

Colossians Complement #8

Fighting the Flesh

A. Surveying the Landscape

- 1) Where does the battle with the flesh take place?

Romans 8:5 – For 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.

- 2) What is the internal make-up of a person before salvation?

Romans 8:8 – So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Colossians 1:21a – And you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind

- 3) What is the internal make-up of a person after salvation?

Romans 7:22 – For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

Romans 8:15 – For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”

Ephesians 1:13-14 – ¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Galatians 3:26, 4:6 – ²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus... ^{4:6} And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”

B. Understanding the battle plan

1) Don't: Serve yourself

Romans 6:16 – Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness?

Matthew 6:24 – “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

2) Don't: Try to serve God by yourself

Romans 7:15, 18 – ¹⁵For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do...

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.

3) Do: Walk by means of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5:16 – I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

1 John 4:4 - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

*other NT terms for this strategy:

- yield to God (Rom. 6:11-14)
- live according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4, 13)
- be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18)

*practical outworkings of this strategy:

- set your mind on things above (Col. 3:1-4)
- set your mind on the things of the Spirit; be spiritually minded (Rom. 8:5-7)
- pray and meditate on worthy thoughts (Phil 4:6-9)
- let Christ's word fill you and spill out of you (Col. 4:16, Heb. 10:24-25)
- avoid setting your flesh up for success (Rom. 13:14)

Discussion Questions

1. Which verse stood out to you tonight? Why?
2. When will you stop fighting the flesh?
3. In what ways do you tend to fail in this fight?