

Coming To Grips With Our 'Flesh'...

It should come as no surprise to us that we have little to no appreciation for hearing uncomplimentary things about ourselves. After all, we are 'good, God-fearing' people. In our eyes we are certainly better than most, and can readily produce evidence of the same with a clear conscience. We do have a convenient way of rationalizing away those things that we find 'offensive.' Romans 7:18 ***"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"***... is one of those verses that we tend to pass over lightly, without taking it to heart. Our chief attitude is more along the lines of... 'after all, we do lots of 'good' things all the time.' On the other hand, let's take the devil... now there is something we can really sink our teeth into. He is the real problem after all. Let's put the blame for everything that is wrong with mankind on him. From the crooked politician to the murderer to the cheating spouse, all can lay the blame for their wrongdoing at his feet... (i.e. 'the devil made me do it'). In our mad rush to absolve ourselves of any and all accountability and responsibility for our actions, we are more than happy to bestow God-like powers to Satan. After all, man has been laying the blame for his and her own choices on each other and the devil since the Garden of Eden, why stop now?



Perhaps we could benefit from the insights of some men of God who have gone before us...

The Two Covenants - by Andrew Murray

Ch 4 – Pertaining to the Flesh

<http://lovesthhoume.com/Books/2Covenant4.html>

Every evil desire and affection comes from the flesh, man's sinful natural life. It owes its power greatly to our ignorance of its nature, and our trusting to its help and strength to cast out its evil. I have already pointed out how sinful flesh and religious flesh is one, and how all failure in religion is owing to a secret trust in ourselves. As we accept and make use of what God says of the flesh, we shall see in it the source of all evil in us; we shall say of its temptations: *"It is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me"*; we shall maintain our integrity as we maintain a good conscience that condemns us for nothing knowingly done against God's will; and we shall be strong in the faith of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the new heart, so to strengthen that we need not and *"shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."*

To deny or ignore the existence of an enemy is to give him a great chance against you; and the flesh is in the believer to the very end, a force of evil to be reckoned with continually, an evil force inside a man, and yet, thank God, a force which can be so dealt with by the power of God, that it shall have no power to defile the heart or deflect the will. The flesh is in you, but your heart may be kept clean moment by moment in spite of the existence of evil in your fallen nature. Every avenue, every opening that leads into the

heart, every thought and desire and purpose and imagination of your being, may be closed against the flesh, so that there shall be no opening to come in and defile the heart or deflect the will from the will of God.

"You say that is a very high standard. But it is the Word of God. There is to be no secret sympathy with sin. Although the flesh is there, you are to make it no excuse for sins. You are not to say, I am naturally irritable, anxious, jealous, and I cannot help letting these things crop up; they come from within. Yes, they come from within, but then there need be no provision, no opening in your heart for these things to enter. Your heart can be barricaded with an impassable barrier against these things. 'No provision for the flesh.' Not merely the front door barred and bolted so that you do not invite them to come in, but the side and back door closed too. You may be so Christ-possessed and Christ-enclosed that you shall positively hate everything that is of the flesh.

'Make no provision for the flesh.' The only way to do so is to 'put on the Lord Jesus Christ.' I spoke of the heart being so barricaded that there should be no entrance to it, that the flesh should never be able to defile it or deflect the will from the will of God. How can that be done? By putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. It has been such a blessing to me just to learn that one secret, just to learn the positive side of deliverance--putting on the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Root Of The Righteous by *A.W. Tozer*
Chapter 18 - We Must Die If We Would Live
<http://lovestthoume.com/Books/RRchapter18.html>



There have been those who have thought that to get themselves out of the way it was necessary to withdraw from society; so they denied all natural human relationships and went into the desert or the mountain or the hermit's cell to fast and labor and struggle to mortify their flesh. While their motive was good it is impossible to commend their method. For it is not scriptural to believe that the old Adam nature can be conquered in that manner. It is altogether too tough to be killed by abusing the body or starving the affections. It yields to nothing less than the cross.

In every Christian's heart there is a cross and a throne, and the Christian is on the throne till he puts himself on the cross; if he refuses the cross he remains on the throne. Perhaps this is at the bottom of the backsliding and worldliness among gospel believers today. We want to be saved but we insist that Christ do all the dying. No cross for us, no dethronement, no dying. We remain king within the little kingdom of Mansoul and wear our tinsel crown with all the pride of a Caesar; but we doom ourselves to shadows and weakness and spiritual sterility.

If we will not die then we must die, and that death will mean the forfeiture of many of those everlasting treasures which the saints have cherished. Our uncrucified flesh will rob us of purity of heart, Christ-likeness of character, spiritual insight, fruitfulness; and more than all, it will hide from us the vision of God's face, that vision which has been the light of earth and will be the completeness of heaven.

The Vision & The Appointment by *George Warnock*

Chapter 3 – A New Man, A New Creation

<http://lovestthoume.com/Books/3NewMan.html>

"How slow we are to comprehend that in God's design and purpose, He would have a people in the earth walking in the same Spirit that our Lord Jesus walked in. Not to make ourselves equal with Jesus. For we are much less, much weaker ~ yet knowing that God's strength is "made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). And Jesus Himself as the Son of God, voluntarily took the role of a slave, a bondservant who did all that His Master wanted Him to do.

Surely the more we are filled with the Spirit, the more meek and humble do we become, because that is the nature of the Holy Dove that rested upon Jesus. And therefore Jesus told His disciples that when He went away, He would send the Comforter to abide with them in His stead. And through Him they would do the same works that He had done, because they would be baptized with the same Spirit. And even greater works, because He would be exalted to the Throne with all power in Heaven and in Earth, and interceding for them before the Father.

We are not talking about the "old Adam" in us attaining the stature that Jesus walked in. We are talking about the old Adam being crucified with Christ, that the Seed of the Last Adam might bring forth a New Man from the Seed that He has implanted in the soil of our hearts.

The Vision & The Appointment by *George Warnock*

Chapter 7 – The Furnace Of Affliction

<http://lovestthoume.com/Books/7Furnace.html>

God will continue to prepare His people, through much grace as well as much suffering, until He has a holy band of overcomers, who will overcome the Accuser of the brethren: "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev 12:11).

The 'hearsay' knowledge that we have as God's people, must give way to words out of "the whirlwind," humbling us to ashes, that out from our burnt-offering unto God, we too might know our God as we never knew Him before. It was



from the whirlwind that God spoke to His servant Job - who, having been humbled to ashes, was constrained to say:

"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5,6). Repent of what? Of himself, you might say, of his ignorance of God's ways. He was a righteous man. But he was humbled in the dust and ashes of repentance, when God asked him a host of questions that Job knew he could not answer. Nor did he try. He realized he knew so little of God, and His ways. He saw himself as totally unworthy to defend himself in the Light of the glory of God that was revealed from Heaven. He would leave the fragment of knowledge he had, in dust and ashes, that he might embrace the God that he had always served - but now saw Him as he had never seen Him before. As it was with Isaiah, when he saw the glory of God, he cried out: "I am unclean!" As it was with Saul of Tarsus, the Light of God blinded this zealous Pharisee for a season. But the Light that blinded his eyes, gave him new vision into heavenly realities - a Light that would never be extinguished as he walked among men, nor when he had "finished the course" and gone to be with his Lord. It was the Light that shone out of the darkness in the beginning, and which "hath shined in our hearts, to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6).

Living In The Heavenly Realms *by Steve Bray*

Waiting On The Lord In Childlike Faith

<http://www.authenticchristianity.net/>



The people of this world are taught from a very young age to become independent and self-sufficient. They set their own goals and work out their own purposes. But this self-originated form of life separates the eternal soul from the heavenly life of God. It is the reason why we must be converted and become as dependent little children before we can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Little children never do anything on their own.

They live in a state of dependence where they receive everything from someone else. And this is the principle by which God expects His children to live. Again, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven." (John 3:27) God insists on being the source of everything that takes place in His kingdom.

We know there are independent beings going throughout the earth doing many things on their own. They expend their energy building up their own little kingdoms. Their self-seeking and self-exalting nature enables them to acquire many things that do not come from God. In fact, the devil helps people acquire things in this world when they choose to bow down to His self-seeking and self-exalting way of life. He knows it will keep their mind on earthly things and lead to their destruction. (Phil. 3:18-19)

Paul said that the people of this world walk “according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air {the one who encourages people to live for themselves}, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.” (Eph. 2:2-3) This is a simple description of the self-originated form of life that holds sway over the “whole world.” (1 John 5:19)

The wisdom that is loved by the people of this world will never enter the kingdom of heaven. It is of the devil. And so there is a great need of being soundly converted, which entails a complete renewal of the mind. We must follow God’s truth to the very end, taking all of His spiritual principles into account. There is order to His wisdom, and it will lead to a logical conclusion when we accept all His teachings. The only difficulty in relating to God’s truth is that it is contrary to how the humanly wise and prudent think. ...I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes. (Matt. 11:25)

When Jesus said, “Do not fear, *little flock*, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” (Luke 12:32) he knew how little this flock would be. Not many are



willing to let go of everything and become like dependent little children who permit Him to direct all their steps. But here is a place where we need to begin following truth to where it actually leads if we hope to be honored by God and receive His Kingdom-life.

And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after {because they do not have faith in God and must take care of themselves}, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God {seek out life in the heavenly realms}, and all these things shall be added to you. *Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

(He will give you this life in the heavenly realms where He becomes the source of everything). Sell what you have and give alms (sell your unneeded possessions and use the resources to lead others into the kingdom of God); provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail... (Luke 12:29-33)

Many have convinced themselves that Christ’s instructions to the rich young ruler do not apply to their own life. But here is an instruction that is given to everyone who wants to be a part of His “little flock.” There are no exceptions built into this command. Have you been willing to follow Christ’s teaching no matter where it leads? While the Lord will insure that we have adequate resources to care for our needs, He never intended for His disciples to begin dipping into His money bag (as Judas did) and use these resources to live for their own pleasures in this world.

The church has become filled with people who are living according to the wisdom of men. They think they are wise in storing up wealth for themselves. And it makes perfectly good sense when living by the wisdom of this world. But again, God's ways are in direct conflict with worldly wisdom. Jesus is still saying to those who are following Satan's "save thyself" way of life, "*You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.*" (Matt. 16:23) Literally, this is a terrible state of mind to be in.

Putting The Flesh To The Test by Steve Bray

The real objective of the Christian faith is to be honored by God. (John 12:26) He gives His honor by filling the soul with His everlasting life. But the seed must be planted in the ground and die before the spirit can be lifted into this eternal life. (John 12:24)

It is our choice to suffer for Christ's sake that actually magnifies His power through our lives. Christ's power was magnified through the ministry He put Paul in because Paul was willing to suffer for the kingdom of God. It was also in this suffering that he was kept in a place where he depended on the Lord to provide him with a constant supply of life from above. Because he was living through divine power, he did not "burn out" or "wear down" his spiritual state. This was the secret, or the mystery, to Paul's spiritual life.

Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in the God who raises the dead. (2 Cor. 1:9)

...For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Cor. 12:10)

...God has chosen to make known...the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim him...so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, *struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me.* (Col. 1:27-29 NIV)

...It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God... I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. (Gal. 2:20-21)

In the end, we will all learn that true righteousness comes directly from God by faith. The quicker we can learn this lesson, the greater our opportunity to know Christ in the power of His resurrection. The flesh simply cannot produce the life that has its source in Christ by keeping laws. May we all learn this lesson today!

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter (living by the written laws) kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Cor 3:5-6)

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life {life from God}, truly righteousness would have been by the law. (Gal. 3:21)

Your Choice – The Flesh or The Spirit

The following article comes from the book – *Living In the Heavenly Realms*, (Steve Bray) <http://www.authenticchristianity.net/Authentic%20Christianity/Articles/Your%20Choice.htm>

Jesus said to the rich young ruler, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.” (Mark 10:18) This statement was not addressing whether or not Jesus was God. The young ruler came to find out how to enter into the “good life” that he was able to see in Jesus. He therefore asked what he might do to achieve the goal. The Lord’s response reveals a fundamental truth that will need to be understood by everyone who is seeking “eternal life.” Jesus refers to God as the only source of true goodness. If man is to be truly good, he will need to receive the one eternal life that has its source in God. In the original creation, God was the source of everything. Man was created to be the highest means for God to reveal His life and glory. God, who is Spirit, intended to live and make Himself known through Adam and his lineage. While Adam was still walking by the Spirit, he revealed the “light of life” from heaven in everything he did. There was no darkness in him until he chose to live “out from” himself by “the flesh.”

Even man’s best efforts to live a moral life will always fall short of God’s glory. In other words, “the flesh profits nothing.” (John 6:63) Man simply cannot be good in God’s sight without walking in His Spirit and bearing His divine fruit. “It is the Spirit who gives life.” (v. 63)

...The fruit of the Spirit {which reveals God’s light of life} is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no {need for} law. (Gal. 5:22-23)

Adam did not need a Bible with laws to instruct him how to live when he was filled with God’s Spirit and manifesting His heavenly fruit. He then did by nature what God’s written laws require of man. Because he originally lived as a vessel of the life of God, as the Second Adam {Jesus} did, he lived as a manifestation of the Eternal and Living Word.

God provided the law because man began living “out from” himself on the natural plane of life. The purpose of the law is to constrain the flesh-life that has developed because of the missing presence of God’s eternal life. It is in this sense that those who are filled with God’s Spirit and are sharing with Him in His eternal life no longer need law to teach them how to act right. In the heavenly realms, everyone remains “perfect in one” as they share in the same life of holy love. (John 17:22-23)

But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing {the indwelling life from heaven}



teaches you concerning all things, and is true...and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him {live through the Son's Spirit}. (1 John 2:27)

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him... Love has been perfected among us in this...because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:9, 17)

It was Adam's choice to live by the flesh rather than by the Spirit that resulted in a "body of sin." Adam did not commit what we might call a "gross sin," even though it was terrible in God's sight. He died spiritually for simply doing something on his own. Choosing to live by self-will results in the fatal choice of turning from a Spirit-directed way of life. You cannot serve two masters. Man cannot walk by his own will in the flesh and also be led by the Spirit. He cannot have a self-originated form of life and also have a life that has its source in God—the One source of all goodness. He must make a choice. It was this turning to a self-directed way of life, known as walking by the flesh, that separated Adam from the life of God. At that point, because he no longer had the Spirit of God filling his inner being and satisfying his soul, he naturally became earthly-minded. The experience of this void within his eternal soul led to a self-seeking and self-exalting form of life. He then began to expend his time living for self in an attempt to develop an earthly form of spiritual fulfillment.

This should help to explain the biblical doctrine of man's depravity. It relates to this matter of being deprived of the spiritual life of God. This depravity cannot help but lead to a self-directed way of life, which is the essence of evil. It is a form of life that is in direct conflict with the life of holy love that was revealed by Jesus. All the carnal darkness now being spread throughout the world comes from living by the flesh, according to the desires of this self-seeking and self-exalting nature.



This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic (of the devil). For where envy (with its source in self-exaltation) and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. (Jam. 3:15-16)

The Son was sent into the world to save man from this fallen state. As the Second Adam, He lived according to God's original plan for man. Everything He did had its source in the Father. Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father."

(John 14:9) He permitted the goodness of the eternal life within the Father to be displayed through Him by consistently choosing to walk by the Spirit. And after He had reestablished this God-ordained form of life, He became the Giver of this eternal life—the source of all goodness—to those who will choose to walk by the Holy Spirit as He did.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life... (John 10:27-28)

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life (the source of true goodness), and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

This was the lesson that Jesus began teaching to the rich young ruler when he came to ask about obtaining eternal life. If he wanted to be truly “good,” by sharing with God in the eternal life, he would need to follow Jesus in a Spirit-directed way of life. But this young man, like many today, chose to remain on the natural plane by walking in the flesh. While it is common to think that his problem was his love for possessions, the real issue was the basic choice between walking by the flesh and walking by the Spirit. He preferred to live “out from” himself so he could control his own life and do his own work—making it possible to have his own glory. We therefore find him going back to his old self-directed form of life. And even though he was able to develop a moral life by obeying many of God’s commands, he lost all hope of finding the Son’s eternal life when he refused to enter into Christ’s Spirit-directed way of life.

You search the Scriptures (and try to use them to help make yourself right), for in them you think you have eternal life (the life of God); and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me {through the cross and into the heavenly realms} that you may have life. (John 5:39-40)

For if you live according to the flesh you will die... For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Rom. 8:13-14)

W. B. Godbey, in his book *Victory*, speaks of how the church in general has not been directing individuals to the true salvation of the Lord. He explains how Christ came to save people from the old way of living by the flesh, so we may live in true harmony with God. Today is the day when we need to be prepared to enter the kingdom of heaven, where there is no disposition to live independently of God. Even though the following statements were separated from the surrounding context, having been taken from several chapters of his book, this truth reflects his overall premise. It reveals the importance of coming into harmony with the Spirit of God in this world.

So they [many of those in the church] play the children’s game, out and in, up and down. We are presuming these people have good moral and churchly characters, perhaps very active in the Sunday-school and temporal interests of the church. They are like the “rich man” in Luke 16, who was an honorable church member; they need nothing but religion...



Popular churchianity postpones nearly all the promises of God to the future state. God says, “Be holy, be perfect, be filled with the Spirit.” Popular religion says you can’t be holy till you get to heaven... We must take God’s Bible as it is and come into harmony

with it, or we will never get to heaven. Have you a New Testament experience? If so, you are emptied of sin and filled with the Holy Ghost...

Remember Christ came to prepare us for heaven. In heaven there are no peace officers, as nobody there has any disposition to break the peace. Hence we must get rid of every disturber before we leave this world. Does the peace of God, "which passeth all understanding," reign in your heart without rival?... When you get rid of Adam the First, then you are no longer under the law, consequently, you will be just as free as if there was no law... So when you get everything out of your heart which antagonizes God's law, then you sit down with God on His throne and cooperate with Him in His administration...

"If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)... If you have a clean heart; i.e., have no disposition to commit sin (live by self-will in order to gratify and please self), you are free from the law. Glorious freedom! It is heaven on earth! Thus we become "kings and priests unto God," and reign jointly with Christ upon His throne.

NO FLESH SHALL GLORY IN HIS PRESENCE!

