

THE FLESH

What Did Jesus Say

Matt. 26:40 through Matt. 26:41

⁴⁰Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but **the flesh is weak.**”

John 6:63

⁶³It is the Spirit who gives life; **the flesh profits nothing.** The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life.

➤ Clearly, our “flesh” is of no value to the Kingdom of God

Flesh = Body & Soul (Mind, Emotion, Will)

But, what is the flesh? Theologians believe that the flesh encompasses our body and our soul (mind, emotion, will). The carnal mind and emotions must be transformed, with our will submitted to God’s Will.

Mind

Rom. 8:3 through Rom. 8:8

⁵For those who **live** according to the **flesh** set their **minds** on the things of the **flesh**, but those *who live* according to the **Spirit**, the **things** of the **Spirit**. ⁶For to be **carnally minded is death**, but to be **spiritually minded is life and peace**. ⁷Because the **carnal mind is enmity against God**; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸So then, those who are in the **flesh cannot please God**.

Rom. 12:2

²And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and **perfect will of God**.

Emotion

Rom. 7:5

⁵For when we were in the flesh, the **sinful passions** which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to **bear fruit to death**.

Jer. 17:9

“The **heart is deceitful** above all *things*, And **desperately wicked**; who can know it?”

Will

Rom. 7:18 through Rom. 7:20

¹⁸For I know that in me (that is, **in my flesh**) **nothing good dwells**; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹For the **good** that I will *to do*, **I do not do**; but the **evil** I will not *to do*, **that I practice**. ²⁰Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh

2 Cor. 12:7 through 2 Cor. 12:10

⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a **thorn in the flesh** was given to me, a **messenger of Satan** to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹And He said to me, “**My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.**” Therefore most gladly I will rather **boast in my infirmities**,

that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For **when I am weak, then I am strong.**

Flesh vs. Spirit

Gal. 5:16 through Gal. 5:26

¹⁶I say then: **Walk in the Spirit**, and you shall **not fulfill the lust of the flesh.** ¹⁷For the **flesh lusts against the Spirit**, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are **contrary to one another**, so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸But if you are **led by the Spirit**, you are not under the law.

Works of the Flesh

¹⁹Now the **works of the flesh** are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that **those who practice such things** will **not inherit the kingdom of God.**

- The word “practice” here means someone who is given fully to the sin despite knowing that it is evil. This is rebellion against God which “is as the sin of witchcraft” (1Samuel 15:23). However, anyone who is saved and is trying to overcome the sin will indeed “inherit the kingdom of God” despite occasional lapses. We do not need to be perfect, “for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Fruit of the Spirit

²²But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴And those *who are* Christ's have **crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we **live in the Spirit**, let us also **walk in the Spirit.** ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Sowing & Reaping

Gal. 6:8

⁸For he who **sows to his flesh** will of the flesh **reap corruption**, but he who **sows to the Spirit** will of the Spirit **reap everlasting life.**

Flesh is Temporal – Spirit is Eternal

1 Pet. 1:24 through 1 Pet. 1:25

“All flesh is as grass,

And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.

The grass withers,

And its flower falls away,

²⁵ But the word of the LORD endures forever.”

1 John 2:16 through 1 John 2:17

¹⁶For all that *is* in the world—the **lust of the flesh**, the **lust of the eyes**, and the **pride of life**—is not of the Father but is **of the world.** ¹⁷And the **world is passing away**, and the lust of it; but he who **does the will of God** **abides forever.**

- Again, perfection is not the point. If our heart desires to do the “will of God” we will not lose our salvation because of occasional lapses. Only if we renounce Christ and reject the Holy Spirit, will we have committed the “unpardonable sin.” (Matthew 12:32)