

“When the Helper comes.”

John 15:26-27

26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, 27 and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

This morning, we begin back in chapter 3 of the gospel of John. I want you to pay attention to what Jesus says about the Spirit in this passage.

John 3:4-6

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

That which is born of flesh is flesh. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
/Now, this passage is certainly about the rebirth of the believer in Christ. \

Every human being is first born of the flesh.
Every believer is also born of the Spirit.

/Being born of the flesh means being born into the race of Adam.\
In other words, we are born dead in our trespasses and sins.

/The flesh here means the manifestation of sin in the members of our body.\

We never lose the flesh until these mortal bodies die. /In fact, the Bible teaches that our flesh is getting worse. \

Eph 4:20-24

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self [man], which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new man, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

*/And John 3:6 says "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. *

Do you see it? / Jesus is saying that the flesh and the Spirit are totally contrary to one another.\ They are opposites. In fact, they are opponents. They are in a constant state of war with one another.

And we are going to see that this war is being waged inside us.

John 6:63

63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

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/ The flesh is no good. There is nothing good in the flesh. There is no real life in the flesh.\

Rom 7:17-20

So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. 19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. 20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

Nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. /He qualifies his statement “in my flesh” because the Spirit also dwells in him. \

These things are true about us as well, of course.

Nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.
/Nothing good dwells in you, that is, in your flesh.\

/There is the flesh, and there is the Spirit. They are mortal enemies. They both dwell inside us.\

The flesh is our enemy as well. It has nothing good for us. /In fact, it works hard to destroy us.\

/On the other hand, the Spirit has nothing but good things for us.\

Try these on:

/Life. Truth. Guidance. Fellowship. Comfort. Righteousness. Peace. Joy. Hope. Power. Instruction. Gifts. Wisdom. Union with Christ. Prayer. Worship. Sanctification.\

/The flesh lies to us.

One of its favorite deceptions is to disguise itself as our friend. \

But the flesh is not on our side.

/The flesh works to convince us that we don't need Christ or the Spirit or the Father.\

Like its father, the flesh is a liar and a murderer.

/The flesh deceives us into thinking we can be perfected by it. \

Gal 3:1-5

1 You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? 2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? 4 Did you suffer so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain? 5 So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

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/The flesh is perverse, hateful, and unfair.\

The flesh tempts us to sin. If we give in to the temptation, the flesh rears its ugly head to judge and condemn us for the very thing it tempted us to do.

/The flesh works to produce turmoil in our hearts and minds.\

We will now turn to the book of Romans to learn more about the flesh versus the Spirit.

Rom 8:5-9

5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on [of] the flesh is death, but the mind set on [of] the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on [of] the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

/In this passage, Paul draws a contrast between believers and unbelievers.\

The Spirit of God – the Holy Spirit-dwells in each and every church age believer.

/So the believer in Christ is not “in the flesh”. The unbeliever is “in the flesh”.\

/This does not mean that the flesh is not in the believer! \ The flesh - the manifestation of sin - remains in the body of the believer until the body dies.

So we have here some contrasts between the believer and the unbeliever.

Rom 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Those who are according to the flesh are unbelievers. /Unbelievers set their minds on the things of the flesh.\ It’s their only option.

/Believers are according to the Spirit. They set their minds on the things of the Spirit.\

But I want you to pay attention to verse 6.

Rom 8:6 For the mind set on [of] the flesh is death, but the mind set on [of] the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on [of] the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

/ The big news here is that the flesh has a mind. The flesh thinks a certain way.\

/The Spirit also has a mind. The Spirit has the mind of Christ.\

What do we learn here about the mind of the flesh? Now keep in mind that, even though we are no longer in the flesh, the flesh is still in our human bodies ,

The mind of the flesh is death. What does this mean? /It means that the thoughts that the flesh sponsors all ultimately lead to death.\ Corruption. Destruction. Futility.

/The mind of the flesh is deadly – deadly for whom? For anyone who lives according to its thinking.\

Let me repeat: the flesh is like its father. The flesh is deceitful and the flesh is destructive. /So, the mind of the flesh is deceitful and it is destructive.\

/Next, the mind of the flesh is hostile toward God. \

And I say again, the flesh is still in our bodies.

/Knowing this, you should no longer be shocked or surprised when “you” have a thought that is hostile to God. \

It’s not you – the real you - that is having the thought, – that thought is coming from the flesh, sin which dwells in you.

The problem comes when we treat it as if it were our own. Then the turmoil begins.

/Let me say again: there is a fierce battle being waged inside us between the flesh and the Spirit.\

We learn about this battle in Galatians 5.

Gal 5:16-23

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

/The word of God makes things clear.\

Galatians 5:19-23 makes things crystal clear: there are irreconcilable differences between the flesh and the Spirit.

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

I hope its obvious now that the mind of the flesh is death.

On the contrary, look at the production of the Spirit.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

/The Spirit only wants good things for us.\ Everything He does for us is good.

1 Thess 5:23-24

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

/The Spirit ultimately wins the battle over the flesh.\ He will complete the work He began. We will be transformed into the image and likeness of God's Son.

/But God wants us to experience victories along the way.\

As long as we believe what the word of God tells us, we will not be deceived by the schemes of the flesh. Listen to the word of God. Hold fast to the truth. The Spirit will take care of the rest.