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Daily Devotional - Thursday, July 18, 2019 - Our Struggle with the Flesh

JULY 18TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Galatians 5:16-26

One of the most misunderstood concepts in the Christian life is that of “the flesh.” So, what is it? In today’s passage, *flesh* refers not simply to the physical body but also to the inner being, which is still subject to sin even though believers have a new nature given to them by God’s Spirit. Therefore, *flesh* refers to our entrenched habits of sinful thoughts, desires, and attitudes—which often lead to ungodly behaviors.

Paul presents, in a painfully honest way, the results of living according to the flesh: deeds including immorality, impurity, idolatry, anger, strife, dissensions, and other destructive attitudes and actions. In contrast, a life led by the Holy Spirit produces the rich spiritual fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Why do so many people who desire a godly, self-controlled life repeatedly fall to fleshly sin? Paul says the determining factor is whether or not they are being led by the Spirit. If Christians try to overcome sin on their own without submitting to the Spirit’s reproof and guidance, they will fail.

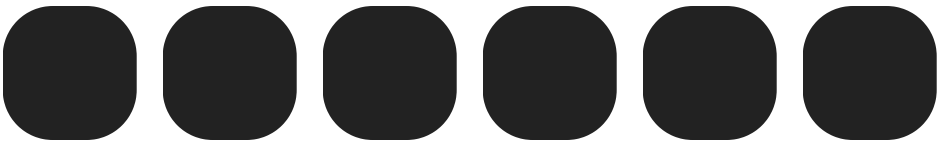
The flesh cannot be disciplined, rehabilitated, or improved. Instead, it must be put to death (Rom. 6:11). Then, through the power of the Spirit, we do not have to yield to sinful impulses but can instead present ourselves to God for obedience to His desires (Rom. 6:12-14).

Walking by the Spirit means submitting to the Lord when you feel tempted to follow your flesh. With His help, you can see your desires give way to obedience that pleases your heavenly Father.

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