Flesh and Spirit

What are flesh and spirit? Why is it an issue? How does scripture use these terms? What is being "in the flesh/Spirit" as opposed to "walking after the flesh/Spirit"? How does this affect our daily lives? And how do we move from one to the other?

The Anatomy of Man

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [I pray God] your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thes. 5:23

”For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Heb 4:12

Defining body, soul, and spirit

Defining the natural body:

Read 1 Cor. 15:38-53

Gen 2:7 KJV – “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground…”

-our natural bodies are of earth, made from dust. They are weak, fragile and are dying. They need food, water, covering.

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” - 2Cr 4:16 KJV

Defining the soul

Gen 2:7 KJV - And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The soul is the result of having a body and the “breath of life”.

-Thoughts, concepts, feelings, desires, and wants are all within the soul. If you are alive, then you experience.

(Soul in Hebrew O.T.“nephesh”, N.T.“psyche”)

439 times in O.T., 58 in N.T.

Pertaining to “the will”

"Give me not up to the will (nephesh) of my adversaries" Ps.27.12

"Thou dost not give him up to the will (nephesh) of his enemies" Ps. 41.2

"Delivered you to the greed of your enemies" Ezek.16.27

"You shall let her go where she will”Deut. 21.14

"Aha, we have our heart's desire" Ps. 35.25

"Or swear an oath to bind himself by a pledge" Num.30.2

"Now set your mind and heart to seek the Lord your God" I Chron. 22.19

"They desire and lift up their soul to return to dwell there" Jer. 44.14

"These afflictions my soul refuses to touch" Job 6.7

Soul as emotions:

"You whom my soul loves" Song 1.7

"My soul magnifies the Lord" Luke 1.46

"His life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty food" Job 33.20

"Who are hated by David's soul 2 Sam. 5.8

"My soul was vexed with them" Zech. 11.8 Darby

"You shall love the Lord your God . . . with all your soul Deut. 6.5

"My soul is weary of my life" job 10: 1

"Their soul abhorreth all manner of food" Ps. 107:18

"My soul is consumed with longing" Ps. 119.20

"Sweetness to the soul” Prov. 16.24

Soul as intellect or mind:

"Whereunto they lift up their soul, their sons and their daughters" Ezek. 24.25

"That a soul be without knowledge is not good' Prove 19.2

"How long must I bear pain (Syriac:Hebrew: hold counsels) in my soul?" Ps. 13.2

"Marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well'Ps. 139.14

"My soul continually thinks of it" Lam. 3.20

"Knowledge will be pleasant to your soul Prov. 2. 10

"Keep sound wisdom and discretion . . . and they will be life for your soul" Prov. 3.21,22

"Know that wisdom is such to your soul Prov. 24.14

Because the soul is thoughts and emotions, the soul is your current experience in this very moment.

Defining the human spirit

Man has a spirit:

1 Corinthians 2. 11 speaks of "the spirit of the man which is in him."

1 Corinthians 5.4 mentions "my spirit."

Romans 8.16 says "our spirit."

1 Corinthians 14.14 uses "my spirit."

1 Corinthians 14.32 tells of the "spirits of prophets."

Proverbs 25.28 refers to "his own spirit."

Hebrews 12.23 record "the spirits of just men."

Zechariah 12.1 states that "the Lord ... formed the spirit of man within him."

The condition of the human spirit:

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” - Gen 2:16-17 KJV

“And you hath he quickened, **who were dead in trespasses and sins**; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and **were by nature the children of wrath**, even as others. - Eph 2:1-3 KJV

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” - Jhn 8:44 KJV

“And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” - Rom 1:28-32 KJV

**Regeneration**

“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, [and] hating one another.But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour” Tts 3:3-6 KJV

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved” Eph 2:4-5

 “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” - Jhn 3:1-8 KJV

“But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” - 1Cr 6:17 KJV

-It is only the spirit that is regenerated or made new. Not the soul or the body.

What happens at regeneration (the re-birth)?

*-Our spirit is washed*. ”…by the washing of regeneration…” Titus 3

*-We are made alive in our spirit.* “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” - 1Cr 15:22 KJV

*-We are given the righteousness of God.* “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: - Rom 3:22 KJV

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” - 2Cr 5:21 KJV

*-We are completely and totally “right” with God.* “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. - Rom 3:28 KJV.“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: - Rom 5:1 KJV

“To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the **spirits of just men made perfect**,” - Hbr 12:23 KJV

-*When the dead spirit was washed and made alive the “old man”or “old sin nature” died*.

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son” - Col 1:13 KJV

 Read Romans 6:1-6

*We are “one with God”.* “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that **they also may be one in us**: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” - Jhn 17:21 KJV

*We are now “in God” and He is “in us”.*. “For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ.” - Gal 3:27 KJV

“But of him **are ye in Christ Jesus**, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” - 1Cr 1:30 KJV

*We are “in the Spirit”.* “**But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.** Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” - Rom 8:9-10 KJV

A believer must first know that he has a spirit. Communication with God occurs there, hearing God’s voice occurs within our spirits. If the believer does not discern his own spirit he is ignorant of how to commune with God in the spirit. He easily substitutes the thoughts or emotions of the soul for the works of the spirit, leaving him in the natural realm.

A believer must know that his spirit is new, is clean, and is of God.

Your spirit does not and cannot sin. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” - 1Jo 3:9 KJV

**What is “the flesh”?**

Greek word “*sarx*”

Flesh is the soft substance of the living body which covers our bones and is permeated with blood.

In scripture, is “the flesh” only referring to our bodies? Yes and no. It depends on how it is being used in each scripture.

The scripture sometimes refers to “the body” as the flesh (not in a negative way). But whenever the body is in a state that is **not submitted to the Spirit** it is specifically referred to as “the flesh” in a sinful state. This is because in and of itself, there is nothing good of the flesh and it is contrary to God. But if submitted to the Spirit, our bodies can be and are used of God.

“And the two shall become **one flesh**; so they are no longer two, but one **flesh**.” *sarx* Mar 10:8

* A reference to flesh being our body.

"See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have **flesh** and bones as you see that I have." *sarx* Luk 24:39*.*

“And the Word **became flesh**, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. *sarx* Jhn 1:14

* “flesh” here not used in a negative way. Jesus did not sin.

"**That which is born of the flesh is flesh**, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. *sarx* Jhn 3:6

(\*again, when we are “born again”, we are made new in our spirit, not the soul).

“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.” – *sarx* Rom 7:18

* There is no good thing in your flesh. It cannot be rehabilitated.

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with **the flesh** the law of sin.” - Rom 7:18, 25

“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Rom 8:8

* The flesh is sinful. It cannot please God.

"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but **the flesh** is weak." Mat 26:41

“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; **for these are in opposition to one another**….” - Gal 5:17

* There is nothing in the flesh that is Godly or righteous. It is only flesh. God is divinity and is spirit. The flesh is made from soil and to the soil it will return (Gen3:19). It is earthy, carnal, natural.
* The flesh is base, animalistic, selfish, instinctual.

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing…” John 6:63

**The body yielded or submitted is not called “the flesh”**

The body can be a good thing and used by God if it is presented (yielded) to Him. But if not, it is just blood, muscle, and bone (flesh).The body that is independent (not submitted) to the Spirit is called “the flesh”.

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” - Rom 6:13

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” - Rom 6:16

“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.” - Rom 6:19

**Still defining “the flesh”**

We could substitute the word “flesh” for “space suit”. If you were wearing a space suit, you would be inside the suit, and the suit would be what you wore to keep you alive and carry out your wishes. Imagine if somehow your space suit had the ability “to learn”. Your space suit would have a memory of the way the inner person thought, walked, lived, ate, etc. Let’s say at first, a bad guy wore the space suit. Then he was killed and a good guy now wore the same suit (a different man is now on the inside). Because our suit is a “special memory suit”, even after the change of “inner man” took place, the space suit in and of itself would still have the tendencies of who wore the suit before if not subject or governed by the new inner man.

**The Flesh is NOT our “sin nature”.**

 “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath**, even as the rest. Eph 2:3

“ For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may **become partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.” 2Pe 1:4

The nature of something is its natural propensity, its inclinations and is the essence of what it is.

Def. nature - the sum of innate properties by which one person differs from others, distinctive native peculiarities, natural characteristics:

The nature of steel is not the same as the nature of water.

**Why the confusion about “sin nature”?**

If we were to separate out the flesh and just look at it, we see that in it there is no good thing and that it is opposed to God. We could say that “the nature of the flesh” is evil. But we are not only made up of our bodies. Since we have a regenerated spirit, us as a whole person (body, soul and spirit) has a godly nature. Our clean and regenerated spirit is our new nature. To only examine the flesh, separated from the power of the Spirit, we could say that it is sinful by nature.

**The core of who you are is your spirit. The condition of your spirit is what you nature is (either unclean or clean). Your spirit has now been washed. You are a partaker of the divine nature.**

“For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.” - Rom 7:5

* Before you were regenerated in your spirit, you as a person were driven by the sinful nature (1. the unregenerate dead spirit and 2. the lusts, needs, desires of the flesh which was left unchecked and not submitted). “We were by nature children of wrath” Eph. 2:3. But when we were regenerated, the dead spirit became washed, alive, and of God. Now, the body no longer has a corrupt nature driving it, no power behind it.
* Someone who is born of the Spirit (like us) no longer has a sinful nature or spirit that is unclean or dead.

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. - Rom 6:6

* The flesh is not the same thing as “the old man”. The old man was the sinful nature which was killed when we were regenerated or “born of the Spirit”. The “flesh” is the body acting independent of the Spirit.

**The brain’s memory and emotional responses was programmed and trained by the old man.**

“Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.” - 2Cr 4:16

* We do still live in a body which is not regenerated.
* Although are spirit was instantly cleansed and changed, our brains (learned behaviors, emotional responses, etc.) were not instantly changed.
* The brain (grey matter) is also part of the body. It has memories that were programmed by the old nature or dead spirit. In other words, the brain (which is part of our bodies) remembers. It remembers how to respond in crisis, what will supposedly bring it happiness, what is safe, what is not, and how to self-protect. **When not submitted to the new regenerated Spirit**, the body/brain will do and express unrighteous thoughts, feelings, desires, wants and deeds. Again, Paul calls this “the flesh”.
* Although the flesh generates feelings and thoughts in the soul that feel and seem real – they are not based in reality. Although it is real that you are feeling and thinking them – they themselves are false. Only the Spirit is in the truth with His perspectives, feelings and thoughts on matters. Since you have died and your life is now hidden in Christ (intermingled in your human spirit), the only opinions, thoughts and feelings **you get to have** are from Him. Apart from the Spirit, your feelings, thoughts, desires and concepts are of error and are misleading.

Example: “the sky is falling”. We hear and believe things all of the time that solicit erroneous emotional responses in us. And then we assign meaning to these things based on prior experience.

“They said this about me.” Which means I’m unloved.

“I could lose my job.” Which means I won’t be provided for or taken care of and then I’ll suffer.

“My spouse is being selfish”. Which means I won’t be taken care of.

“They accused me of this or that. Which means I am being attacked.

“If I tell them the truth, they won’t understand.” Which means I’ll be rejected.

**Recap**

Although we’ve been regenerated in our human spirit and are now one with Christ in our spirit, our bodies (including the brain) have not been redeemed yet. When the body is not submitted to the Spirit, it is called “the flesh”.

**“In” the Spirit or “In” the Flesh?**

Biblically speaking, Christians are always "in the Spirit" (Rom. 8:9), because we have the Spirit of Christ. However, we do not always "walk in" or "walk after" the Spirit. “Walking” or “living” addresses our moment by moment choices, which do not affect our "being in" the flesh or being in the Spirit.

Read Romans chapter 8

**We can “walk after the flesh”**

Rom 8:12 – “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.”

Rom 8:13 – “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

Gal 5:13 – “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; **only use not** liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

Rom 6:12 - “Therefore **do not let** sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts.”

Gal 5:16 – “This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

…”and **do not go on presenting** the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.” - Rom 6:13

**We can “walk after the Spirit”**

READ Galations 5:13-25

– “And that **ye put on** the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Eph 4:24

More characteristics of the Spirit: loves scripture, loves prayer, loves to worship God, loves what is righteous, is tender hearted, small, contrite and broken.

Your spirit doesn't grow. It does not need teaching, understanding, or revelation. Knowledge and teaching are for the mind. As our minds are renewed there is more truth for the spirit to use and for you to recognize what the spirit is saying in any given situation. (Col 2:10, 1 Jn 2:27)

* More about how to walk after the Spirit later.

**Revisiting “the flesh”**

Paul’s list in Galatians is not all inclusive. He concludes the list with “and things like these” (Gal. 5:21)

* The flesh always has to “win”.
* The flesh wants to be tempted.
* The flesh will use the excuse of “I’m trying to follow God and do what’s right, but I can’t, or it’s too hard.” The flesh wants to always feel defeated in some way.
* The flesh always wants to be “working on something”, achieve some level, get to some higher plane, or arrive to some improved degree. It wants to figure something out, arrive at a new status, or solve some problem.
* The flesh will create problems where there are none.
* The flesh is always in some kind of non-reality. It is usually focused on how bad things are or how bad things are going to be. Or, a fleshly high and focus on how great things are. It will focus on anything but God – it is incapable of that.
* The flesh is fearful. Rarely does it walk around expressing pure and obvious fear, but it likes to mask it with more noble intentions. Fear is usually re-packaged as anxiety, concern, over planning, over scheduling your life, micro-managing, curiosity, or questions that are trying to find some type of security.
* The flesh will often have a general feeling as if something is always wrong, that things always need to be changed or improved in some way. Even when there is nothing wrong at all, the flesh will feel like something must be wrong. It will usually find something to focus on eventually.
* The flesh wants to be taken care of. It does not want to be responsible or “take the ball” for life. This is the passive variety of flesh.
* The flesh wants to take the bull by the horns. It will attack situations in life instead of trusting and waiting on God.
* The flesh will pretend that it “doesn’t see the truth” or that it “doesn’t understand” in order to get away with staying in control.
* The flesh will use confusion in order to not change. It will actually confuse itself on purpose (without facing it of course) in order to not lose control and its place the throne.
* The flesh loves to fight. Controversy, disputes, mental jousting with others.
* The flesh will create situations of tension and conflict.
* The flesh loves to be busy.
* The flesh is usually very opinionated.
* The flesh loves money. Money provides security and power. Longing for money and a life full of the pursuit of money is a characteristic of the flesh.
* The flesh loves poverty. Some varieties of flesh prefer things to be difficult and hard. It is fleshly to think that it is more Godly to suffer and be without.
* The flesh feels in control and powerful.
* The flesh is constantly analyzing. Some varieties of flesh are much like a computer; constantly dissecting every situation and every conversation.
* The flesh is meticulous.
* The flesh is lazy of heart. The flesh does not want to do the work that it takes to believe God. It is passive and self consumed.
* The flesh is arrogant and confident.
* The flesh promises that if you give it what it wants that it will be satisfied. This is a lie. If you give in to the flesh to satisfy it, it will only want more. It may feel satisfied in the short term, but to feed it will only strengthen the monster.
* The flesh is impulsive.
* The flesh is a strong reactor. It throws a fit when it doesn’t get its way. It makes extreme decisions quickly, and it can become extremely irrational in a matter of seconds.
* The flesh is a weak reactor. It feels defeated and hopeless.
* The flesh is constantly scheming in order to change things or solve dilemmas.
* The flesh avoids.
* The flesh is self-protective.
* The flesh is independent. It wants to do its own thing and call all the shots.
* The flesh is self-reliant.
* The flesh hides and loves secrecy.
* The flesh is overly complex.
* The flesh is given to change.
* The flesh seeks and looks for the worst in others.
* The flesh compares itself to others.
* The flesh is impatient.
* The flesh is often irritated.
* The flesh is frustrated.
* The flesh blames others and refuses to take responsibility.
* The flesh loves itself.
* The flesh has self-hatred.
* The flesh wants to be worshipped.
* The flesh doesn’t feel good enough.
* The flesh feels like it “knows” the hearts of others.
* The flesh justifies itself and is defensive.
* The flesh almost always “disagrees”. It is contrary by nature.
* The flesh complains, it whines, and is discontent.
* The flesh cannot be changed, rehabilitated or made new. It can only be left or “not walked after”. God does not change our flesh but gives us His uncreated life.
* As soon as the flesh humbles itself and submits to the Spirit, it ceases to be “the flesh”. But now the body and brain are subject to the Spirit and able to be used of God for service.

**The Master Programs of the flesh**

The old man or sinful nature programmed the flesh.

Master programs run smaller programs. We build “a tree” of self-protection, fear, passivity, avoidances, selfishness, ambition, pride and lusts.

Primary motivators: FEAR, PRIDE, LUST

 self protection need to feel better impulsivity

 about self

various avoidances self promoting destructive behaviors

  

Legalisms /’shoulds” need to be right various self ambitions

\*The flesh of the sinner looks the same as the flesh of the saint!

Common and pervasive flesh patterns:

* Living as though your primary daily purpose is to get your work done for the day. Idea that what life is really about is what is temporal, physical, or the seen. – living avoiding deeper things of the heart. **avoidance, shallow, passive of heart.**
* Never feeling like you quite measure up. Unsuccessful at what are the perceived requirements of God. – **Avoidance, discouragement, guilt.**
* Self confidence in your current good choices, previous good choices or knowledge. – **Self-reliance, self-righteousness, arrogance, legalisms.**
* Fear of abandonment/ abuse, fear of suffering, fear of loss. Living preventative, in control, aggressive, or avoiding and passive.

Fear and pride are strong motivators that often dictate our theology and our view of scriptures in order to allow us to stay in those patterns and remain justified in doing so.

**Since we are free from the law, is anything required of the Christian?**

**Yes. We are required** **to**: receive love, forgiveness, to rest, and enjoy God’s kindness!

Rom 8:12 “We are debtors or “under obligation” to not live after the flesh.

Rom 8:2 – “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death”

Mat 11:29 “Take **my yoke** upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Rom 11:22 “Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.”

**How Do We Walk After the Spirit?**

* Must first realize that our turning point is not when we sin only. **Our turning point is to be when we are not walking after the Spirit.** It will soon manifest with the deeds of the flesh and/or outward sin. If the fruit of the Spirit is not evident, then we need to turn.
* As we “renew our minds”, God giving us light and understanding, we have more truth in our brains that cooperate with the realities of the Spirit.

 “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.” - Rom 12:2

**Yielding**

 “Neither yield ye **your members** instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. ... I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. - Rom 6:13, 19

 Humility

Dependence

Trust

**On Humility**

Matt 18:3 “and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Who we really are (the spirit man) is extremely child like and simple – very, very little (similar to the heart of a 3 or 4 year old). This little child is “hidden in Christ” – cared for, loved, secure, continually nurtured and embraced.

 -very young children are sweet, tenderhearted and crave love (although children are unregenerate in their spirit, not “born again”). As they get older, their hearts begin to harden a little, then a little more. The hardening process is a result of independence and coping (self protection, self reliance, the independent self identity).

 - a very little child’s identity is more wrapped up in their parents instead of themselves. Their world and their environment is dad or mom, not their own independent self-life. In other words, a very little child is not extremely self-aware. A very little child who is unprotected and vulnerable lives their life through another. It is the heart posture of total trust and dependence.

 - we have build these false layers (or walls) around our true dependent self. **It started at such and early age and we’ve lived with them so long, that we believe that the walls of coping and self protection/self reliance are “us”.**

**So what should we do?**

-the scriptures tell us in many places to **“humble ourselves”.**

- to humble yourself is to peel back the false layers of self that you’ve built (the false self of who you think you are) to find the true self of who you really are.

-Who are you really? What are you really like at the bottom and core?

-think about what a small child is like.

 -You are very tiny. Mostly lost. Unknowing. Unprotected. In desperate need of constant tenderness and love, trusting, scared of things.

- To “humble yourself” you must realize the truth about your childlike self.

- Then the dependant and needy part of your heart will come up. You will easily be able to connect with your Father who is near, who cares for you, who is loving you.

* As your needy childlike heart receives His love and your “world” and identity are now in your Father, you will be “after the Spirit”.

**The Great Shortcut**

Galations 2:20 makes it very simple.

Gal 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

-The old man or the “old self” is dead and gone.

-The true self is childlike, needy, dependent on Jesus.

Col 3:10 “and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”.

-Paul calls it a “new self” because who we are in the spirit is to be our **new identity**.

-We don’t have to spend huge amounts of time trying to ”be childlike”. It is already the truth about who we are in our new and clean spirit.

-But as we find “Christ in us”, there will be a childlike, humble submission to Him.

**The “Old Man” or the “old self”**  **The “New Man” or the “new self”**

In was in the condition of: Is in the condition of:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| “Dead in trespasses and sins” – Eph. 2:1 (spiritually dead) | “Alive in our spirit” – 1 Pet 3:18 |
| Is alone and unprotected - John 9:31, 1 Pet 3:12 | “hidden in Christ” – Col. 3:3 |
| “alienated from God” – Col. 1:21 | “One spirit with Him” – 1 Cor. 6:17 |

Resulted in these experiences in the soul: Results in these experiences in the soul:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| self protection | security |
| self reliance | trust |
| self love | love for God and others |
| fear, thus control | peace |
| selfishness | selfless |
| independant | dependent |
| deeds of the flesh “ lust, greed, selfish ambition”, etc. | fruit of the Spirit |

\*Since “the flesh” was programmed by the “old man” or old nature, after regeneration if we are walking after the flesh, we will have similar experiences to when we were unsaved. Before regeneration, we had no choice but to sin (it was our nature). We were continually engaged in evil deeds (Gen 6:5, 1 Pet 2:25). Now sin no longer has power over us (Rom 6:14). Therefore, for the regenerated christian, walking after flesh is not “core driven”. It is going through the motions of something we don’t even want to do (Rom 7:15).

Therefore, since our old self has been crucified and Christ is now in us, we are a vessel that contains the life of God. “our life is hidden in Christ”.

* Our job is to constantly defer to the life of another who is in us.

= Trust is always the portal from flesh to Spirit.

 -dependency on Christ, yielded to Christ, being small in Him all move you into reality. Reality is that you are dead and Christ is alive in you. He is the one who is alive in you.

Learning to “let go” is very important.

-some live very much “not let go”.

-Become a person who loves letting go and being small – when you are afraid and when you don’t understand.

\*The primary function of the flesh is **independence through** **control**.

 -We tend to stay in the rut we are in.

 -Looking to see if you are “after the flesh or spirit” constantly is fear and is fleshly. Rather, give yourself to what the Spirit is doing – humility, love, thankfulness, etc.

**Identity is a REALLY BIG DEAL!**

If you were to lose a finger or cut off your hand, would “you” cease to exist? Of course not. You would have only lost a part of your body. “You” are not really your body. Although you are one with your body and we say that your body is you!

The apostle Paul spoke of keeping his body in subjection and making it his slave to serve God. This is a good thing to do. Your body is secondary and is to be subservient to carry out the needs and wants of the inner person.

**So then, who are you?**

-You cannot believe or trust in your own thoughts and feelings, but only when they originate from the Spirit.

- You are who you are in your spirit.

Read Romans 7:17-23

“YOU” are not your brain either. The brain has been programmed, largely by the old nature which has now been killed.

Again, Paul does not identify with the flesh as being him. “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” - Rom 7:18, 25

Rom 7:17 KJV - Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Rom 7:18 KJV - 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.

Rom 7:20 KJV - Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Who you really are is “hidden” in Christ within your spirit.

Col 3:3 “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

**The big mistake**

If you believe that your body or brain is “you” then you are going to listen to and pay attention to thoughts, feelings, wants, desires and emotions that are not from the spirit – which is the “real you”. Everyone loves themselves. To deny ourselves is very difficult, especially when what you feel and think is so powerful or loud. It seems like “it is you” feeling this or thinking this and therefore you pay attention to it and fulfill the need. This could be as simple as thinking through a thought to the end, pondering some idea continually, or allowing yourself to “feel” an emotion, thinking that it is legitimate.

\*If an idea you thought was put there by someone else, you could easily dismiss it.

Rom 6:11 “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Col 3:5 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:”

 Mortify- “to make dead”. Consider or realize that you are already dead.