

# **Victory Over the Flesh**

*Disciplining the Flesh to Live in the Spirit*

**Scripture references: Romans 6-8; Romans 7:18-20; James 1:14-15**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Not everything comes from (or **is**) the devil. Some choices we make are from our own flesh – responding to internal desires.

Jesus Christ already condemned sin in the flesh. **Romans 6:6** “*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.*” **1 Peter 4:1,2** “*Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;*” **Romans 8:1 NIV** “*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in (belong to) Christ Jesus.*” That means even though the presence of sin remains, it has lost its authority over the believer.

The believer’s struggle is not about power, but about whether we will walk in what has already been provided. As born-again believers, we are not fighting for victory—we are living from victory; therefore, we respond to temptations, situations, challenges, and every circumstance from the place of victory given to us by Christ Jesus.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE FLESH**

**Romans 7:18-20** describe an awareness of the conflict between flesh and the desire to do right. At this point, it is evident that this is **not yet** the full victory of the Spirit-led life but the desire to be aligned with God and the presence of something that resists that desire. Paul says, “*in me, that is in my flesh...dwells no good thing...*” So, we begin to understand this is not the devil. It is the **flesh vs the will and desire** for (what is) good.

The flesh is not just the body. It is a mindset that opposes (is hostile toward) God and seeks to satisfy itself outside of His will. It is active, opposing, and demands control. It is flesh resisting what your spirit already agrees with and **pushes for satisfaction outside of the will of God.**

Left **unchecked** [not confronted, not interrupted, not brought under control; allowed to continue without resistance], it will always lead you away from obedience. **Romans 8:8** “*So then they that are in (still under the control of) the flesh [sinful nature, appetites, and impulses] cannot please God.*”

**FIVE SENSES AND THEIR ROLES:** *see, hear, smell, taste, touch*  
Your senses are not sinful—they are informational gateways.

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They present what is seen, heard, and felt, but they do not determine our outcome. It is the flesh that responds to what the senses present, and the will chooses what happens next.

### **THE PROCESS OF SIN**

Scripture teaches that desire, when entertained, produces sin (James 1:14–15): “*But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin...*” **NOTE:** God cannot be a source of temptation. It is not His character.

This means sin does not begin with action—it begins with agreement:

- Desire appears – but is not sin yet.
- Desire is entertained (**agreement**) – becomes **unchecked**.
- Desire grows – not it gains strength.
- Sin is produced.

Here’s what the process looks like: The **senses present information**, the **mind processes it**, the **flesh responds with desire**, and the **will makes a decision**.

If you do not interrupt the process early, it will grow stronger and eventually take root.

**NOTE:** The danger is not the initial *feeling*. The danger is letting it go unchecked. You will entertain what you allow to linger. Guard your heart (mind). Yield to (instead of ignoring) the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

### **THE MOMENT OF VICTORY**

Victory is found in your first response. 2 Corinthians 10:5 “*casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God (what you already know) ...*”

You must confront, reject, and redirect immediately. You do not wait until it grows—you stop it at the thought. Why? Because those inclinations will • **stay** • **grow** • **take root**.

### **RESPONDING FROM VICTORY**

Romans 7 shows us we have a problem. Romans 8 shows us we have **power**. Because of Christ, you are not obligated to obey your flesh.

You have authority over your thoughts, your responses, and your decisions.

You are not at the mercy of what you feel—you are responsible for what you allow.

### **Final Thought:**

Temptation begins internally when desire is entertained. It is not the moment of exposure (to temptation) that leads to sin. It is the moment of agreement with it. Remember, your flesh may react, but because of Christ, your spirit has authority. Your victory is already secured in Christ Jesus. Now, our responsibility is to respond accordingly.