

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Plugged In - Part 2

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Introduction

The Apostle Paul describes the battle between the flesh and the spirit -- a common experience of Christians. We want to do what is right, yet we struggle to do the right thing to grow more in the image of God. The Scriptures provide insight and a pathway for us to “walk more in the Spirit and not fulfil the desires of the flesh.”

Read

Romans 7:15-18, Romans 8:1-17

Complete the following:

Although I want to do _____ [describe something positive you want to do], that I do not practice, but I end up doing _____ [describe something opposite that you do instead].

For the [positive activity] that I will to do, I do not do; but the [negative activity] I will not to do, that I practice.

Discuss

1. We all experience the struggle of not living up to the good intentions and resolutions we set ourselves. Why do you think we so easily fail to practice better spiritual choices? Share this without judgement or condemnation.
2. Read Galatians 2:20. Despite the fact that our flesh is meant to be crucified with Christ, why does the flesh seem to be very much alive and “at war” with the spirit?

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3. Read Romans 8:2 again. What does this verse mean to you in relation to the struggle between our flesh and spirit? How does the redemptive work of Jesus Christ free us from “the law of sin and death”?
4. Read Ezekiel 11:19-20 and Jeremiah 33:31-34. How is the motivation of a Christian different in the new covenant compared to the old covenant?
5. “Don’t ‘manage’ the flesh, kill it.” This means that we should deal ruthlessly with sinful habits and carnality in our lives. How can one ‘kill’ the carnal nature? Consider the following: fasting, accountability, confession, repentance, etc.
6. Read Galatians 5:16. Apart from prayer and reading the Word of God, how can we “feed the Spirit”?
7. Note the context of Romans 8 regarding the role of the Spirit of God and the love of God. According to this passage, what are some powerful motivators for personal change and transformation?
8. Read Ephesians 2:10. Why would knowing that we are God’s workmanship and focusing on the good works which He has prepared for us be such powerful motivators to oppose to the works of the flesh?

Respond

Living in the Spirit cannot be accomplished by sheer willpower. While commitment and discipline are important, we need to plug into the power of the Holy Spirit and have the grace of God to sustain this spiritual life.

What is one change you can make today to give more room for the Holy Spirit to move powerfully in your life?