



family devotional

WWEI



college park church

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our LIVE|12 devotional for families!

This tool was designed to equip you to apply God's Word in your children's lives and develop a habit of regular devotions as a family. It will help you reinforce your weekly small group discussion and the Sunday sermon throughout the week. Additionally, much of the material in this devotional is derived from this year's LIVE|12 book, *Licensed To Kill: A Field Guide for Mortifying Sin* by Brian Hedges. This family devotional will be enhanced if parents read this book, either by themselves or with their kids.

This year's LIVE|12 experience will be very convicting and perhaps at times, disheartening. But just like a plumber who notices that pipes are broken, our problem of sin cannot be ignored. It must be dealt with!

Parents will have the opportunity to create a safe place for children to be vulnerable about their sin and to receive love, forgiveness, grace and direction. Remember:

If we say we have fellowship with [God] while we walk
in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But
if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have
fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his
Son cleanses us from all sin. | 1 John 1:6-7

This devotional will provide opportunities to share the Gospel with your children, as well as remember the Gospel for your own heart.

In this devotional are three readings for each week, and each devotion is broken into four parts:

read it

Open your Bibles and read and read the passage together. You may also read the corresponding part of the LIVE|12 book *Licensed to Kill*.

learn it

This is an explanation of the Bible passage.

apply it

This section explores the application points from the text.

pray it

Pray together as a family. You may use the included prayers as guides.

If you would like to continue a family devotion experience on the other days of the week, feel free to:

Re-read any of the Scripture passages together as a family

Discuss the week's sermon

Read a Christian book or the LIVE|12 book together

Work on memorizing a Scripture passage together as a family (especially if you can work on this throughout the month and have it memorized by the end of LIVE|12)

Spend an evening praying or singing together

As you ask your children various questions throughout this devotional, take the opportunity to be a good listener and give children time to think through their answers. Try to facilitate a conversation so that everyone in the family has the chance to be heard. You may also want to start your time together with a song or prayer.

Children will respond to the devotionals differently based on their age, maturity, and personality. Feel free to add your own ideas to make the devotions applicable to your family! This devotional also has two appendices: one that includes hymns that your family could sing together (**Extra Resource #1**), and one that outlines how you could share the Gospel with your children (**Extra Resource #2**).

May the Lord bless your family richly as you study His Word together!

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but
if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body,
you will live. | **Romans 8:13**



week one :

WEEK OF AUGUST 5

SERMON: **Temptation vs. Mortification:
Drawing the Lines of Battle**TEXT: **Colossians 3:1-6**SMALL GROUP: **The Reality of Sin & The
Need To Kill It Off**BOOK: *Licensed to Kill*, Ch 1-2

DEVOTION 1:1

read it

Romans 8:12-14

learn it

Killing Sin

When you see an old brick building that has green ivy growing on its walls, you may think that those long green vines all over the building are pretty, but did you know that even though the ivy looks pretty, it is actually eating away at the mortar that holds that building's bricks together? If no one ever cuts down that ivy, the vines will eat into the side of the building, until the walls start to crumble!

This ivy is like our sin. If we leave sin alone in our lives, it will eat away at us until it ruins our lives. Sin will kill our minds; it will kill our hearts; it will kill our relationships; and it will kill our closeness with God.

James puts it this way: "Sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death" (James 1:15).

Instead of allowing sin to destroy us, we are called by God to kill sin. The best thing to do with sin is kill it.

The upcoming weeks will teach us more about what it means to put our sin to death.

apply it

Sin is like a plant that wants to grow and that will grow if you let it.

As a family, consider purchasing two plants, one that you water every day and give sunshine, and one that you do not water at all and keep away from sunshine. Over the next couple of weeks, observe the plants and how they become different. Why is this? What you feed grows, and what you starve dies. Notice that it also takes time (and effort) for a plant to die. It will take time to kill your sin as well.

How do you feel about killing sin? Does this seem scary? Does it seem like it will be hard? What are some sins that God might be pointing out in your life that He wants to kill before they destroy you?

As a family or personally, you can memorize the theme verse of LIVE|12:

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but
if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body,
you will live. | Romans 8:13

pray it

Dear Father, our sin is deadly, and we know that if we don't turn to You, our sins will continue, and they will grow worse until they destroy us. We admit that we have sinned, and we ask You to forgive us for these sins. Please teach us how to kill sin in our lives. We want You to kill this sin by the power of Your Spirit so that we can live joyfully for You forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.



DEVOTION 1:2

read it

Romans 6:1-13

learn it

What Is Sin?

Take a moment and have everyone share what they think a good definition of sin is. *Sin is anything that separates us from God. Sin divides us relationally from God.*

When we sin, we are saying "I'm going to do what I want, not what God wants." It is choosing to not follow God by obeying Him or grow closer to Him by loving Him. Instead, it is the choice to turn from God and go away from Him.

There are many other ways to describe sin, but they are all fundamentally about being separated from God:

When we disobey God's law, we are breaking God's way and separating ourselves from Him and others (1 John 3:5-6).

When we worship an "idol" (Colossians 3:5), we are separating ourselves from worshipping God (Matthew 6:24).

When we fall short of God's perfect standard, we are missing the mark of what being close to God should look like (Romans 3:10-12).

Sin is spiritual death: Just like death is being separated from your body, being in sin means you have to be separated from God (Romans 6:23).

apply it

Have someone in your family read Romans 6:23.

There are two kinds of people in life:

Those who are stuck in sin with no way out: They are spiritually dead, and they will physically die as well.

Those who are in Christ: They have eternal life, and they will live forever with God when they die.

Which one are you?

How does a person know for sure that he or she is in Christ and has eternal life with God? It is because they have told God they want to receive His "free gift" of eternal life in Christ.

We deserve death forever because of our sin. But Christ died for us instead.

If we receive Christ's death for us as a gift and tell God we trust Christ to save us from sin, the Bible says we get to be "in Christ."

Have someone read Romans 6:5:

Christ's death kills our sin, and His resurrection gives us life forever too!

If you have never received God's "free gift" of Christ's death for you, would you like to do this? You can pray with your family and do this right now (see Prayer 2 below). Or you can think more about this decision and whether you want to receive God's "free gift" of Christ's death for you.

In the next few weeks, we will be talking about killing sin in our lives, but this is only possible in the lives of those who have first trusted Jesus as Savior.

If you have received God's "free gift" of Christ's death for you, this is a great opportunity to thank Him for that "free gift." Only Christ can save us from the sin that separates us from God.

pray it

Prayer 1:

Dear Father, our sin separates us from You. But we thank You that even though we deserved death spiritually and physically, Christ died for us to free us from sin. Please don't allow us to keep choosing sin and turning away from You, but help us to turn to You and trust Your Son Christ in our lives and with our decisions. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Prayer 2 (For those who want to receive God's "free gift" of Christ's death):

Dear Father, my sin separates me from You. I cannot know You or be close to You or love You in my sin. I admit that I am a sinner. I know that Christ died on the cross for me. I know that You raised Him from the dead to give me eternal life too. I trust Christ as my Savior, and I want to follow Him as Lord. I accept your 'free gift' of eternal life. Thank You, Amen.



DEVOTION 1:3

read it

Mark 9:43-48

learn it

"Cutting Off" What Leads To Sin

After reading Mark 9:43-48, we can tell that Jesus is demanding that we get rid of anything that leads us to sin in our lives. Some people have made the mistake that God is asking us to really cut off our hands or our eyes. Jesus can't simply be telling us to get rid of body parts, because Jesus knows that our real problem is not our body parts, but our hearts (see Mark 7:21-23).

So, Jesus is not really telling us to cut off our body parts, but He is telling us that we will have to cut off parts of our life that are tempting us to sin.

Why do we need to cut off parts of our lives? If we don't cut off the parts of our lives that lead us to sin, then they will kill us!

Do you remember our first verse in this Family Devotional (which is also the theme passage of LIVE|12)? Romans 8:13 says:

"For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

What happens when we don't cut off our temptations and just live in sin? That's right, we will die! If you are a Christian, the sin in your life can kill your relationships and your love for God. If you are not a Christian, the sin in your life will lead you to spend forever in hell, just as Jesus describes in Mark 9:43-48. It is better to go without something in your life than to let it lead you to sin or cause you to go to hell!

As John Owen, a famous Puritan theologian who wrote one of the most important books about killing sin, once said: "Be killing sin or it will be killing you."

apply it

It takes radical action to get rid of sin.

Just as Jesus described "cutting off" the things in our life that lead us to sin, we need to get violent with sin. There are three ways we need to get violent with our sin:

1) We should be cutting off sin in all areas of our lives, not just some areas.

If my Mom asks me to clean up my room, should I tell her, "No Mom, I already obeyed once today when you asked me to get up on time for school"? Of course not! We can't obey in only one area of life. We must cut off sin and obey God in all areas of life.

2) We should give sin no opportunities to tempt us.

What should I do if I know that I will be tempted to be greedy in my heart about the toys I see in the toy aisle? I should probably decide not to go down the toy aisle that day. I must give sin no opportunity to tempt me if I can avoid it.

3) We should reject the first sign of sin when we are tempted.

As soon as I begin to feel angry with my brother or sister, should I just give in to my anger and blow up at them? No! Instead, I need to do whatever it takes to not blow up at them (like walk away, pray, or choose to talk kindly to them). I have to reject the first sign of sin; otherwise, I'll probably give in to sin.

What is one area of your life that you think you would like to "cut off," as Jesus puts it?

Below are a few examples:

Selfishness: Focusing on only your own desires, and not caring about how to serve other people.

Greed: Wanting more and more, instead of being thankful for what God has given you.

Lack of control: Letting your desires or feelings control you instead of choosing to do what is right in self-control.

Or some other area?

You can ask your Mom or Dad to help you think about an area you would like to "cut off" that is hard for you. You can also ask them to help you this week to "cut off" the opportunities that lead to this sin.

Let's pray about this area together and ask God to help us this week to "cut off" anything that will lead to this sin.

pray it

Dear Father, You know my heart and my ways. Help me to also understand my ways: both my sin and my growth. Would You help me to want sin to be killed in my life and help me to "cut off" the temptations in my life? I want to recognize more that sin is really bitter and deadly and no good. Instead, I want to recognize more that You and Your ways are sweeter than honey and they bring joyful, satisfying life. Thank You that no sin is more powerful than You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



week two :

WEEK OF AUGUST 12

SERMON: **The Battle is on the Inside**TEXT: **Romans 7:14-25**SMALL GROUP: **Temptation & Indwelling Sin**BOOK: *Licensed to Kill*, Ch 3-4

DEVOTION 2:1

read it

Galatians 5:16-18

learn it

What is the “flesh?”

In our LIVE|12 theme verse, Romans 8:13, Paul says: “For if you live according to the flesh you will die. . .,” and in our verse today from Galatians 5, Paul tells us to “walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (verse 16). But what is “the flesh?”

By “the flesh,” does Paul mean that our physical bodies are what lead us to sin? No. Our bodies are gifts from God that we can use to please God (see Rom. 12:1-2). So what is our “flesh?”

Our “flesh” is the remnants of sin that still dwells in us. Some people call the flesh “indwelling sin” or even our “sinful nature.” Our flesh is the “old me” that hates God and is enemies with holiness.

This “flesh” in us has desires and deeds (see Col. 3:5) that are sinful.

Our flesh desires things that are wrong (like wanting to hurt someone we don’t like), or it desires something too much (like wanting a piece of candy that isn’t ours).

These desires then turn into sinful deeds (like hurting that person or stealing that candy).

But Christians have something that unbelievers do not: We have the Holy Spirit inside us who wages war against this flesh!

apply it

One day a troop of soldiers was marching through the woods for miles. Their legs were tired from marching, and their arms were tired from carrying their packs and weapons, but they had to keep marching to find their enemy. Suddenly, they saw in a clearing, a single soldier who had taken off his weapons and was sitting down next to a log, picking yellow

flowers and humming a song to himself. What do you think the soldiers said to him? They said, “Get back up and put your weapons on! You can’t just sit there! Don’t you know we are in a battle?”

It may seem like feeling conflict inside of us between the flesh and the Spirit is a bad thing, but, in fact, feeling this conflict is a good thing! If you didn’t feel a conflict inside of you, you wouldn’t realize that the Spirit is battling against your flesh!

The next time you feel conflict inside of you—where your flesh wants to sin but you can also feel God’s Spirit tugging at your heart to help you do what is right—take a moment and thank God. Thank God that He has given you the Spirit to win this battle!

As a family, you can sing the hymn “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (see below): it includes the words “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it.” But even though we feel the conflict of the flesh in us, we don’t have to give in. The Spirit can win the battle.

pray it

Dear Father, You are the King of Kings, and You won the war with sin when Jesus died for sin and rose again. Thank You that I feel conflict within me when my flesh wants to sin. This means that Your Spirit is trying to help me to glorify You. Please give me strength by Your Spirit to overcome my flesh, the remnants of sin that still dwell in me. And this week, when I feel this conflict, help me to cooperate with Your Spirit by glorifying Your name and obeying You instead of obeying my flesh. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING

By Robert Robinson (1758)

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise,
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount! I’m fixed upon it,
Mount of thy redeeming love.

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here’s my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for thy courts above.



DEVOTION 2:2

read it

James 1:14-15

learn it

The Strategy of the Flesh

Last time we learned that our “flesh” is the remnant of sin that still dwells in us. But we also learned that this flesh creates conflict in us: the flesh battles against God’s Spirit who lives in us.

Everyone who goes into battle has a strategy, so what is the flesh’s battle strategy?

James 1:14 tells us: But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

We look at sin like a big fish looks at a giant juicy worm on a hook: it looks so tasty, so much like what we want in life. The fish really wants that worm. He desires it. This is the flesh’s strategy: to entice our desire. This verse tells us that we are tempted to sin when we have a desire:

Maybe we desire a toy or piece of food, so we take it even if it doesn’t belong to us (stealing).

Maybe we want to have influence over somebody else, so we speak harshly to them (anger).

Maybe we want to look good in front of other people, so we puff ourselves up in our minds (pride) and present ourselves in a way that will get attention (vanity).

Are these sins? Yes, they are. But where did they start? With a desire!

apply it

Just like that juicy worm in front of the fish, sin has a deadly hook. Sin lies to us by promising us something, but it never fulfills its promise. Sin never gives us something without taking away from us something that is even more important: our closeness to God.

We may think sin looks good, and we may desire to do it, but just like that pointed hook, we will have to pay painful consequences for our sin.

Are you giving in to dangerous desires? You can find out by asking yourself a few questions:

Do I often think about something sinful? Is my mind filled with some particular thing that I really, really want?

Do I make excuses in my mind like, "It's just a little sin," or "This isn't really sin this time. I really need to do this?"

We need to not let wrong desires take over our minds!

You can tell your parents one or two things you have been desiring. These could be things that are okay (like desiring food) or they could be bad (like desiring to hurt somebody). Are you going to give in to these desires in a sinful way?

Notice that soon after our verse in James 1:14, the Bible tells us that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above," (James 1:17). Are you living your life always wanting more (desires), or are you recognizing that everything you have is a gift from God (gift)?

It is because they have told God they want to receive His "free gift" of eternal life in Christ.

We deserve death forever because of our sin. But Christ died for us instead.

If we receive Christ's death for us as a gift and tell God we trust Christ to save us from sin, the Bible says we get to be "in Christ."

pray it

Dear Father, thank You for every good gift that You give me. I know that my desires lead me to sin and that my flesh wants me to give in to these desires. Please help me to desire the right things in the right way for Your glory. And help me most of all to desire You: For You are the ultimate gift to me. Thank You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



DEVOTION 2:3

read it

James 1:14-15

learn it

The Sequence of Sin

Last time we looked at what the Bible had to say about the strategy of the flesh. Now we are going to focus on the verse right after that, which tells us the sequence of sin.

James 1:15 explains:

“Then desire, when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”

The process of our sin looks like this:



First, we desire something that God doesn't want for us (“Boy, I really want to talk back to my parents right now instead of listening to them and obeying them”).

Then, we enact this desire and sin (we talk back to our parents disrespectfully).

Finally, we keep sinning until our souls and our relationships die (we can no longer muster the strength to be respectful, and our relationship with God and our parents is effectively dead).

Sin doesn't just occur out of nowhere, it always follows this pattern (if we let it)!

apply it

Did Jesus face the temptation to sin? Yes, He did. But, did He give in to temptation and therefore sin? No! (See Heb. 4:15 and Heb. 2:18.)

Do you want to know what Jesus did when He faced temptation?

Have someone read Matthew 4:1-11.

What did Jesus use to fight tempting desires? That's right, God's Word.

Do you think that knowing God's Word and being willing to obey it is important for you when you are tempted? Yes! Absolutely! (See Ps. 119:11.)

If you want, you can pick a verse with your parents that will help you in the middle of temptation. (For example, if you are often tempted with disobeying your parents, you could memorize Ephesians 6:1.)

If you remember this verse when you are facing tempting desires, you can keep from turning those desires into sin, and keep that sin from turning into death!

pray it

Dear Father, thank You for sending Jesus to face temptation but never sin. He was even tempted by the Devil, but He never sinned against You! Jesus understands that temptation is hard, but He has also given us the Holy Spirit to help us in temptation so we don't have to sin. Help me as I try to put your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



week three:

WEEK OF AUGUST 19

SERMON: **Sin in the Crosshairs**TEXT: **Romans 6**SMALL GROUP: **The Gospel and Our Victory Over Sin**BOOK: *Licensed to Kill*, Ch 6-7

DEVOTION 3:1

read it

Colossians 3:1-4

Book: *Licensed to Kill*, pp. 61-66**learn it**

The Good News God Offers Us

If you were to come home and all your parents told you was bad news like “You’re grounded from playing with your friends,” and “You’re in trouble,” and “You won’t get any dinner tonight,” how would that make you feel?

The truth is, without some good news from God, all we have is **bad news**:

Even our best actions in life aren’t any good if we don’t have a relationship with God (see Isa. 64:6).

Without help from God, our tempting desires would always lead to sin which would always lead to death (see Jas. 1:15).

We have sinned against God and therefore deserve his angry punishment forever (see Rom. 1:18).

This is all really bad news!

But God offers us good news! If we have put our faith in Christ, we get to be united with Christ in our past, our present and our future!

In our past, our old sinful selves have been put to death because Christ died for us, and we have been raised up to a new victorious life because Christ rose from the dead. Our passage tells us “you have been raised with Christ” (verse 1)!

In our present, the risen Christ who sits in glory with the Father holds our life in His hand. Our home is now with God. Our passage tells us “your life is hidden with Christ in God” (verse 3). There could never be a more secure place for us than being forever protected by and given life by God.

In our future, we look forward to eternal life with God and all the saints in heaven. Though

we are on the earth, our reservations are already made in heaven. It's as though we have seats in heaven with our names on them, and when we leave this earth, we will be seated in His glory with Him. So whether He comes back first or we leave here, we will be with Christ in glory (see verse 4).

apply it

If there is sin in your life right now that you feel you don't have control over, what is the first thing God tells us in our passage to do in order to kill that sin? He tells us to see our position: we must remember that we have been "raised with Christ;" that's why we have power to begin to seek godly things!

When you have put your faith in Jesus, you are no longer in the position of a "slave" to sin:

"We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin." (Rom. 6:6-7)

We must constantly remember that we are no longer slaves to sin. Christ has freed us from being slaves to sin, so now our new master is God.

Know your position! Have your parents ask you, "Are you a slave to sin?" and if you have put your faith in Christ, you can answer: "No, I am free and raised with Christ!" Let's ask God to help us live like we are truly free.

pray it

Dear heavenly Father, it is because You raised Jesus that I am free from sin and have been raised up with Him. Since You say that I am united with the risen Christ in victory over sin, help me to act like I am really free. Help me to think about godly things and help me to act in godly ways. I know that this is possible through the power of Your Spirit. Thank You Father for raising Jesus from the dead and gaining the victory over sin! In Jesus' name, Amen!



DEVOTION 3:2

read it

Colossians 3:1-4 (Book: *Licensed to Kill*, pp. 66-69)

learn it

A New Treasure

There once was a pirate who loved treasure so much that even when his boat was sinking, he wouldn't let go of his heavy wooden chest filled with treasure. Because he wouldn't let go of this treasure, he drowned with the ship! What would you have told this pirate? You probably would tell him, "Let go of that treasure! It might seem like great treasure, but the better treasure would be to stay alive!"

There are many things on earth that we can consider a treasure: our relationships, our belongings, or our safety. These are not bad things. It is not a sin to find joy in these things. But what makes these things sin is when we treasure these "gifts" more than the "Giver" (God)!

When we treasure our friendships so much that they become more important than God, then they become sinful for us. Scripture gives us the answer to how we can keep from treasuring anything above God.

When we make Christ our ultimate treasure, the things He is passionate for become the things we are passionate for. The way we get rid of our sinful desires is to find more pleasure in Christ and His desires.

If a baby loves a toy and doesn't want to give it up, how would you get him to let go of the toy? The way to get him to leave the toy would be to help him find something else that he finds more pleasurable. If there is sin that you are treasuring, you must renew your mind with a clearer picture of Jesus, seeking Him as more beautiful than anything this world can offer. Then you will drop your sin because Jesus is better!

apply it

Whenever we have our mind only on earthly things, our picture of Jesus isn't how it should be. We need to seek a clearer picture of Jesus in His Word because He is more beautiful than any earthly thing.

The way for you to become focused on your real treasure is to turn off the things that are distracting you. On the next page are two columns: **Column 1** has things we tend to treasure or get distracted by. **Column 2** has aspects of Jesus that we can begin to treasure and enjoy. Circle the things in Column 1 that you tend to treasure or get distracted by. Circle the things in Column 2 that you want to begin to think about and enjoy more about Jesus.

Column 1 - Distracting Treasures

- TV
- Video games (or other games)
- Friends
- My toys (or a specific one)
- Attention from my mom or dad
- Playing
- Other: _____

Column 2 - Treasuring Christ

- I am raised with Christ to new life
- Christ is seated with God in victory
- My sins died when Christ died
- Christ holds onto my life now and forever
- Christ will return to earth, and I will get to be with Him forever in a perfect body

pray it

Dear Father, help me to see Christ as more glorious and beautiful than anything the world has to offer. Teach me Your ways, and lead me in this journey of making Christ my ultimate treasure. Let Your will be done in my life that I may give You the glory! Give me strength by Your Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.



DEVOTION 3:3

read it

Colossians 3:5-17

Book: *Licensed to Kill*, pp. 69-72**learn it**

Put Off Sin, Put on Grace

If someone has lied her whole life, when would you consider her no longer a liar? It isn't when she stops lying, but when she starts telling the truth (see Eph. 4:25).

God has called us not only to put off sin but to also put on grace. When we put off things like anger, evil desires, filthy talking, and idolatry, we can't just leave our efforts there. We must trade these habits for their complete opposites. This means putting on things like kindness, compassion, gracious words, and worship of God.

This practice is a lot like clothing. If you can, go and get a large piece of clothing (like a coat from your Mom or Dad) and put it on. Then take it off. Then go put on your own clothing (like your own coat). Our spiritual growth is a lot like taking off an old coat that isn't something we want and putting on something that is just right for us.

So, how do we practice this "putting off" and "putting on" spiritually? God tells us we do not have to put off and put on by ourselves.

Our passage tells us that putting off and putting on involves having three things in us that can then come out of us: peace, the Word, and gratitude!

First, we operate out of peace with God and with others (verse 15). When "the peace of Christ rules in our hearts," our actions reflect the loving peace that we should have with others and with God, instead of sinful hostility.

Second, we are to "let the word of Christ dwell in us richly"(verse 16). This means reading, memorizing, singing, obeying, praying, and thinking about the Bible. Then we can help others by teaching and challenging and singing with them! We can take in the Word and also give out the Word!

The end goal of these habits is to gratefully "do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus" (verse 17). When we talk with others, we should be slow to complain and quick to give thanks to Jesus. Our highest motive for putting on the grace of God is to glorify Christ! He deserves all the thanks and glory in our lives!

apply it

You can begin practicing putting off sin and putting on grace right now. On the next page is a list of some of the sins and a list of some of the grace-filled activities found in our passage (Col 3:5-17).

Sins	Grace-filled Activities
Impurity (letting wrong desires motivate)	Compassion (caring for others' needs)
Passion (uncontrolled or improper desire)	Kindness
Covetousness (desire to have more)	Humility
Anger toward God or others	Meekness (being gentle and considerate)
Wrath ("blowing up" at others)	Patience
Malice (planning on hurting others)	Forgiving others
Slander (insulting others)	Love (doing what is best for another person)
Obscene talk (disrespectful speech)	Peace from Christ
Lying	Thankfulness

If God is sensitizing your heart to some things you can "put off" and "put on," you can circle one of the Sins or Grace-filled Activities and answer at least one of the questions below as a family:

- 1) What is one way we can live out this Grace-filled Activity and bring greater peace in our family? (For example: When my little brother says he needs help with something this week, I will be quick to help him or ask one of our family members to help him with me. This is compassion.)
- 2) How can we use God's Word to help us put off this Sin or pursue this Grace-filled Activity? (For example: When I am in the store and am struggling with something that I want that my mom doesn't think is best for me, she can help remind me about Col. 3:17: that I can be thankful for what I have and for Jesus. This will help me put off covetousness and put on thankfulness.)
- 3) How can we make sure that this Grace-filled Activity points to thankfulness to Jesus? (For example: Instead of simply learning to wait patiently for Mom and Dad, they can help remind me that Jesus also had to wait for God to direct Him, and He can give me strength to wait for others. I can thank Jesus that He was perfectly patient for God's will and that He helps me be patient as well.)

You are not alone in putting off and putting on! God has given us a family of believers who help each other grow in doing everything for the glory of Jesus!

pray it

Dear heavenly Father, give us the wisdom to pinpoint the sins we are most inclined to. Then strengthen us to put off sin and to put on Your grace. Give us peace-filled lives that learn about You in Your Word so that we can encourage others. Thank You for giving us Your precious Son who helps us "put off" sin and "put on" righteousness! In Jesus' name, Amen.



week four:

WEEK OF AUGUST 26

SERMON: **Empowered by the Spirit**TEXT: **Galatians 5:16-24**SMALL GROUP: **Fighting in the Power of the Holy Spirit**BOOK: *Licensed to Kill*, Ch 8

DEVOTION 4:1

read it

Galatians 5:16, 25

learn it

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Throughout many of our devotions so far, we have mentioned the Holy Spirit. Near the beginning, we discussed how two forces war within us: the flesh and the Spirit. The flesh is the remnants of sin that still dwells in us. But what is the Spirit?

God is a Trinity (three Persons with one essence). The Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, see Matt. 28:19). When a person puts his faith in Jesus for salvation, God the Father puts the Spirit inside of this believer (see 1 Cor. 6:19, Gal. 4:6).

This Spirit is a true Person who can be grieved when we disobey (see Eph. 4:30), and with whom we can walk in obedience and life (see Gal. 5:16, 25).

In fact, having the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of you is something that no one in the Old Testament had! Instead of going to the Temple in order to encounter God's Spirit, we have been given God's Spirit inside of us to be with us everywhere we go!

apply it

Have someone read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

See if the people in your family can answer these three questions from these verses:

- 1) Who is your body a temple for?
- 2) Who do you belong to?
- 3) Since you were bought with a price (Jesus died for you to bring you back to God), what should you do in your body?

The correct answers are:

- 1) Your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit!
- 2) You belong to God (not yourself)!
- 3) You should glorify God in your body!

Take a moment to point to or put your hand on each person in your family and say
“You are a Temple, so glorify God with your body!”

Everyone in the family can do this with you.

Let’s treat our bodies this week like they are temples of God’s Holy Spirit, not ours to use however we please.

pray it

Dear Father, You have put Your Holy Spirit inside of me to make me a temple of the living God. This is truly amazing! Help me to use my body in worshipful ways more and more and not to treat my body like I own it and can do whatever I desire. I want You to be glorified in my body, Lord. In Jesus’ name, Amen.



DEVOTION 4:2

read it

Philippians 2:12-13

Book: *Licensed To Kill*, pp.89-91

learn it

Cooperating with the Spirit

If we have God's Spirit living inside of us, who is responsible for our growth? What do you think of the two pieces of advice below? Do either of these sound like correct advice?

1. "Your growth is up to you; just try harder!"
2. "Just let go and let God!"

Neither one of these pieces of advice is correct! Number 1 leaves my spiritual life entirely up to me and neglects God's work! Number 2 acts as if God is magically going to change my life without any effort on my part!

Imagine yourself as a sailor out in a sailboat in the ocean. The wind is blowing, but your boat is not moving anywhere; it is just sitting there in the water. Why do you think your sailboat is not moving? It is because you haven't yet opened up your sails and moved them around to receive the wind that is blowing so that it can power your boat! This is like our spiritual life: God's Spirit is moving and working (like wind, see John 3:8), but we have to put effort into growing our spiritual life habits (like setting our sails). The sailor cannot control the wind, but when he sets his sails to be pushed by the wind, his sailboat can then move along with speed!

When we team with the Spirit, God tells us we are "walking" along with the Spirit together, and if you "walk by the Spirit, ... you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (Gal 5:16).

apply it

How does your thinking need to change when you think of your spiritual growth?

- Were you leaving it all up to God?
- Were you thinking it was all up to you?

What would you say to a friend if she told you:

"Don't worry about trying hard to kill sin today. God will just do this by Himself in your life."

How do you think the Spirit's wind has been blowing in your life?

- Has He been pointing out a sin in your life that He wants you to overcome?
- Has He been pushing you toward a certain way of obeying?
- Has He been opening your mind to the beauty of Jesus and what He's done for you?

Based on your answer to how the Spirit's "wind" has been blowing in your life, is there a practical way that you can "set your sails" to catch this "wind" from the Spirit?

(For example: If he has been opening up your mind to the beauty of Jesus, you can ask your Mom if she'll pray with you this week to thank Jesus for what He's done.)

If we receive Christ's death for us as a gift and tell God we trust Christ to save us from sin, the Bible says we get to be "in Christ."

pray it

Dear Father, You are all-powerful, and You have told us that You are using that power to work in our lives through Your Spirit. Thank You for how Your Spirit is already working, blowing "wind" in our lives to point us to You. Please help us to understand what Your Spirit is doing in our lives and take the steps we need to "set our sails" in obedience, so Your Spirit can make us grow in killing sin and becoming more like Christ! In Jesus' name, Amen.



DEVOTION 4:3

read it

Psalm 119:9-11

Book: *Licensed To Kill*, Ch.9

learn it

The Weapons the Spirit Gives: Meditation and Prayer

We have spent a lot of time together talking about the power and deadliness of sin and our responsibility from God to put it to death. It is not enough to try and get a little better in our lives; we must kill sin in order to live a life walking with God's Spirit and filled with his victorious power!

If God tells us to "put to death the deeds of the body" and to do this "by the Spirit" (see Rom. 8:13), how do we do this? Has God given us weapons that we can use to fight alongside the Spirit and kill this sin?

Yes, indeed. Our verse (Ps. 119:9-11) tells us that God has given us two weapons that especially help us draw near to God!

- **Meditation** on God's Word (*"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You."* Verse 11)
- and
- **Prayer** (*"With my whole heart I seek You..."* Verse 10)

The apostle Paul also mentions these two weapons when he discusses the whole armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-17:

- *"Take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"* (verse 17)
- *"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication..."* (verse 18)

Now, you might say:

"Oh, I've heard this before; if I want to grow spiritually I need to read my Bible and pray. Isn't that too simple of a battle plan?"

This is not a simple battle plan; it is a plan that God has given us to grow a healthy spiritual life! Neglecting these two things is like someone who is out-of-shape saying: "Oh, I've heard so many times that I need to diet and exercise, but isn't that just too simple of a solution?" In order to get in shape, that person *does* need to diet and exercise! And if we want to kill sin and grow in godliness, we will have to get God's Word in us and pray fervently!

apply it

We must remember, the goal of *meditation on God's Word* and *prayer* is to draw near to God. The reason personal time in God's Word and in prayer is often called "devotions" is because this time is supposed to be a time when we devote or give over our lives to God!

When we meditate on God's Word and pray, we are not spending time by ourselves, but with God himself. In fact, these two weapons are actually ways we communicate with God.

- When we *meditate on God's Word*, God speaks to us.
- When we *pray*, we speak to God.

We don't just meditate about God; we meditate *with* God!

We don't just pray to God; we pray *with* God!

What a joy that God wants to communicate with us, and when we meditate on His Word and pray with Him, sin is slowly killed in our lives because it can't compete with the beauty of being close to God! May God bless us as we use His weapons to kill sin and to walk in His Holy Spirit for the rest of our lives!

pray it

For our final prayer time, have each person in your family pray one of the verses below to God that talk about *meditating on God's Word*, and one person can pray the "Closing Prayer" last.

Dear Father, I will praise You with an upright heart, when I learn Your righteous rules! (Ps. 119:7)

Dear Father, with my whole heart I seek You; let me not wander from Your commandments! (Ps. 119:10)

Dear Father, I have stored up Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes! (Ps. 119:11-12)

Dear Father, I will delight in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word! (Ps. 119:16)

Dear Father, open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your word! (Ps. 119:18)

Dear Father, when I told of my ways, You answered me; teach me Your statutes! (Ps. 119:26)

Closing Prayer:

Dear Father, help us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. In Jesus' name, Amen.
(2 Peter 3:18)



Extra Resource #1: Great Family Worship Songs

AMAZING GRACE

CCLI Song # 22025
Edwin Othello Excell | John Newton | John P. Rees
Public Domain

DOXOLOGY

CCLI Song #56204
Louis Bourgeois | Thomas Ken
Public Domain

GOD OF WONDERS

CCLI Song #3118757
Marc Byrd | Steve Hindalong
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Never Say Never Songs (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc., 741 Cool Springs Blvd., Franklin TN 37067)
Storm Boy Music (Admin. by EMI Christian Music Publishing)
Meaux Mercy (Admin. by EMI Christian Music Publishing)
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HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD

CCLI Song # 4348399
Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash | Jesse Reeves
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HOW GREAT THOU ART

CCLI Song # 14181
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IN CHRIST ALONE

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Keith Getty | Stuart Townend
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OUR GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD

CCLI Song # 41099
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VICTORY IN JESUS

CCLI Song # 1259
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Extra Resource #2: How to Share the Gospel with Your Kids

Questions to ask to clarify the condition of a child's heart:

1. If you died today, on a scale of 1-10, how certain are you that you would spend eternity with God in heaven? What makes you think you will/won't go to heaven?
2. If you died today and stood before God, and He asked you why He should let you into heaven, what would you say?
3. How can you know for certain that you'll spend eternity with God in heaven?

Verses to use to share the Gospel:

1. You can **know** for certain whether or not you have eternal life: 1 John 5:13
2. **Heaven** is a free gift, that cannot be earned or deserved: Ephesians 2:8-9
3. You are a **sinner**, and you can't save yourself (even by your good works): Romans 3:23
4. **God** is both loving (doesn't want to punish us forever) and just (must punish sinners forever): 1 John 4:8; Exodus 34:6-7
5. **Jesus**
 - a. Who He is: Jesus is God and man: John 1:14
 - b. What He did: Jesus died on the cross and rose again to pay the penalty for our sins and purchase a place for us in heaven: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Isaiah 53:6; John 14:3
6. **Faith**
 - a. Faith is not head knowledge about Jesus: James 2:19
 - b. Faith is trusting Jesus alone to forgive your sins and give you eternal life: John 20:31
7. **Assurance**: If you repent from your sins and trust (have faith) in Jesus alone, God promises you eternal life!: Romans 10:9; John 3:16



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