

The Cancer of Sin  
The Fight With The Flesh

Romans 7:14-25

C.S Lewis, the author of the Chronicles of Narnia once said, "No man knows how bad he is until he has tried to be good."

Just because we have been saved by Christ doesn't mean Christians don't struggle with sin!!

Our spirit has been set a part but our minds continue to have the pattern of the old way of thinking. So what does this mean? It means we still experience a battle in our mind, will, and emotions.

We want to leave the old way patterns of life and embrace the new life in Christ but the flesh constantly wants to have its own way.

Here is what I mean when I say a battle with my flesh: The "Flesh", is our nature while here on earth. It is developed in us by the way we tried to meet our needs out of our own resources.

So how can we overcome sin tendencies in our life? 98% of the text we just read is about the Apostle Paul's struggle with sin. Paul faced the same daily battles that we face in our minds, emotions, and he still wrote 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the New Testament.

The Bible gives us the effects of living after the "flesh" found in Galatians 5:19-21. The list includes: Sexual immorality, impurity, hatred, bitterness, anger, selfish ambitions, factions, divisions, envy and the list goes on and on.

Billy Graham puts it like this, "Flesh refers to the old patterns by which we have attempted to get all our needs supplied instead of seeking Christ first and trusting Him to meet all of our needs."

To sum up what the "flesh" is; it's all of the habit patterns that we have developed over the years to meet our needs out of our own resources.

What did this mean to the Apostle Paul?

Sometimes we forget the humanity of great men and woman in the Bible. They were just like us.

Listen to how Paul described his battle with his own flesh:

Romans 7:15 (NLT) "I don't understand myself at all."

Vs. 16 (NLT) "I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong."

Vs. 17 (NLT) "I can't help myself"

Vs. 18 (NLT) "I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is conserved."

Vs. 18 (NLT) "No matter which way I turn I cant make myself do right."

Vs. 21 (NLT) "When I do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong."

Vs. 24 (NLT) "What a miserable person I am."

His point is this; we are all locked into this battle, this fight of the old habit patterns that we have developed over the years.

The non-Christian is not engaged in this fight with the flesh because they rely on their resources whereas the Christian has all Jesus' resources that are available.

Unfortunately, most Christians have not learned how to rely on Christ. Maybe this is the very dilemma that you are facing at this point in your life?

The Ephesian church had to be reminded not to think according to the flesh. Paul said in Ephesians 4:17-24.

Paul would later say in Romans 8 that those who lived after the flesh could not please God.

What does this mean? IT means my flesh is difficult to deal with!!!!

Our flesh is hard to deal with because we have ingrained patterns that we have learned since childhood. The truth is, the older you get the more difficult it is to change those patterns. That's why we MUST deal with it today!!!

So what should we do in light of all of this?? Lets go back to Romans 7:24-25;  
"What a wretched man I am! Who will save me from this body of death?"

Thanks be to God-through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

It is through Jesus that we are able to overcome. HE is our source in the struggle!

We also according to Ephesians 4:23, need to “renew the attitude of your mind.”  
How many of you need an attitude change in your minds today?!!!

First you have to admit you are in a battle. Secondly you have to confront the issue. The good news is you don't have to face the struggle alone. Remember you have the Holy Spirit to be your strength. And lastly, remember where your help comes from. Your help comes from the Lord!!!!!!