

Walking In The Spirit, Part IV (Overcoming The Flesh)

The Walk of Holiness

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November 1, 2020

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Sermon: The Walk of Holiness: Walking In The Spirit, Part IV (Overcoming The Flesh)

Lesson Text

Galatians 5:16–21 (AV)¹⁶ *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. ¹⁸ But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 John 2:16–17 (AV)¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

James 4:7–8 (AV)⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded.

Introduction

In our previous messages on “Walking in the Spirit” we looked at the 12th chapter of Hebrews.

Hebrews 12:¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Today we want to double back on the things that trip us up during our race, that being sin!

As Christians we have two natures; the Adamic Nature that is corrupt and prone to sin that we inherit at birth, the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ that we receive the moment we are born again.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (AV)¹⁷ Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

But what it’s teaching us in our first lesson text in Galatians is that these two natures are in a constant battle against each other.

Galatians 5: ¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

And just like Paul, we all have this inner struggle, inner battle between our two natures!

Romans 7: ²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

And the battle is because our Adamic Nature's desire for sin is getting in the way of our Divine Nature's desire to do the will of God.

Sins come in three categories, Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life. And to win this battle, we must learn how to defeat each of them.

Hebrews 4:15–16 (AV)¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Today we will deal with the first point of the category of sin, the Lust of the Flesh!

Series and Sermon: The Walk of Holiness: Walking In The Spirit, Part IV (Overcoming The Flesh)

“Resist the Flesh, Flee the Flesh, and Defeat the Flesh”

I. Resist the Flesh

James 4:⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

To resist means to struggle, battle, attack, fight, or repel. To oppose and push back.

The reason the world is filled with the lust of the flesh is because the enemy wants us to become so normalized, regularized, and standardized that we ultimately give in to it. In other words, we stop fighting and resisting it.

I remember in a moment of frustration saying, is everyone fornicating? And someone hollered out, “yes pastor, they are”. At that moment something rose up in me and said the devil is a lie!

What rose up in me was the Holy Spirit to resist the strategy of the devil to give in to the flesh.

Galatians 5: ¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Our human nature is to avoid conflict, go along to get along, to conform to the crowd.

The key to Resisting your Flesh is Submitting to your God

James 4:⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

To Submit comes from the Greek Word “*hypo-tassō*”, a combination of two words, and literally means “to place under,” to be in subjection or submission.

Because of God's never-ending grace and mercy that endures forever, we must choose to submit to God's will rather than be enslaved by the lusts of the flesh.

Romans 12:1–2 (AV)¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

II. Flee the Flesh

James 4: ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded.

The **fight-or-flight response** is a physiological reaction that either prepares our bodies to stay and fight or to flee.

So, the question is, when it comes to our flesh, do we stay and fight (resist), or do we flee?

The answer is both!

We stand and fight against the outward opposition (the devil), but we put on our running shoes and flee our inner cravings.

Romans 7:18 (AV)¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

When these inner demons raise their ugly heads, we are instructed to flee!

2 Timothy 2:22 (AV)²² Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

1 Corinthians 6:18 (AV)¹⁸ Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

The key to Fleeing your Flesh is Drawing Nigh to your God

James 4: ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you...

To draw nigh means to come closer. In other words, don't just run from something, run to something. Don't just run from your flesh, run to your God.

Fred Hammond sang, "And I am running back to you, I see you're standing there for me. Your arms are open wide, and I don't have to cry no more. You're standing there for me, And I am running back to you."

III. Defeat the Flesh

James 4: ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded.

- We Resist the Flesh, Fight the Devil by Submitting to God
- We Flee the Flesh, Run from Our Inner Cravings by Drawing Nigh to God
- Finally, we Defeat the Flesh by Cleansing our Hands and Purifying our Hearts.

The purpose of resisting and fighting the flesh and fleeing and running from the flesh is to ultimately defeat and be victorious over the flesh.

Our flesh will always be with us, but it doesn't mean that we have to always struggle with it; we can defeat it.

Romans 7: ²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

Romans 7: ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

The answer to this question is how do we defeat the flesh: the answer is Jesus Christ!

The Key to Defeating your Flesh is Cleansing your Hands and Purifying your Hearts through Jesus Christ.

To Overcome and Defeat our Flesh we must Cleanse our Hands:

- Ephesians 5: ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,
- Revelation 12:11 (AV)¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
- What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus

To Overcome and Defeat our Flesh we must Purify our Hearts:

- Jeremiah 17:9 (AV)⁹ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?
- Psalm 51:10 (AV)¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

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Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Walking In The Spirit, Part IV (Overcoming The Flesh))

Lesson Text

- Galatians 5:16–21, 1 John 2:16–17, James 4:7–8

Sermon Outline (Notes)

I. *Resist the Flesh*

II. *Flee the Flesh*

III. *Defeat the Flesh*

Questions (What was your main takeaway from Sunday's Sermon?)

I. Getting to Know "Me"

1. How do you like the first name you were given at birth? (Choose one)
 - I like the name I was given at birth and use it all the time.
 - I am not a fan of my first name but have stuck with it.
 - I go by my middle/nickname.
 - I/someone else changed my legal name.
2. If the Apostle Paul were alive today, do you think he'd be active on social media (Choose one)
 - Likely yes. He'd see it as a way to "be all things to all people."
 - Likely no. He'd see it as a distraction to ministry.

II. Into the Bible

1. James 4:4-5 is likened to a marriage relationship. James 4:4-5 AMPC [4] You [are like] unfaithful wives [having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God]! Do you not know that being the world's friend is being God's enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God. [5] Or do you suppose that the Scripture is speaking to no purpose that says, The Spirit Whom He has caused to dwell in us yearns over us and He yearns for the Spirit [to be welcome] with a jealous love?
 - i. Describe this jealous love God has for His people. (Cross-reference: Jeremiah 3:14, Hosea 2:19)
 - ii. Who is James' audience in this epistle? Can one be truly, genuinely born-again and be a friend of the world? Provide scriptural evidence.

III. Life Application

1. What are some things that prevent believers from resisting the flesh? How should we fight against them?
2. Make and share a practical plan for fleeing your flesh when tempted.