

Monster  
Cheat Sheet  
for John  
Owen's  
Mortification  
of Sin in  
Believers

John Owen's [Mortification of Sin in Believers](#) is a beast of a book.

It's not a beast in size--it clocks in at 84 pages. It's a beast in content, language and style:

**Content:** Mortification (killing) of sin doesn't get a lot of work in our [modern churches](#). Neither do the methods behind killing sin. So it will be a [shock to the system for believer and unbeliever](#) alike.

**Language:** Published in 1656, when Owen was 40, *Mortification* shares some of the same characteristics of a Shakespearean play. A reader must untangle complex sentences and bone up on his Elizabethan vocabulary.

**Style:** Owens writes like a lawyer. His arguments are precise (liberal use of verses from both the Old and Testament) and highly structured. And then there is a hierarchy that demands a close reading.

No wonder an [anonymous biographer said Owen](#) "travels through [his subjects] with the grace of an elephant." And that's funny, because Owen actually called *Mortification* his "little discourse."

I guess you can make that kind of statement when you are the [greatest theologian in the English Language](#).

In a future post I'll follow up with the reasons why a close reading will be worth it, in the meantime I hope this cheat sheet will give you a taste--and desire--for *Mortification*.

And keep in mind, this cheat sheet is dense because John Owen is dense: it is hard to determine what should go and what should stay because it all is very important.

My goal is to encourage you to pick up a copy of *Mortification* and read it. I had the privilege of studying it with a great friend, which is an effective tactic to reading Owen. I highly recommend it.

Grab a copy here:

[PDF of the Mortification of Sin in Believers](#) (This is how I read it.)

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[Abridged Version by Richard Rushing](#)

## Why Owen's Wrote Mortification of Sin in Believers (Preface)

So the burning question is this: why did John Owen write this book? His answer is three fold.

**He preached it because he wanted to set the record straight.** Believers struggling to resist sin: At peace with the world, themselves, their sin. Self wrought mortification taught by some, which is unbearable, foreign to the gospel, responsible for superstitions, self-righteousness and causes anxiety.

**Men preaching mortification of sin as an end in itself.** He targets the Papists, which is a derogatory slur for Roman Catholicism, who are guilty of teaching both the regenerate and unregenerate to mortify sin as a means to gain God. This rubbed Owen's the wrong way. Big time.

**His friends and colleagues encouraged him to publish it as a book.** This book started out as a series of sermons. The people who heard the sermons thought Owen's should publish the sermons.

Having preached on this subject unto some comfortable success, through the grace of Him that adminstereth the seed to the sower, I was pressed by sundry persons, in whose hearts are the ways of God, thus to publish what I delivered, with such additions and alterations I should judge necessary.

And by the way, any time Owen refers to "professors" he is referring to "believers."

## 5 Conditions You Must Meet If You Want to Mortify Sin (Chapter 1)

Owen states that the first three chapters of his little discourse will focus on convincing the reader that mortification is the work of believers, and he "proceeds to improve it to the holiness and consolation of believers."

His anchor text is [Romans 8:13](#): "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live."

Out of that text Owen says there are five conditions a person must meet if they want to mortify sin :

- 1. What:** It is the duty of the believer to mortify, what Owen calls his "duty."
- 2. Who:** Since Paul used "ye," he obviously had someone in mind.
- 3. Reward:** Obedience to this duty is crowned with a promise: "ye shall live."
- 4. Cause:** Central to Owen's argument is that mortification is the work of the believer. "If ye through the Spirit."
- 5. Condition:** You won't get that reward unless you perform your duty. You won't perform your duty if you do not have the Spirit. This is the meaning behind the first word of the anchor text "If." If you do X, then Y.

One of the trickier parts of reading *Mortification of Sin* is keeping track of Owen's argument, as in the case where he now proceeds to break down point 5, "Condition." It is worth reading Owen slowly and marking up the book carefully if you want to make any sense out of it. It is the only way to [absorb the book into your bloodstream](#).

**1. Owen says that conditions may mean two things:**

**(1.) Uncertainty of surviving an event.** For example, "If we make it out alive, then I'll marry you." Owen says that this is NOT Paul's meaning when he writes, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live," because in the first verse of the same chapter Paul writes, "There is no condemnation to them." In other words, mortification is a duty believers must perform with the work of the spirit--but it is not an either/or proposition. Mortification for believers is a promise.

**(2.) Certainty of the connection between two events.** For an example Owen uses, "If you will take such a potion, or use such a remedy, you will be well." That is, using a certain potion will lead to good health. And this is the sense that Paul is using when he says, "If." This is not cause and effect, however, since "eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ" ([Romans 6:23](#)). Rather it is the means to an end. In other words, if you mortify your sins, then you will receive eternal life. Yet, Paul is not suggesting that mortification is the means to that end since eternal life is a free gift. Rather, Owen says, "The intendment, then, of this proposition as conditional is, that there is a certain infallible connection and coherence between true mortification and eternal life." Mortification of sin is the [fruit of a true believer](#) who lives under the promise of eternal life.

**2. The person this duty is given to** - Paul does not direct this duty to unbelievers who may fall into superstition and self-righteousness. It is given to people who are "quickened by the Spirit." Owen throws out this thesis to guide his little discourse:

The choicest believers, who are assuredly freed from the condemning power of sin, ought yet to make it their busienss all their days to mortify the indwelling power of sin. *page 7*

**3. The primary cause of the performance of this duty** - It is the Holy Spirit. "If by the Spirit." This is the same as the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Adoption, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit that dwells in us, quickens us and makes intercession for us. Attempting mortification without the Spirit is fruitless.

Mortification from a self-strength, carried on by ways of self-invention, unto the end of a self-righteousness, is the soul and substance of all false religions in the world. *page 4*

**4. Owen now explores the duty:** "Mortify the deeds of the body." He breaks his argument down into three categories: (1.) What does Paul mean by body? (2.) What does he mean by deeds of the body? (3.) What does he mean by "mortify"?

**(1.) What Paul means by "body"** is the same as when he said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." This is the "body of sin." The "old man." The seat of lust. The flesh is the damage and influence of original sin that was against the Spirit. Think lust, corruption, indwelling sin. It also refers to the whole person being corrupted.

**(2.) What are the deeds?** The products of that indwelling sin. Envy, pride, murder, hate, greed, lust, murmuring, stealing, idolatry, fornication, wrath. Both internal and external deeds are considered since every sin wishes to "bring forth a perfect sin," but mortification aims at killing the sin at the root: "the axe is to be laid to the root of the tree."

**(3.) What is this mortification?** Paul uses a metaphor that means "putting of any living thing to death." *To kill*. To take "away the principle of all his strength, vigour, and power, so that he cannot act or put forth any proper actings of his own." Indwelling sin is a person, the "old man," complete with "faculties, and properties, his wisdom, craft, subtlety and strength." This man must be slain by the cross of Christ. Yet, this is a progressive work, over the lifetime of the believer.

**5. Owen explores the reward: "Ye shall live."** The reward, as you might expect, is the opposite of the one found in the earlier part of this verse: "If ye live by your flesh, ye shall die." The believer can expect as his reward to live a good, vigorous, comfortable spiritual life while he is here and obtain eternal life hereafter.

He ends the chapter with this statement: "The vigour, and power, and comfort of our spiritual life depends on the mortification of the deeds of the flesh."

So, in summary of chapter one, every believer is expected to kill sin at the root so that sin does not have an unchecked influence on your life, but is actually growing weaker and weaker in power. Mortification is a fruit of the Spirit, of believers with the promise of eternal life. This is an act of true believers for whom there is no condemnation.

# Who Should Mortify Sin and 6 Reasons Why (Chapter 2)

John Owen reviews the first principle of the mortification of sin, which he stated in the previous chapter (this is the sort of thing you have to watch for when reading Owen who will often review what he's just covered, as if the time between the ending of one chapter and the beginning of another is long enough for the general idea to fade):

The choicest believers, who are assuredly freed from the condemning power of sin, ought yet to make it their business all their days to mortify the indwelling power of sin. *page 10*

Colossians 3:5 says, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." The previous four verses inform us who is to mortify their sins:

- "Risen with Christ" verse 1
- "dead" with him, verse 3
- "appear with him in glory" verse 4

He encourages us to mortify sins because it leads to greater fruitfulness in our lives. Furthermore, Paul, exalted saint, was consumed with mortification in spite of his lofty position--more so should we.

He then leads into 6 reasons why we should mortify sin:

## **1. Sin abides in us**

We must avoid the mistake of suggesting that we have "were already perfect," Philippians 3:12. We are never delivered from this body of death except when we die. Until then we must wage war against our enemy.

## **2. That sin is alive and active**

As long as we are alive that sin in us is alive, too. But it's not idle sin. By instinct it wages war against the spirit: "the law of the members is still rebelling against the law of the mind," Romans 7:23.

It seeks to undermine our souls night and day. It "lusteth against the spirit," Galatians 5:17.

It "lusteth to envy," James 4:5.

It bends toward evil.

If sin be subtle, watchful, strong, and always at work in the business of killing our souls, and we be slothful, negligent, foolish, in proceeding to the ruin thereof, can we expect a comfortable event? *Page 12*

### **3. If let alone to act, it will sin in the utmost**

Sin seeks to sin to the uttermost. So hate wants to become murder. Lust wants to become adultery. Envy wants oppressions. Self-reliance wants self worship. This is what would happen if we did not mortify sin. Even the best saints are not spared from the ruthless perseverance of sin.

Now nothing can prevent this but mortification; that withers the root and strikes at the head of sin every hour, so that whatever it aims at it is crossed in. *Page 12*

### **4. We are given the Holy Spirit**

We oppose sin and lust with the "principle" given to us by God: the Holy Spirit. This is only fair and reasonable as Owen points out. In combat both warriors must be free to attack and defend. Furthermore, it's foolish to bind up him who will fight for us. The contest is for our lives and souls.

Not to be daily employing the spirit and new nature for the mortifying of sin, is to neglect that excellent succour which God hath given us against our greatest enemy. *Page 13*

### **5. Neglect will make the soul sick**

The neglect of mortification will lead to sin getting victory in our lives, which in turn breaks the bones of the soul and makes a man weak, sick and ready to die. He can't look up. He can't defend himself. In time his heart is hardened as the

onslaught of sin continues unabated. He becomes earthly, carnal, cold, wrathful and a lover of the world. Mortification is then distorted in two ways:

(1.) *First frame of mind--legalism.* Pride, cruelty, stubbornness and envy become marks of those with this frame of mind.

(2.) *Second frame of mind--licentiousness.* Pretences of liberty and grace mark those with this frame of mind. "We don't have to mortify sin because there is no sin to mortify. We are forgiven, perfect."

This is that which I intend: by the omission of this duty grace withers, lust flourisheth, and the frame of the heart grows worse and worse. *Page 13*

## **6. It is our duty to perfect our holiness in the fear of the Lord**

First Corinthians 7:1 provides the anchor text for this sub-argument. In other words, we do not want to be at peace with sin, *but war*. Underneath this principle he builds an argument that says sin still exists, so we must mortify it in spite of these two facts:

(1.) *Meritorious mortification* - We are put to death with Christ, a death that paid the penalty of all sin.

(2.) *New nature* - We are new creatures injected with the Spirit. We have new natures, desires and longings.

Yet sin doth remain, so act and work in the best of believers, whist they live in this world, that the constant daily mortification of it is all their days incumbent on them. *Page 14*

So this forms the argument for the first principle: who should mortify sin and why. But before Owen moves on to the second principle he wants to complain about believers in his days who lack the fruit of authentic mortification.

The church is full of these believers, but if you examined them you'd discover they had no depth, and the church attendance register would need to be corrected to account for those who "give evidence of a miserably unmortified heart."

If vain spending of time, idleness, unprofitableness in men's places, envy, strife, variance, emulations, wrath, pride, worldliness, selfishness, be badges of Christians, we have them on us and amongst us in abundance.

Unmortified believers are marked by two evils:

**1. Evil in himself - cheap grace.**

The blood of Christ is used to cleanse us, the exaltation of Christ is meant for repentance and the doctrine of grace teaches us to deny ungodliness. The false believer, however, uses these principles to approve of sin.

**2. Evil towards others - self-righteousness.**

They are deceived to believe they are good, and lack empathy towards other believers who stumble. They then deceive people around them to strive for the reputation of the believer who exceeds his righteousness, yet he will still miss eternal life.

## **The Usefulness of Mortification (Chapter 3)**

Owen now lies down the second principle behind the mortification of sin in believers: that mortification is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit:

He only is sufficient for this work, all ways and means without him are as a thing of nought; and he is the great efficient of it, - he works in us as he pleases. *Page 17*

### **1. Men seek other ways to mortify sin.**

Vows, orders, monastical life, hair shirts, fastings, penances. This is the essence of "popish religion" taught by "Papists." But they will not be healed by these methods because they lack the work of the Holy Spirit. Neither do they mention Christ or his cross. They will only be tormented and troubled in their consciences. Reasons why they can't mortify sin with these methods:

#### **(1.) God never approved of these methods.**

"In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men."

#### **(2.) The methods he did approve are used incorrectly.**

Instead of looking at the origin of methods of mortification--praying, fasting, watching, meditation--as their saviour, they look to the method.

This is a general mistake made by people who do not understand the gospel. This includes the desert fathers and their extremity of sufferings. They try to mortify the natural body we live in instead of killing the source of that sin--the old man.

This cycle of mortification is vicious. Man is sick with guilt. He promises to do better. He scrutinizes his every thought, deed and word. Prays for a season. The guilt lifts, and within time the man falls back into that sin.

Why do we fall for this vicious cycle? Preoccupation with external disciplines keeps our minds off the true nature of our sins.

He that turns his meat into his medicine must expect no great operation. Spiritually sick men cannot sweat out their distemper with working. But his is the way of men who deceive their own souls. *Page 18*

## **2. Mortification is the work of the Spirit.**

(1.) God promises to take away our proud, rebellious and unbelieving hearts and give us a new one--this is the work of the Spirit (Ezekeil 11:19 and 36:26).

(2.) The gift of Christ includes mortification: "Without Christ we can do nothing," John John 15:5. Jesus promised us the Spirit (Acts 2:33).

Owen now wants to answer two potential questions. The answers will help him build his case in this chapter.

**First question.** How does the Spirit mortify sin? Three answers:

[1.] He fills our hearts full of grace and those things contrary to the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21).

[2.] He burns up the very root of sin (Isaiah 4:4).

[3.] He puts the cross of Christ in the heart of the believer.

**Second question.** If this is the work of the Holy Spirit, why do we have to do anything?

[1.] All works of grace are his, yet we are commanded to perform them.

"Works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure," Philippians 2:13.

"The work of faith with power," 2 Thessalonians 1:11.

He causes us to pray (Roman 8:26).

[2.] He doesn't coerce us to mortify our sin. He changes "our understandings, wills, consciences, and affections, agreeably to their own natures" so we desire to mortify sin. His "assistance is an encouragement as to the facilitatating of the work, and no occassion of neglect as to the work itself."

Owen ends this chapter on the second general principle wondering about the fate of two kinds of people: those who wage war against sin without the help of the Holy Spirit and those who are slaves to sin and love it.

For the first he answers that despite their hard work they will still miss heaven. For the latter he ends with a rhetorical question to suggest that if the one who labored relentlessly to mortify sin without the Spirit doesn't get in heaven, what will the fate of him who embraces sin be? You are meant to shudder.

# The Health of Our Spiritual Lives Depends Upon Mortification of Sin (Chapter 4)

Here's Owen's statement on the third principle: "That life, vigour, and comfort of our spiritual life depend much on our mortification of sin." In other words, the health of our spiritual life depends upon the killing of sin.

Owen names four desires that all believers want: strength, comfort, power and peace. He lumps these into two categories: power and strength, then comfort and peace. And if we lose one of these desires in our walk with God, then our souls will feel it.

To maintain those desires we must mortify sin:

## **1. Mortification of sin is not a promise that we will never suffer.**

"A man may be carried on in a constant course of mortification all his days; and yet perhaps never enjoy a good day of peace and consolation." He uses Heman as his example in Psalm 88. A man who walked close to God and mortified sin yet was in constant terror.

## **2. Our adoption is the cause of our comfort--not mortification.**

"The Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." The privileges of adoption are "life, vigour, courage, and consolation." When we become children of God we are put into a position to enjoy those perks.

## **3. Mortification can influence the health of our spiritual life.**

### ***(1.) Unmortified sin does two things:***

*[1.] Weakens the soul.* David did not mortify sin and it destroyed his spiritual condition. In Psalm 38:8 he said, "I am feeble and sore broken." Owen wrote, "An unmortified lust will drink up the spirit, and all the vigour of the soul, and weaken it for all duties."

1st. Unmortified sin "unhinges" the feelings and desires of the believer from God.

2dly. Unmortified sin creates a mind obsessed with satisfying that sin.

3dly. We neglect our duties for God because we are lured away by our lusts.

Were this my present business, to set forth the breaches, ruin, weakness, desolations, that one unmortified lust will bring upon a soul, this discourse must be extended much beyond my intendment.

*[2.] Darkens the soul.* Unmortified sin becomes a dark cloud over the soul. When we look to the promises of God for comfort, sin blocks our view. Man will not find comfort in mortification disciplines unless he first repents.

### **(2.) Mortification makes room in the heart for more grace.**

Like a garden that is well weeded, the heart will flourish and thrive when sins are uprooted. When "noxious and hurtful" things are not uprooted, then the heart becomes clogged with lusts. True, graces can exist in a heart where sin is not killed. But that grace is weak and ready to die.

### **(3.) We will not have peace until we wage war with self.**

## Wrong Way to Kill Sin (Chapter 5)

Owen predicts and tackles some common objections. He starts with an illustration about a man who is a true believer but finds himself under the thumb of a powerful sin. What should he do? Owen breaks his answer down into three components:

- I. The right and wrong way to kill sin.
- II. The general directions to completely destroy sin.
- III. The specific steps to completely destroy sin.

He starts with the wrong way to kill sin. What he calls "negatively."

***I. 1. (1.) Mortification is not to utterly kill it so that we no longer struggle with that sin.***

This is what we want, of course, but it's NOT what happens. At least not in this life. Utter destruction of sin occurs in the next life (Philippians 3:12). Paul, the loftiest of all saints, never reached perfection. Neither will we.

***(2.) Mortification is not hiding sin.***

We may pretend like we don't struggle with a particular sin when in fact we do. To that sin we hide we can add hypocrisy.

***(3.) Mortification is not a timid character.***

Even the most quiet and sedate of people can have hearts that are a "standing sink of all abominations."

***(4.) Mortification is not behavior modification.***

Some men will fool themselves into thinking they are mortifying sin when in fact they are simply diverting it. Changing your friends, lifestyle and interests may effect that sin. But it will creep up in other areas of your life.

**(5.) Mortification is not spastic combat with sin.** (We descend into a sub-argument.)

[1.] When a particular sin becomes grossly apparent, and it disturbs our peace or reputation, we may fling ourselves at that sin. In response, "sin sinks in its head, appears not, but lies as dead before him." But when things quiet back down, "the thief appears again alive, and is as busy as ever in his work."

[2.] We flee from trouble and suffering to regain our peace with God. We set ourselves against our sin. But our hearts don't want God. We want our sin. And we want our peace. So we slink back to our sin, deceived.

## Right Way to Kill Sin (Chapter 6)

Owen now explains how to mortify sin "positively."

**I. 2. Mortification of lust consists of three things** (this refers to point two, of the main point I, back in chapter five.):

**(1.) Regular weakening of sin.** Lust is a deeply-rooted, depraved bent of will and affections to some sin. The man who is not born again does not have the nature to mortify sin. Yet, because he has an abundance of sin to indulge, he doesn't consume himself with just one. Lust is to be distinguished from a sinful habit like getting tipsy. Getting tipsy is mild to the violence that lust wants to wage.

Now, the first thing in mortification is the weakening of this habit of sin or lust, that it shall not, with that violence, earnestness, frequency, rise up, conceive, tumultuate, provoke, entice, disquiet, as naturally it is apt to do, James 1:14, 15.

There are two limitations to this thought that every lust inclines to sin.

**[1.] Some lusts flare up over others.** We don't fight every single lust at once. Life circumstances, affliction, defect in our character or temper, temptation, Satan leveraging--any one of these could be the trigger to satisfy a lust. One lust can be greater in one man than another.

**[2.] Some lusts appear great in violence.** Fornication, for example (1 Corinthians 11:18). Love of the world, however, that's an inside job, but equally deserving of judgement. Other sins don't vex us as much so we can get away with them in secret.

Owen now introduces us to a new definition of mortification: "the wasting of the body of death." Compare Paul's "crucify the flesh" in Galatians 2:4.

First thing in mortification. Take away it's blood and spirit. What does that look like? Mortified sin:

- Shall not entice and disturb as before.
- Shall not draw aside.

- Shall not disquiet and perplex this killing of its life.

Mortifying sin is like nailing a man to a cross. He struggles and screams, but as his "blood and spirit waste" he whimpers, faints and eventually grows quiet. This is true with mortified sin. This is true of both the carnal affections and desires, and the root of those affections and desires.

A man may beat down the bitter fruit from an evil tree until he is weary; whilst the root abides in strength and vigour, the beating down of the present fruit will not hinder it from bringing forth more. *p 31*

**(2.) Mortification is constant warfare.** It is "laying load on sin" at all times.

[1.] Study your enemy. Know that you have an enemy who never rests and wishes nothing but your death.

[2.] Know how lust and sin works. Find out the subtleties, policies and depths of your sin. Know where the strength of your sin lies.

[3.] Put it under the sword. Even when that sin is quiet (Colossians 3:5).

**(3.) Evidence of success in mortification.** Complete conquest of that sin occurs when you can identify sin and its signs, and then throwing it to the cross of Christ.

Now I say, when a man comes to this state and condition, that lust is weakened in the root and principle, that its motions and actions are fewer and weaker than formerly, so that they are not able to hinder his duty nor interrupt his peace--when he can, in a quiet, sedate frame of spirit, find out and fight against sin, and have success against it--then sin is mortified in some considerable measure, and, notwithstanding all its opposition, a man may have peace with God all of his days. *p*

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Owen now dishes out some advice on how to weaken lust:

- "Weakening this disposition is to oppose it with a principle of grace opposite its nature." For example, fight pride with

humility. Passion with patience. Uncleaness with purity of mind. Love of the world with love of God.

- "Cheerful fighting against, the lust spoken of." We must use every means to weaken lust--and do it with spirit and joy.

Success comes in degrees. Depending upon the stronghold which that sin had over your life, peace returns progressively.

# Revisiting Rules Behind Mortifying Sin (Chapter 7)

II. (Refers back to chapter five). Owen now considers the methods to mortify sin. To do so we have to look at the principles and rules behind mortifying sin.

## 1. Must be a believer.

In grafted in Christ (Romans 8:13), where there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1). In fact, it is believers alone who are encouraged to mortify sin (Colossians 3:1-5). Certainly philosophers in the past did something that looked like mortification--but it's false and unacceptable to God. "Those in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). True, sin must be mortified. But something must happen first. There is no death of sin without the death of Christ. You must have the Spirit. No Spirit, no mortification (Romans 8:9). "If the Spirit is in us, we are mortified (Romans 8:10). Christ in us will provide the right operation to mortify sin (Romans 8:11).

What about unregenerate men who try to mortify sin? It is a sad issue. Mortification is not the present business of unregenerate men (Jeremiah 6:35). Conversion of their souls is their immediate business. When unregenerate Jews asked Peter what to do about their sin he said "Repent." John the Baptist said, the "axe is laid to the root of the tree." The root must be dealt with if you want good fruit.

Various evils in unregenerate people trying to mortify sin.

(1.) Unregenerate men are diverted from conversion when they make killing sin their immediate business. They want to get rid of that sin that robs them of peace, which is a form of self-love.

(2.) Unregenerate men engaged in mortification think their souls are not in danger.

[1.] Men try to pacify their souls without Christ. Sick in soul, these men run to mortification rather than the Great Physician. This is to their eternal peril.

[2.] Since mortification is a good thing at the proper time, and these unregenerate men mortify it and think they are in good condition, doing it quietly, thus becoming self-righteous.

(3.) To kill sin is the work of living men. Unregenerate men will eventually see that their mortification is in vain when the sin returns, redoubling its efforts. And in their despair they think mortification is all for nothing, and so give in. Mortification without Christ deludes, hardens and destroys.

And therefore we see that there are not usually more vile and desperate sinners in the world than such as, having by conviction been put on this course, have found it fruitless, and deserted it without a discovery of Christ. *p. 37*

## **2. Must be a work of faith.**

It's mad to kill sin without faith (Acts 15:9 and 1 Peter 1:22).

*Objection:* If it's is mad to kill sin without faith, what should unregenerate men do? Abandon themselves to sin if mortification is a hopeless cause?

Answer 1: God restrains men out of his goodness to keep them from rushing headlong into confusion and chaos. Unregenerate men will not sin to the utmost due to God's common grace.

Answer 2: Preaching God's word will lead to unregenerate men restraining their sins out of shame.

Answer 3: Preaching the word's ultimate end is not to rebuke or restrain sinners since they are still under darkness.

Answer 4: In a plea to unregenerate men Owen says not to throw yourself into mortification--*but conversion*. You never fix the leak in the basement if the house is on fire. [Use the law to show men their true condition](#): sin is a symptom, we are sin. Master preachers lay their axes at the door, drives still at the heart. Going after their sin and not their sin nature is like driving an enemy into an impregnable castle.

Thou settest thyself against a particular sin, and dost not consider that thou are NOTHING but sin.

He then asks the question "Can sin be killed without an interest in the death of Christ or mortified without the Spirit?" No. To do so is to drive men to torment and anguish. And it doesn't create Christians. Rather it creates hypocrites. This is known as "Roman mortification."

This grieves Owen to see those in bondage and eternal condemnation because of the religious programs that promise eternal welfare but do so without Christ.

## Impact of Careless Mortification (Chapter 8)

2. Second principle: If obedience isn't all encompassing in sincerity and diligence--if we relax for a moment--there is no mortification. If a man is loose in his commitments to spiritual disciplines, then is overcome by sin, and asks for deliverance, he will not mortify that sin. If he is vexed by one sin and neglects others, God will reject his efforts. Take care of the entire body, soul and spirit--the universal discipline. It is a wholesale work.

**(1.) A fragmented approach to mortification** comes from a corrupt principle, namely, we try to kill a sin because it disturbs our peace--not that we hate it or love Christ. This is a form of self-love. The foundation of true mortification is based on a hatred of sin and a sense of the love of Christ. A hatred of sin is grieving over what grieves God. God will not relieve you of lust or sin or their consequences if your motive for killing sin is self love.

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.  
2 Corinthians 7:1

**(2.) Does God allow sin to get the better of us** as to get our attention that we are not in universal obedience? No. If sin rages, then it is because we are negligent.

[1.] This is a natural effect: if you are diligent in your protection of your heart and root, detroying sin, then sin shall not fester or rage. If you are negligent in your duties then sin will take root, spread and erupt.

Thus, perhaps, a man may be put to wrestle all his days in sorrow with that which, by a strict and universal watch, might easily have been prevented. *p 42*

[2.] God chastens our negligences, gives up wicked men to one sin in judgement of another--a greater for the punishment of the less. In the case of the messenger of Satan let loose on Paul to keep his revelations from going to his head. In Peter's case, was left to deny his master, rebuking his confidence.

If you really want to mortify lust, be diligent to mortify all lust. Do not neglect.

## 6 Signs You Are in a Dangerous Condition of Sin (Chapter 9)

Here Owen now moves to point III. With the general rules out of the way, he wants to look at the particular directions for mortification. But first he needs to qualify that sin. His first step: Does the sin have dangerous symptoms? If so, then it deserves extraordinary measures.

Naturally you need to ask: what are signs that you are in a dangerous condition of sin?

### 1. Inveterateness.

Think endurance and stamina. If you have neglected communion with God for worldly wisdom. If sin has lain long undisturbed in your soul--corrupting and festering. You have a dangerous symptom and your soul is in a woeful condition. Normal work of humiliation won't do if you wish to experience peace ever again.

**2. Secret pleas of the heart to approve of that sin.** And lack of systematic exposure of it to the gospel.

(1.) Man looks to justify his sin by looking to find that portion of his being that is good. He will do a good deed so he can persist in sin.

- Heart in love with sin will abuse 2 Corinthians 13:5, examining himself to justify his sin. This is a "desperate device."
- A heart that doesn't seek to repent of sin, get it pardoned in the blood of Christ or mortified in the Spirit, but use other devices to get out from underneath the yoke God has placed upon him, "his condition is dangerous, his wound hardly curable."
- Jews defended themselves by the claim they were Abraham's children and approved by God, thus approving their sin.
- If he can heap up hope that he can escape the wrath of God, he will be unfruitful, separated from God that is not final separation.

(2.) Mercy and grace applied to an unmortified sin or one not sincerely endeavoured to be mortified is an extension of the previous deceit. It's

like saying, "In all things I will walk with God, but in this one thing--God be merciful to me." Think rich young ruler.

- Indulge a sin on an account of God's mercy is a badge of hypocrisy and inconsistent with Christian sincerity (Jude 3).
- Fulfilling the end of the flesh upon the gospel. Even believers are prone to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (Romans 6:1,2).
- Men who have a secret wish for a sin and would indulge it if they could get away with it--they are equally at the door of death.

### **3. Frequency of success.**

- Man indulges in sin and delights in it. Even after a struggle to kill it. He may not let on to the world but inside he relishes it.
- A man may not finish a sin, but he would if he could. He is in a dangerous situation.
- If we choose activities that make us heedless and negligent then we will become heedless and negligent when it comes to the mortification of sin. What activities will make you heedless and negligent?
- If you are surprised by your sin, it doesn't make your sin any less serious or excuse you. But you are still culpable and at fault because you should have been watchful.

### **4. His fear of shame and punishment if caught.**

- Does not hate sin as sin, but hates the negative consequences of indulging in that sin. Resolved to do the sin if that were no punishment. No different than living in the practice of sin.
  - Christ's children have the death of Christ, love of God, precious communion with God and deep grounded abhorrence of sin as sin. Joseph is a good example. Paul said, "Love of Christ constrains us" (2 Corinthians 5:14) and "having received these promises, let us chase ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and the spirit" (2 Corinthians 7:11).
- Sub sign of dangerous condition is that man uses the law, not the gospel, to oppose sin, including the fear of hell and judgement. This

angers Christ. Men cast off off his easy, light yoke, and put on the hard, heavy yoke of the law. Evil lies at the door of the person whose thoughts are only of the punishment of hell and holy vengeance (Romans 6:4).

If thy lust hath driven thee from stronger gospel forts, it will speedily prevail against this also.... What gospel principles do not do, legal motives cannot do.

### **5. You feel like you are being disciplined.**

God does leave us under lust or sin to correct us for former sins, folly or negligence (Isaiah 63:17). If you are under that correction, then examine your heart and ways when under the perplexing power of lust and sin.

- What was your soul like before?
- Were you neglecting duties?
- Being selfish?
- Must you repent of sin? New sin is sometimes permitted and new affliction sent to remind us to bring old sin to remembrance.

### **6. You resisted God's chastisement.**

Isaiah 57:17 God deserted and afflicted the Israelites because they held unto their sin. The word preached, which is God's ordinance for correction, conversion and edification, hews men by that sword, strikes directly at their "bosom-beloved lust," startles the sinner and engages in mortification. If a soul resists that word, sin returns to its old posture--and that is a sad condition.

Extraordinary measures for sins and lusts of the preceding kind--they must be killed by fasting and prayer. And by the way, you are deceived if you think that you see these six signs of dangerous and mortal sins in your life, and then conclude that you is a believer. These are not the signs that someone is a believer. These are the signs that a *believer* is in grave trouble.

This concludes Owen's first particular direction.

## 3 Things to Consider When Killing Sin (Chapter 10)

Second particular direction when it comes to mortifying sin: Get a clear sense of the guilt, danger and evil of your abiding sin.

### 1. Consider the guilt.

We will try to excuse our sin by saying other Christians are doing it. Or it's not as bad as such and such sin. Beg for mercy for this particular sin. Think it is little. Hosea 4:11 says "whoredome and wine and new wine take away the heart."

David's dark reasoning smothered his sense of guilt so that God sent Nathan the prophet to wake him up. Lust in the understanding darkens our hearts. The first thing that someone must do if he wants to kill sin is *fix a right judgement of it's guilt upon his mind*.

(1.) Consider this: There is more evil and guilt in your own heart--than if you had no grace at all.

(2.) Consider this: God sees the beauty and goodness in the hearts of his saints, more than the beauty of the ungenerate. But he also sees more evil and wickedness than in the heart of the unregenerate--the decaying children are condemned.

Let these thoughts lead you to a correct view of your guilt.

### 2. Consider the danger.

(1.) Beware of being hardened by the deceitfulness (Hebrews 3:12, 13) of sin. Searing our consciences, binding the mind, stupefying the affections and deceiving the whole soul.

- We can grow "sermon-proof and sickness proof." Sin will become a light thing. Neglecting spiritual duties and think nothing of it. Your lust is working toward a light thoughts about heaven, hell, righteousness and the blood of Christ.

(2.) Danger of God's judgement or punishment. He will visit you with the rod, take vengeance on your sin. He afflicted David.

(3.) Danger of loss of peace. An unmortified lust can drive God to turn away from you and hide himself from you until you repent (Hosea 5:15).

- Promise and reward of covenant is grace, peace with God and walking before God.
- In the Psalms David cried out about his bones being broken, soul disquieted, wounds grieved: "Though God should not utterly destroy thee, yet he might cast thee into this condition, wherein thou shalt have quick and living apprehensions of thy destruction."

(4.) Unmortified lust can lead to eternal destruction. To fully appreciate the danger of eternal destruction:

[1.] There is a connection between unrestrained sin and eternal destruction: "He will deliver none who continue in sin--they will be destroyed" (Galatians 6:8, Hebrews 3:12 and 10:38).

[2.] These who walk after the flesh, who are so entangled in an unmortified lust must understand eternal destruction in his way.

### **3. Consider the evils of it.** Evils that attend unmortified lust.

(1.) Grieves the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:25-30). Should we grieve him who has sealed us unto redemption? Consider who the Holy Spirit is: who it is we grieve, what he has done for us--and we should be ashamed. No greater motive and incentive unto universal holiness than this.

(2.) An unmortified lust wounds Christ afresh. His saint is wounded, his love is frustrated and his enemy is gratified.

(3.) Soul-destroying sin will make a man's ministry impotent. He will not be honored with any success. Your life will lack beauty and glory. God blasts such men's undertakings.

Conclusion: Meditate on these considerations of allowing sin to fester--the guilt, the danger and the evil. Meditate on them until your soul trembles.

## 5 Ways to Kill Sin (Chapter 11)

The **third direction**: Load thy soul with the guilt of it. Grieve, in other words. You do that generally and specifically.

### 1. Begin with generals and then move to particulars

**(1.) Be much in the affecting of your conscious with the terror of the Lord in the law.**

Each transgression deserves recompense. You may make excuses that you are free from the power of the law. But you are in the wrong.

[1.] *It is impossible to justify* you have gospel grounds to prove you are free from the condemning power of the law as long as you have unmortified sin.

[2.] *God had commissioned the law* to hunt down and drag sinners back to those of God. It will find you out.

[3.] *Proper work of the law.* Discover sin, awake and humble the soul and expose sin fully. Like a mirror. Sinners have turned apostates by ignoring the work of the law--they would not measure their sin by it no more. Ears must be open, it will speak to you with a voice that will make you tremble and fill with astonishment. "If you want to mortify sin then you must tie your conscience to the law, cut off any excuses, shifts or exceptions, until it owns thy guilt with apprehension."

**(2.) Bring thy lust to the gospel.** Not to bring relief but further conviction of guilt. Throw yourself at Christ: unmortified corruption in the face of the grace of God and blood of Christ--do you recoil? If not, your case is dangerous.

### 2. Descend to particulars in the gospel.

(1.) *Consider his patience and forbearance.* He preserved you from being an object of wrath, drew you back when you broke promises, spared you. He is always to visit you with love and so will you repay that love with secret sin?

(2.) *At the door of being hardened.* "Grace decaying, delight in duties vanishing and engaged in loose society God abhors."

(3.) Load they conscience with God's gracious dealings with you. Do not wait until you are cowering in the dust before the feet of the Lord.

**Fourth direction to mortifying sin.** Cultivate an unrelenting desire and longing to be rid of that indwelling sin.

Long desires for natural and civil things will lead us astray.

For deliverance, long desires for the things of the Lord on the other hand is a grace in itself. Have a vehement desire (2 Corinthians 7:11 and Romans 7:24). Unless you long for deliverance you will not have it. Praying always will put you into a position to be watchful for the enemy and his tricks.

Get the heart into a panting and breathing frame. David is our example.

**Fifth direction:** Is the unmortified sin rooted in your nature and fomented by your constitution?

**1. If this is the case, it doesn't excuse your sin.** Only the grossly profane would draw that conclusion. David said it was being born in iniquity that caused and aggravated his sins. Not a lessening. This peculiar breaking out of a sin should humble you.

**2. If you don't devote yourself to an extraordinary watchfulness** of this peculiar breaking out of this sin because of your nature and disposition, then you will fal headlong into hell. This peculiar breaking out gives advantage to sin and Satan.

**3. There is no one certain case in which bringing the subjection** of the body is beneficial as quoted by Paul (1 Corinthians 1:27) "I keep under my body, and bring it under subjection."

This is an ordinance of God, and that certain case is when indwelling sin is rooted in the nature and disposition. The Papists abuse this ordinance--who don't know the righteousness of God, the work of the Spirit or the walk at hand. Bringing your body under subjection withers it by taking away the "fatness of soil." In other words, cutting away the nature and appetite with fasting and watchfulness.

Two ensuing limitations:

(1.) This fasting is not viewed as the end itself, but means to an an end. Men can have lean bodies and souls.

(2.) Do not look upon the basic means of "bringing your body under subjection"--fasting and watchfulness--as having power to mortify sin themselves.

**Sixth direction:** avoid those situations, conditions, seasons, business, studies, ways, companies that feed this natural distemper and disposition--watch as Jesus commanded (Mark 13:37).

**Seventh direction:** close down hard on sin the moment appears. Do not give it any room. It will take as much as it can. It seeks to fill its entire extent.

# Our Imperfect Knowledge of God Is Enough to Kill Sin (Chapter 12)

**Eight direction:** meditate on things that humble you.

## 1. Think greatly of the greatness of God.

And your great distance from him. You are "grasshoppers," vanity and dust in the balance. Job and Habakuk and many prophets of old fell struck dead at the apprehension of God. Be much in thought of that nature.

## 2. Meditate on how lowly you are from God (Proverbs 30:2-4).

Labor with this meditation to take down your heart.

We speak much of God, cant talk of him, his ways, his walks, his counsels, all day long; the truth is, we know very little of him. Our thoughts, our meditations, our expressions of his are low, many of them unworthy of his glory, none of them reaching his perfection.

Here Owen introduces an objection.

Moses was under the law, and not the gospel. He saw God's back parts, but we in the light of the gospel see his face clearly. In other words, the harsh nature of mortification is unnecessary given we are living in a new era of grace.

**Answer 1:** Owen acknowledges that we have a vast advantage over the saints before Christ regarding redemptive history.

**Answer 2:** Yet, even that vision of God before Moses in which he only saw his back parts was a gospel sight--it was precious.

**Answer 3:** The apostle Paul even proclaimed that he did not see God face-to-face, that his knowledge of God was in fact childish and should be destroyed. He saw in a glass, darkly. Even in so-called gospel light he saw back parts. He encourages us with the hope that one day we shall see him as he is "face-to-face."

The Queen of Sheba exclaimed after meeting Solomon: she had only been told half the truth. We will be breathless when face to face with God. We won't know what we will be like much less what God will be like.

**(1.) We know so little of God.** We cannot know him. He is immortal and infinite. We are mortal and finite. First Timothy 6:16: We lose our sense of understanding when we consider God, his work and way.

Let us consider:

**[1.] We are far from knowledge of God.** To make an image of him in our mind is no different than making an image of him out of wood or stone. "The utmost of the best of our thoughts of the being of God is, that we can have not thought of it."

**[2.] We can never know infinite or omnipotent.** Even though God teach us to think of Him as infinite and omnipotent, we can truly say we even know what those terms mean. We can't conceive or express. Our understanding is brutish. We are but looking at the back parts of things. We do know him, however, by what he says he does--not who he is.

**(2.) All that we know about God is low, dark and obscure.** And what little we know about God we only know about him by faith. The chief and only acquaintance of God (Hebrews 11:16). Our knowledge and reward is by faith 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Some will object that is not those low, dark and obscure views of God true only for non-believers?

No. In essence, non-believers and some weak believers may be in the dark, but not true believers. To which John replies:

**[1.] We all know enough of Him to love him more than we do.** We have not used that knowledge to the full extent of worshipping him.

**[2.] The knowledge of God as seen in the gospel of Jesus Christ is unparalleled.** It is the pre-eminent example of expressing himself to us.

**[3.] Unbelievers and believers differ in not what they know but how they know it.** The believer sees his knowledge of God as the saving, soul-transforming light. The unbeliever, who may be able to say more things about God than the believer, sees "nothing with a holy, heavenly light."

**[4.] Jesus reveals to the believers God as father in covenant with us, redeemer and rewarder.** But...

**[5.] it is still just a little portion of what we know about him.** Just his back parts.

1st The gospel revelation purpose is to reveal enough of him so that we know him adequately to have faith, love and obedience.

2dly- We know so little of the things of the Lord and the gospel because we are slow and dull.

Here's the bottom line: Our nature is inadequate in comprehending God, but we can know God with an adequate and constant knowing that is proper and essential to watch ourselves in his presence. This is essential to clamping down on flourishing lust.

# Man-Made Peace vs. God-Given Peace (Chapter 13)

**Ninth direction:** If God afflicts you for a certain sin, whether the root or eruption, do not consider it a closed matter until God gives you the peace. Prevent yourself from speaking groundless peace upon your soul--it is deceitfulness.

Here's what to do:

**1. God gives peace at his pleasure.** Even to his elect. It is his prerogative and privilege and sovereign right. Romans 9:18: "He hath mercy on whom he will."

**2. Christ is the final administrator of this peace upon our souls.** He is the Amen, as he told the church at Laodicea--and he judges not with his eyes, but the inward character of man.

But how do you know God is giving you peace and not yourself? Here's how:

**1. If we don't have the greatest detestation of our sin that is perplexing us,** yet look to God alone as the remedy of that dismal condition--they are speaking peace to themselves. Men will mourn their sin when they look upon Christ as peirced for that sin.

Ezekiel 16:60-61: "Remember thy ways and be ashamed."

As the character of Job did not come to peace until he abhorred himself and his sin and did not take the easy way out with the doctrine of free grace. If detestation and abhorring for our sins does not follow or proceed on feeling of peace about our sins--that peace is not from God. It is man made, and we are guilty of "skinning the wound."

When we deal in man-made peace, the root of our sin persists and threatens. And if we willing withhold full surrender, clinging to that sin all of our life, we will never have peace in this life. He will be sick and faint all of his days (Isaiah 57:17).

**2. False peace that will not last comes from men convicted of sin** who rationalize their condition by finding permission of God and the applying that to their situation.

**Example 1:** Man is upset and convicted over his constant relapses of some sin. He uses Isaiah 55:7 to pardon his sin: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." And then repeats it ad nauseum, abusing God's abundant grace.

**Example 2:** He abuses Hosea 14:4: "I will heal the backsliding. I will love them freely." The man that steals peace, even yet as God hides his face, he does not seek God.

Naturally, the question has to be asked: How do we know we have God-given peace and not man-made peace?

**(1.) Answer 1:** The peace won't abide. Peace that fades or grows cold should let us know that it is man made and not God-given. We must wait.

**(2.) Answer 2:** Those who generate man-made peace will scramble for yet more relief as their peace grows cold.

**(3.) Answer 3:** Man-made peace only quiets, calms and soothes the conscience and mind, the rational side of man. It does not soothe the soul or heart. The God-given peace does good and brings us joy (Micah 2:7).

**(4.) Answer 4:** Man-made peace does not heal the life nor uproot the evil. In fact, it encourages a trade of backsliding as subdued sin returns, addicted to the game of cat and mouse. God-given peace comes with a love and sweetness from God, and "strong obligation on the soul no more to deal perversely."

**3. Man-made peace is slight of sin.** Jer 6:14 It glances at the promise of God in haste and is satisfied. But it does not mix with faith.

4. Man-made peace soothes or **calms our perplexing and disquiet of one sin based upon the promise of God**, yet another sin persist which we adore

and do not wish to purge. God-given peace does not come until we've dealt with all indwelling lusts.

**5. Man-made peace does not humiliate or humble.** God-given peace does. It melts us.

Objection: How do we know when he speaks it?

**(1.) Does Owen's skirt this issue?** I'm not sure, but he does want you to know he wishes all men would receive God-given peace.

**(2.) Instinct of faith.** We will not NOT hear the voice of Christ. The best judge of Christ's voice is he who works and labors at observing Christ, the Spirit and the work they produce. Secondly, God's peace does the heart and soul good. Humbles it. Cleanses it. Melts it. Empties self.

# The Methods of Killing Sin (Chapter 14)

All that Owen has written up to now has been focused on preparing hearts to mortify sin. Here are the few specific directions he gives.

**1. Faith in the work of Christ will kill sin.** It is living in this promise that will slay sin. But how does faith do that?

**(1.) *There is sufficient provision in Christ for your relief and assistance.*** The provision laid up in Christ will mortify your lust. There is enough in Jesus to yield relief (Philippians 4:13). In our distress, we should consider Jesus' fullness of grace, and we obtain purging grace by abiding in him (John 15:3 and Romans 11:19, 20).

**(2.) *Expect relief from Christ.*** We must be patient because God's appointed time is appointed by Him alone. And all your efforts to mortify sin that are not informed by an expectation of relief from Christ are fruitless. They will not do you any good. If we do not get relief from Jesus, we will not get relief from anyone else.

*(1.) Consider his mercy as a high priest.* He suffered as we did. Tempted as we were. Thus he can succor those who are in misery over their sin (Hebrews 2:17-18).

*(2.) Consider his faithfulness.* God's covenant is a promise as assured as are the course of the stars and planets. David looked for relief from God "as one watches for the morning" (Psalm 130:6). Two advantages for those who hold this expectation in Christ:

[1.] if Christ be chosen from the foundation for our supply, he will not fail us. God does not tell us to seek him in vain.

[2.] Our expectation of relief in Christ engages our hearts to pursue every means available. Let our hearts work in prayer and sacrament. "It is the expectation of faith that sets the heart on work." *p 82*

The million dollar question: Has anyone not had success with these methods?

**First:** Christ died to destroy all temptation and all the works of the devil. Mortification of sin makes much of the death of Christ on the cross. Titus 2:14 says that he will not fail in his work to free us from the power of sin and purify our lusts. It is his blood that purges and cleanses. We are baptized into his death. Our baptism is evidence of our implantation into Christ. Our old man is destroyed, the body of sin crucified. We are raised into grace and fullness of life.

**Secondly [sic]:** act in faith in the death of Christ, under these two notions:

1. In expectation of power. See the direction given in general.
2. In "endeavour of conformity." Not sure what this means. In Owen's words:

Let faith look on Christ in the gospel as he is set forth dying and crucified for us. Look on him under the weight of our sins, praying, bleeding, dying; bring him in that condition into thy heart by faith; apply his blood so shed to thy corruptions: do this daily. *p 84*

**2. The Holy Spirit is essential in killing sin.** Adding the heads of the work of the Spirit to this business of mortification (that it is our "duty, is effectual, carried on, accomplished by the power of the Spirit"):

*(1.) He alone clearly and fully convinces the head off the evil of corruption. It convicts the soul of evil, cuts off all pleas, discusses all its deceits, stops all its evasions, answers all pretences, makes the soul see sin as an abomination.*

*(2.) The Spirit reveals our relief--the fullness of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:8).*

*(3.) Spirit alone establishes the hearts in expectation of relief from Christ (the great sovereign means of mortification).*

*(4.) Spirit brings the sin-destroying cross of Christ into hearts.*

*(5.) Spirit is the author and perfecter of our sanctification (Ephesians 3:16-18).*

*(6.) Our addresses to God find support from the Spirit. He is the Spirit of supplication (Romans 8:26). "This is confessed to be the great medium or way of*

faith's prevailing with God. Thus Paul dealt with his temptation, whatever it were: 'I besought the Lord that it might depart from me.' *p 84*

And like that, we are done with this little discourse.

In fact, the end was so abrupt I made a search to see if all copies of this book ended with chapter fourteen. Indeed, after a hours of crawling through sites, it does end like this.

Not that I wanted more. At that moment at least.