannot mortify a specific lust that is troubling you, unless you are seeking to obey the Lord from the heart in all areas.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “We must not be concerned only with that which troubles us, but with all that troubles God. God’s work is to have full victory, and universal obedience, not just the victory over the sins which trouble our soul.”
- “Maybe God has allowed this troubling lust to have power over you to draw your attention to other failures and your lukewarmness in walking before him. He at least has allowed it to trouble you to awaken you to consider your ways. Maybe this troubling will lead to a thorough work and change in your course, to walk fully with God.”
- “We must hate all sin, as sin, and not just that which troubles us. Love for Christ, because he went to the cross, and hate for sin that sent him there, is the solid foundation for true spiritual mortification. To seek mortification only because a sin troubles us proceeds from self-love. Why do you with all diligence and earnestness seek to mortify this sin? Because it troubles you and takes away your peace, and fills your heart with sorrow, trouble, and fear, and because you do not have rest through it? Yes, but, friend, you have neglected prayer and reading! You have been vain and loose in your conversation with other things. These are just as sinful as the one that troubles you. Jesus Christ bled for them also. Why do you not set yourself against them?”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

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Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

Review Questions

1. Read 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1. Summarize the promise and then the command that follows based on the promise. How does this passage reinforce the point of Owen's chapter?

2. According to Owen, why does God sometimes allow a particular lust to trouble us as an ongoing besetting sin?

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Chapter 9: The Dangerous Symptoms of Sin

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen shows us the sinfulness of sin in terms of all its dangerous symptoms and effects upon the soul. By doing this, we are given an important preparatory direction for the task of mortification. Until we see how defiling and destructive sin is, we may not be convicted to do anything about it.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “If a sin has been corrupting your heart for a long time, and you have allowed it to prevail and abide in power, without vigorously attempting to kill it, and heal the wounds that it causes, this is a serious condition.”
- “Those who belong to Christ, and are obedient to the word of God, have the death of Christ, the love of God, the detestable nature of sin, the preciousness of communion with God, and a deep-rooted hatred of sin as sin to oppose all the workings of lust in their hearts.”
- “When a lust has remained a long time in the heart, corrupting, festering, and poisoning, it brings the soul into a woeful condition. In this instance an ordinary course of humiliation will not be sufficient. Such a lust will make a deep imprint on the soul. It will make its company a habit in your affections. It will grow so familiar to your mind and conscience that they are not disturbed at its presence as some strange thing.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. Read 2 Kings 5:17-18. What was so dangerous about Naaman's perspective and spiritual condition evidenced in his words?

2. Read Romans 6:1-4. According to Paul's statement here, why is it inconsistent for a Christian to continue living in sin?

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Chapter 10: Seeing Sin for What It Is

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen gives another preparatory direction for mortification: to see sin for just how evil and destructive it actually is. A right view of sin is an essential foundation if we would be convinced that we must kill sin in the power of the Spirit.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “This is the outcome of lust in the heart; it darkens the mind so that it does not rightly judge the guilt of sin.”
- “Sin lies as a worm at the root of obedience and corrodes and weakens it day by day. All graces, ways and means whereby one might be improved are hindered by sin.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. Read Proverbs 7:23. How does this passage give us a sober view of the consequences of sin? How was the young man in this passage foolish?

2. Read Hebrews 3:12-13. What dangerous situation does this passage warn against? What does the passage exhort us to do to avoid this dangerous situation?

3. Owen lists the manifold dangers of sin. List those various dangers below.

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Chapter 11: A Tender Conscience and a Watchful Heart

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen exhorts the reader to pursue a tender conscience before God, whereby we have a proper sense of the evil of sin, and a sorrow over sin considering all that God has done for us in Christ. Secondly, Owen also explains the need for watchfulness in our battle against sin.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “It is important, then, for your conscience to pay attention to the law as it speaks concerning your lust and corruption. If your ears are open, the law will speak with a voice that will make you tremble. The law will cast you to the ground and fill you with astonishment. If you intend ever to gain the victory in mortification, you must tie your conscience to the law. Do not allow it to dodge the law’s arrows.”
- “Bring your lust to the gospel. Not for relief, but for further conviction of your guilt.”
- “A strong desire is the lifeblood of praying without ceasing! A strong desire sets faith and hope to work, and drives the soul in following hard after the Lord. Get your heart into a strong longing and panting attitude. Long for, and cry out for, righteousness.”
- “It is impossible to fix boundaries for sin! It is like water in a channel. If it ever breaks out, it will flow on through the breach. It is easier to stop it in the beginning than after it has begun to run.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. Why is it important to charge our conscience with the evil of sin both by using the law of God and the gospel? How do the law and the gospel function in awakening our conscience to the evil of sin? Summarize what John Owen says in your own words. Also read Romans 7:7-8 to help answer the question.

2. Read Mark 13:37 and Luke 21:34. What command does our Lord Jesus give us in these passages?

3. Why is it more difficult to kill sin after it has progressed further? Read Proverbs 5:22, Hebrews 3:12-13, and James 1:14-15 for insight on answering this question.

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Chapter 12: Humility

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen explains that if we would kill sin, we must be those humbled under God's mighty hand, especially as we contemplate the majesty and glory of God in comparison with us.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- "Consider these things often to abase the pride of your heart and to keep your soul humble within you. Such a frame of heart will be a great advantage in conquering the deceitfulness of sin. Think often of the greatness of God."
- "We may suppose that we have here attained great knowledge, clear and high thoughts of God, but alas! When he shall bring us into his presence we shall cry out, 'We never knew him as he is; only a thousandth of his glory, and perfection, and blessedness, has ever entered our hearts!'"
- "Will not a due apprehension of the inconceivable greatness of God, and the infinite distance in which we stand from him, fill our souls with a holy and awful fear of him, and keep us in a frame unsuited for the thriving and flourishing of any lust whatever. We should continually be accustomed to reverential thoughts of God's greatness and omnipresence. Then we will always be watchful against any behavior not suited to his presence."

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. When Job “saw” (i.e., spiritually apprehended) the Lord in Job 42:5-6, what was his response?

2. Read Proverbs 30:2-4. How does Agur act wisely in what he says in this passage?

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Chapter 13: Wait for the Verdict of God

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen explains that we should not speak peace to our consciences until God the Holy Spirit has spoken peace to our consciences. If we “speak peace to ourselves” we are at risk of continuing in a path of sin because we are not viewing our sin from God’s perspective.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “Men certainly speak peace to themselves when they do not view their sin, from the guilt of which they seek relief, with the greatest hatred imaginable. There should be an abhorrence of themselves for that sin.”
- “Let a man seek as he will for healing and peace, let him go to the true Physician, let him seek in the right way and let him quiet his heart in the promises of the covenant. Yet when peace is spoken, if it is not attended with hatred and abhorrence of the sin which caused the wound and was the reason for all the trouble, then this is not God’s peace, but a peace of our own making.”
- “When men speak peace to themselves, it is seldom the case that God at the same time speaks humiliation to their souls. But God’s peace is humbling peace.”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

Study Guide

The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Review Questions

1. Read Isaiah 57:16-21. According to vs. 18, who does God restore comfort to? According to vs. 20-21, what is the experience of the wicked like?

2. Why is it a bad sign if we are concerned only about one sin in our lives, but we are not concerned about other sins? What does Owen say about this?

3. Why is it a bad sign if we are proud and yet at peace? What does Owen say about this?

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Chapter 14: The Work of Christ and the Power of the Spirit

Summary

In this chapter, John Owen, having established numerous preparatory directions, guides the reader to the two essential directions for killing sin: to set our faith in Jesus Christ and to look to the power of the Spirit.

Golden Nuggets

Review and meditate on these select quotations:

- “Set your faith upon Christ for the killing of your sin. His blood is the great sovereign remedy for sin-sick souls. Live in the light of Christ’s great work, and you will die a conqueror. You will, through the good providence of God, live to see your lust dead at your feet.”
- “Place your faith particularly upon the death, blood, and cross of Christ; that is, on Christ crucified and slain. Mortification is based particularly upon the death of Christ. This is one of the main purposes of the death of Christ, and shall assuredly be accomplished by it. He died to destroy the works of the devil.”
- “We are dead to sin by profession; dead to sin by obligation to be so; dead to sin by participation in his virtue and power for the killing of it; dead to sin by union and interest in Christ, through whom and by whom it is killed. How can we thus live in it?”

Choose your favorite among these quotations and explain how it is helpful to you.

Your Favorite Quotation

Select one of your favorite quotations from the chapter and copy it below for meditation and sharing with others.

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Review Questions

1. Select one of the biblical passages in this chapter that Owen quotes or references and explain the meaning and application of the passage.

2. List the six ways in which the Spirit works to help us mortify sin.

3. Read John 15:5. Why is this verse essential to remember as you finish John Owen's book on killing sin?

Answer Key

The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Chapter 1

- 1—To whom it is directed: ‘You believers’
2—The condition: ‘If you’
3—The means of accomplishment: ‘The Spirit’
4—A duty: ‘Put to death the deeds of the body.’
5—A promise: ‘You will live.’
- Answers will vary. Owen is telling us that the true Christian religion involves the saving power of Jesus Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit which enables true believers to kill sin. But false religions will prescribe various ways to deal with sin, apart from the Holy Spirit. All of those self-efforts at killing sin only produce a self-righteousness (since, we reason, that we took care of the sin problem ourselves). For this reason, we need to be on guard against any approach to holiness that is based on self-effort apart from the Spirit’s help.

Chapter 2

- 1—Indwelling sin always abides while we are in this world; therefore, there is always a need for it to be mortified.
2—Sin is still acting and laboring to bring forth the deeds of the flesh.
3—Sin, if not continually mortified, will bring forth great, cursed, scandalous, and soul-destroying sins.
4—The Holy Spirit and our new nature are given to us to oppose sin and lust.
5—Neglect of this duty makes the inner man decay instead of renewing him.
6—Our spiritual growth is our daily duty.
- An unmortified professor describes someone who professes the Christian faith, but they do not engage the work of mortifying sin. They say they follow Christ, but they do not obey the command to kill sin.
- The first evil effect is how sin affects the individual who professes Christ. By saying they follow Christ, but then by sinning without repenting, they turn God’s grace into a justification for sinning, and they harden their hearts by the deceitfulness of sin. The second evil effect is that their sinful behavior affects other professing Christians who may be tempted to justify their own sinful behavior.

Chapter 3

- Vows, orders, fastings, penances, and rough garments, etc.
- Yes, they are important means. But it is wrong to see them as “the fountain” or the source of power and strength. They are, rather “the stream” that flows from the fountain.

- 1—By causing our hearts to abound in grace and the fruits that are contrary to the works of the flesh.
2—By the effective destruction of the root and habit of sin, to weaken, destroy, and take it away.
3—He brings the cross of Christ into the heart of a sinner by faith, and gives communion with Christ in his death, and fellowship in his sufferings.

Chapter 4

- Yes, it is possible to lack joy and peace, even while fighting sin for a long time. Owen provides Heman the author of Psalm 88.
- 1—It will weaken the soul and deprive it of its vigor.
2—Sin will also darken the soul and deprive it of its comfort.
- Answers will vary. In this illustration, Owen points out that sins are like noxious weeds that sap life and beauty from the field. But the graces of the Spirit (such as the Fruit of the Spirit) are like life-giving plants that spring up and fill the field.

Chapter 5

- No.
- Yes.
- Answers will vary. Mortification is not just a change of outward behavior or replacing some outward habit. Sometimes, people cease one sinful habit, but they continue in other patterns of sin, or they justify other sins in their lives. True mortification involves killing sin at its root in our hearts and dealing with all known sins.

Chapter 6

- 1—A habitual weakening of the lust.
2—A constant fight and contention against sin.
3—A degree of success in the battle.
- Paul says we are to crucify (i.e., kill, execute) our sinful flesh with its passions and desires.
- Answers will vary. Owen means that when we truly mortify sin, we make progress in holiness. We do increasingly gain the mastery over our sinful lusts, and we increasingly turn away from them. We increasingly have the ability to put off sin, and to put on righteousness. This is not perfection, but it is the trajectory that true believers will go when they are mortifying sin.

Chapter 7

- Answers will vary. Vs. 1 mentions those “in Christ Jesus.” Vs. 9 speaks of belonging to Christ and having the “Spirit of Christ” (a reference to the Holy Spirit). Vs. 10 mentions “Christ in you.”
- To be saved, we need to believe in Jesus Christ. We cannot save

Answer Key

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ourselves. But some, who put off sins externally, may no longer sense their need for Christ's redemption. They may feel that they are doing "okay" without Jesus Christ and can handle their problems on their own.

- Owen says it is important to call hearers of the Word to see their sinfulness and to put off sin. But this must not be done apart from calling them to believe in Jesus Christ. Otherwise, preachers might unintentionally encourage people toward self-effort and self-righteousness, apart from the redemption that Jesus Christ provides.

Chapter 8

- The promise is that God will dwell with us as we become His holy temple, and that he will be a father to us, and we will be His children. In light of these promises, the command is to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of the Lord. This passage reinforces Owen's point because the command says we are to put off all filthiness, not just some sins.
- Owen suggests that God may be seeking to get our attention in other areas of our life where we are disobedient. This situation may awaken us to our need for repentance in other areas of life.

Chapter 9

- Naaman justified his sinful idolatry by imagining that God would not make a "big deal" about his ongoing worship of the false god Rimmon. Naaman justified this sin. He was hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, having so long engaged in idolatrous behavior.
- Paul says that we have died to sin, and we have risen again to new life in Christ. It is inconsistent with our new resurrection life to continue living in sin.

Chapter 10

- This verse teaches that sexual sin, in particular, is deadly, and it would take the life of the one who engaged in it. The young man was foolish because, lacking sense, he did not realize the consequences of sin.
- The passage describes how we may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. This is a dangerous situation for our souls. The means by which we avoid such hardening is to exhort one another every day with the Word of God.
- First danger: Being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Second danger: Coming under a great chastisement. Third danger: The loss of peace and strength all a man's days. Fourth danger: The danger of eternal destruction.

Chapter 11

- The law of God shows us how evil sin is by bringing clarity to the many ways in which sin manifests itself, and it shows us the consequences/penalties of sin. Romans 7:7-8 explains that knowledge of sin comes through the revealing clarity of God's law. Paul came to know the evil of his covetous heart by hearing the law say, "you shall not covet." The gospel awakens us to the evil and guilt of sin by showing us God's love and mercy towards sinners. When we sin despite such mercy, it further increases our guilt, and shows us how evil a thing sin is.
- We are commanded to be watchful.
- The more we sin, the more entangled we become by the sin. Hebrews 3 also warns us that if we do not quickly kill sin, we may be hardened and deceived by it, making it more difficult to kill sin. James 1 explains that as sin progresses, it only grows worse. For this reason, it is important that we rise up against the first occasions of sin breaking out, lest it gain a stronger foothold in our lives.

Chapter 12

- Job repented of all the things he had said against God's wisdom and providence in his affliction and abhorred himself. He repented in "dust and ashes" realizing his insignificance and sinfulness.
- Agur is wise to recognize his own lack of wisdom and understanding. When compared with the knowledge of God, which is infinite, Agur sees himself as "stupid" and lacking in understanding. We are as nothing before God.

Chapter 13

- According to vs. 18, God restores comfort to those who mourn. In context, it is those who mourn over sin. According to vs. 20-21, the wicked are like a troubled sea that is constantly in agitation. The wicked do not experience peace.
- This is a dangerous sign because it may mean that we are concerned about the one sin for some natural or selfish reasons, rather than repenting of our sin because we have come to see that sin as evil in God's sight. Additionally, if we do not repent of all the other sins in our life, it shows that we are concerned only about the one sin that afflicts us, rather than the fact that all the other sins in our lives are a serious matter in God's eyes.
- Owen points out that when God speaks peace to us, he brings us also to a state of humility. But if we are proud and yet at peace, this is a sign that we have not really repented of our sin before God.

Answer Key

The Mortification of Sin, by John Owen

Chapter 14

1. Answers will vary.
2. 1—The Spirit alone clearly and fully convinces the heart of the evil, guilt, and danger of the corruption, lust or sin that is to be mortified.
 2. The Spirit alone reveals to us the fullness of Christ for our relief.
 3. The Spirit alone establishes the heart in the expectation of relief from Christ.
 4. The Spirit alone brings the cross of Christ into our hearts with its sin-killing power.
 5. The Spirit is the Author and Finisher of our sanctification.
 6. All of our soul's prayers to God in our need are supported by the Spirit.
3. This verse reminds me that I cannot kill sin and bear fruit for God apart from Jesus Christ. I must be united to the life-giving vine if I would live a godly life. I must believe in Jesus Christ and abide in Him to bear fruit.