

IDENTIFYING YOUR BELOVED SINS

Rooting out sin is one of the primary goals in the Christian life. Some sins are easier to remove and replace than others are. There are some sins that we as believers actually feed, nurture, and harbor. These are known in Puritan vernacular as “Beloved Sins,” or “Bosom Sins.” The purpose of this paper is to identify that particular sin that maintains its grasp on you more than others do. The following excerpts are taken from Christopher Love’s book, *The Mortified Christian*, pages 102-108.

“What symptoms may be given of a man’s bosom and darling sin, and which of all others is the most predominant and unmortified in his soul? This is a needful question, and I shall give you ten symptoms whereby you may know which is your beloved or master sin.

1. That sin is your bosom or master sin which you most frequently commit or fall into in the course of your life....
2. That sin which you most easily consent and yield to upon every temptation is your bosom sin....
3. That sin is most unmortified in you that you are most unwilling of all others to part with. Therefore a bosom sin in Scripture is compared to the right eye and the right hand, which implies that a man’s master and beloved sins are as dear to him as the members of his body....
4. That sin is most unmortified in you which of all other sins most vexes and galls your conscience....
5. That sin which of all others most insinuates itself into your heart when you are in the service of God and performing holy duties, that sin which can be so impudent as to intrude upon your heart when you are in the presence of God – that is your unmortified sin....
6. That sin which your enemies most upbraid you for, and your friends most persuade you against, yet you [exercise] no power to leave – that is your bosom and beloved sin....
7. The sin that comes most fresh in your mind to trouble and perplex your conscience when you are in the extremity of any affliction, upon your sickbed or deathbed, or when you are in prison or poverty or the like – that sin which most of all troubles your conscience most commonly is your master sin....
8. That sin for which of all others you can least bear reproof is your master sin. It may be that you bear a reproof for some sins, but when a man hits the nail upon the head and reproves you for your master sin you cannot endure that....
9. That is your bosom sin that a man most indulges in and knowingly allows himself...using the least means against [it]....
10. That sin is your bosom sin to which all other sins give supplies and yield contribution. Suppose pride is your master sin; then you will use deceit in your trade, false lights and false weights, and so forth, all in your business success to uphold your pride. And so with any other master sin....

First, I beseech you all, in the fear of God, to take a survey of your own heart to discover which is your master sin. When you have found it out, though you

should be watchful against all other sins, especially bend your strength and care against this sin....

Beloved, in that part of your soul against which sin and the devil make the strongest assaults, be sure to put forth the greatest part of your strength against them.... Know and consider that it is the greatest hypocrisy in the world to go about to mortify other sins and yet leave your bosom, beloved sin unsubdued...

Take heed of being mistaken about your bosom lust in conceiving it is mortified when it is not... Your bosom sin in your youth may be another in your old age. Take heed of thinking your bosom or master sin is mortified when it is only changed.

When you have found out your bosom lust, then labor to root it out of your heart and subdue it. When your bosom lust burns in your breast like a fire, you should especially labor to quench it, strive against it, and mortify it.”