

Message Description

— Why do we struggle so in our attempts to kill persistent sin? The noted 19th century theologian J. C. Ryle summed up the Bible answer by saying that nineteen out of twenty times the reason Christians struggle with persistent sins is that they have a weak or nonexistent prayer life. As we continue our message series focused on this question, we will learn about the connection between killing sin and praying. And we will learn how to supercharge our prayer life when we feel distracted, distant, or unengaged with the Lord.

— **James 4:8a** | *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you...* (CSB)

— **James 4:7** | *Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* (CSB)

— **James 4:8b-9** | *... Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.* (CSB)

How to Approach the Lord?

I. Pray

— **Psalm 100:4** | *Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name.* (CSB)

— How does the Holy Spirit use our prayer to help us overcome persistent sin?

A. Prayer calls on God to work on our behalf in overcoming persistent sin.

— **Matthew 6:13** | *And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.* (CSB)

— **Psalm 19:13** | *Moreover, keep your servant from willful sins; do not let them rule me. Then I will be blameless and cleansed from blatant rebellion.* (CSB)

— **Psalm 119:133** | *Make my steps steady through your promise; don't let any sin dominate me.* (CSB)

B. Prayer changes our focus from the things of the world to the things of God.

— **Romans 12:2b** | *...be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.* (CSB)

— **James 4:8a** | *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you...* (CSB)

C. Prayer is a conduit for the strength of God to flow into our lives.

— **Psalm 138:2-3** | *I will bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your constant love and truth. You have exalted your name and your promise above everything else. On the day I called, you answered me; you increased strength within me.* (CSB)

D. Prayer begins the flow of wisdom that leads us away from temptation.

— **Psalm 139:23-24** | *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way.* (CSB)

— **Psalm 23:3** | *He renews my life; he leads me along the right paths for his name's sake.* (CSB)

II. Unhindered

III. Find undeserved help

— **Mark 9:28** | *After he had gone into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"* (CSB)

— **Mark 9:29** | *And he told them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer."* (CSB)

IV. At the perfect time

— **Lamentations 3:19-21** | *The thought of my suffering and homelessness is bitter beyond words. I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this:* (NLT)

— **Lamentations 3:22-24** | *The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!"* (NLT)

— **Lamentations 3:25-26** | *The LORD is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him. So it is good to wait quietly for salvation from the LORD.* (NLT)

— How to do a prayer journal?

— No one-right-way.

— The simplest way is to make lists...

— The final step is free-handed prayer...