

THE CHARACTER LIFE

Dominating The Flesh: Led By The Spirit

Foundation Statement: You can't dominate the flesh and have your life controlled by it. To dominate the flesh you must conduct your life based on what the spirit of speaks to your spirit and not based on your feelings, desires, or emotions. – Galatians 5:16

I. **Apostle Paul is being led by his flesh and not the Holy Spirit (Romans 7)**

- A. 14-Carnal-He's fleshy and governed by his unrenewed nature
 - 1. In other words his body has been trained to do and desire things by his unrenewed mind and even though he's saved his life is still being governed by what that unrenewed mind has trained his body to do
- B. 23-His life is being governed by his unrenewed soul/nature and his spirit can't do the things that it wants to do

II. **To dominate the flesh you're going to have to be led, controlled, and moved by the spirit. The way to dominate the flesh is to be led by what the Holy Spirit speaks to your spirit.**

- A. You dominate the flesh, but not being led by it anymore; now you lead it.
 - 1. When the flesh is telling you what to do and you're following the flesh, then you're being dominated by it.
 - 2. You dominate the flesh by not conducting your life based on what it wants to do and instead you conduct your life based on what the Holy Spirit leads you to do
 - 3. Imagine a ring in your nose. When you follow the feelings and desires of the flesh your flesh is pulling you around in life by that ring in your nose. When you're led by the spirit, the Holy Spirit is the one dictating your life.
 - a. You put a ring in the nose of that flesh and you pull it around
- B. Romans 8:14 – Born again people are supposed to be led by the spirit of God
 - 1. Led – To lead, take one with, attach to one's self as an attendant, to **conduct**, bring, to lead, guide, direct, to move, impel
 - 2. The Holy Spirit is supposed to be the conductor of your life
 - a. EX: The orchestra is not moved by anything but the conductor. I could run up there and start moving that stick and they wouldn't be moved by that. They don't start playing just because they feel like starting. They're not moved to play by their feelings. They're moving when He's moving and when he stops they stop.
 - 3. Don't be led by the flesh and don't follow the flesh.

- a. Your feelings and desires might be telling you to do one thing, but to follow them is to be dominated by them.
 - b. The conduct of my life is not based on or conducted by my feelings or emotions. The conduct of my life is based on what the Holy Spirit says to my spirit in spite of my feelings.
 - c. You're supposed to be controlled by, moved by, led by what the Holy Spirit speaks to your spirit not by your feelings or desires.
- C. Galatians 5:16 – If we'll walk in the spirit and be led by the spirit we won't perform the lusts of the flesh; we'll dominate the flesh instead of being dominated by the flesh
- 1. Walk-To habitually walk in the general vicinity; To live; Follow as a companion or dedicated follower; To be occupied with.
 - a. Be a dedicated follower of the Holy Spirit and be occupied with what he's leading your spirit to do you instead of following your flesh and being occupied with what it wants
 - b. You can't follow the Holy Spirit and follow the flesh
 - 2. If you walk in the spirit by being led by the Holy Spirit you won't perform the desires of the unrenewed nature
 - a. The spirit is not going to lead you into fleshy activities so if you'll be led by him and follow him you won't perform the desires of the flesh
 - 1) You'll dominate that unrenewed nature by doing what the Spirit leads you to do rather than doing what it wants
 - b. EX: If you have feelings of discouragement, but the Spirit leads your spirit to exercise joy by faith and you exercise joy by faith, then you just walked in the spirit, were led by the spirit and dominated the flesh.
 - 1) You were moved by the spirit to exercise joy by faith rather than being moved by feelings of discouragement into discouragement
 - 3. The desires of the unrenewed nature and the spirit are totally opposite
 - a. The part of you that has been influenced by God desires against the part of you that hasn't been influenced by God (that's the unrenewed mind and poorly trained body)
 - 1) The part of your mind that's unrenewed is yet to be influenced by the Word of God; the habits your body has developed through that unrenewed mind have yet to be influenced by the Word of God
 - 2) The unrenewed nature (the unrenewed mind and poorly trained body) tries to keep you the spirit from doing things that you want
 - b. The unrenewed nature can be trained and renewed to the Word of God and the more it is the less problems you'll have with it

- 1) That training starts with you being led by Holy Spirit, based on that leading you, the spirit, tell your mind what to think and your body what to do

III. You can't dominate the flesh and be controlled by it or anything other than the spirit

- A. The Holy Spirit is supposed to give revelation knowledge to your spirit and then your spirit tell your mind how to think and your mind then tells your body what to do. That all started with you being led by him.
 1. John 16:13,17:17-The Holy Spirit is the only one who will give you knowledge and lead you in line with the Word
 - a. He's going to give you the right knowledge, the right leading, and your spirit needs to take that knowledge and leading and tell your mind what to think and your body what to do
 - b. If you're leading comes from anything else you now have the potential to be led in the direction of the flesh
 - 1) My feelings and senses will lead me into the flesh (a life in disagreement with the Word of God); They are not to be trusted
 - 2) Your feelings and senses will give you knowledge that's not in line with the Word
 - 3) My feelings and senses are not my source of knowledge nor or they my leading
 2. People miss it because they get their leading from the wrong place
 - a. Their leading comes from what they see or how they feel; they're moved by what they see or how they feel
 - 1) They didn't get revelation knowledge from the Holy Spirit and then tell their mind what to think and their body what to do. They instead are thinking and doing based what they see and feel.
 - 2) You're not supposed to get knowledge from your feelings and eyes and then think and do based on that knowledge
 - b. My leading and knowledge doesn't come from what I see or how I feel, it comes from my trust in the words the Holy Spirit speaks (2 Cor 5:7)
 - 1) I'm not moved by what I see or how I feel, I'm moved by what the Holy Spirit speaks to my spirit in spite of what I see or how I feel.
 - 2) I'm moved based on what God speaks to me not by my senses
 - c. EX: Just because you feel discouraged you don't base your thinking or doing on that. Base your thinking and doing off of what the Holy Spirit is speaking to your spirit in the midst of those discouraged feelings.
 3. When I'm conducting my life based on what the spirit is saying to my spirit instead of based on what my flesh feels or sees I'm dominating my flesh

- a. Every time the spirit leads you and you obey, you're dominating the flesh and strengthening the spirit
 - b. If a person is constantly conducting their life based on what they see or feel, then they are being led, governed, and dominated by the flesh
- B. The Apostle Paul was moved, led, and controlled by what the Holy Spirit spoke to his spirit (Acts 20:22-24)
1. **Bond in the spirit**-Compelled by his convictions, under the constraining power of the Spirit of God, fastened to, tied to, under obligation
 2. **None of these things move me** – I make account of none of these things
 - a. When he's deciding whether or not he should go he doesn't take these things into account; these things don't count or have weight when he makes his decision
 - b. His flesh had to be saying we don't want to go back there
 3. When we're deciding what to do the only thing that should count in our lives is what the Spirit of God leads us to do
 - a. None of these things that aren't the spirit of God count
 - b. The flesh's vote doesn't count (Romans 8:12)
 4. Examples: They did something to offend me, but it doesn't count in my decision to love. I'm hungry and tired, but those things don't count in my decision to keep a good attitude.
- C. Who's leading you? Who's the conductor of your life? If it's anything other than the Spirit of God you're being dominating by the flesh
1. Ephesians 2:3 – People who are carnal are led by desires developed through the unrenewed mind; whatever they desire to do they do it
 2. Philippians 3:19 – This is belly-led; the hunger of your belly moves you into a feeling of irritability
 3. Matthew 6:24 – This is money-led; you make decisions based on money instead of on the spirit of God
 4. Proverbs 3:5 – That's head-led; you make decisions based on what makes sense to you instead of on the spirit of God
 5. Ephesians 4:26 – This is feeling-led; you feel angry, but don't allow that anger to move you in opposition to the Word; you're not governed or controlled by that anger you control that anger
 6. What determines you're moving? What in life moves you? Whatever moves you is dominating and controlling you.

IV. Lack of control in your life reveals immaturity. When you're controlled by your unrenewed mind and poorly trained body that reveals you're being dominated by your flesh rather than led by the Spirit (1 Cor 3:1-3 KJ/AMP)

- A. Carnal people are immature people (babes) who can't control their feelings, emotions, and unrenewed nature
 - 1. Carnal people are not in control of their feelings, emotions, and desires, but controlled by them
 - 2. Carnal – Fleshly; Governed by human nature and not by the Spirit of God; Under the control of desires developed by the unrenewed mind; human nature apart from divine influences
 - 3. AMP 3-If you're controlled by your emotions you're dominated by the flesh
- B. Mature sons of God are led by the spirit of God; children of God/immature believers are led by things other than the spirit (Romans 8:14-17)
 - 1. One sign that you're maturing and developing in the character of Jesus is that you are being led by the spirit and not by your flesh
 - 2. Sons vs. Children
 - a. Children (Nepios)-Infant, little child, minor, not of age, metaphorically childish, untaught, unskilled; child 7, babe 6, childish
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 3:1, 13:11, Galatians 4:1,3, Ephesians 4:14, Hebrews 5:13
 - b. The difference between believers as "children of God" and as "sons of God" is brought out in Rom 8:14-21. The Spirit bears witness with their spirit that they are "children of God," and, as such, they are His heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. This stresses the fact of their spiritual birth (Rom 8:16,17). On the other hand, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God," i.e., "these and no other." Their conduct gives evidence of the dignity of their relationship and their likeness to His character.
 - c. "A child" (teknon akin to *tikto*, "to beget, bear"), is used in both the natural and the figurative senses. It gives prominence to the fact of birth, whereas *huios* "son" stresses the dignity and character of the relationship.
 - 3. Sons of God aren't taken with, moved by, or attached to their feelings or emotions; they're taken with, moved by, attached to the Spirit of God
- C. A spiritual person is in control of their emotions, not controlled by their emotions
 - 1. A spiritual person doesn't operate by feelings
 - a. To let your emotions run is to be weak spiritually
 - 1) You're spirit isn't strong enough to hold those emotions in check
 - 2. Spiritual people are in control of their soul and body through a strong spirit
 - a. A strong spiritual man could be raging mad and you not even know it because he's led by the spirit not by the feelings of anger
 - 3. If you're not strong spiritually you won't have the strength to control your flesh, but you'll be controlled by it

- D. Spiritual people who are led by the spirit endure hardness as a good soldier (2 Timothy 2:3)
 - 1. The hardness comes, the pressure on your unrenewed mind and poorly trained body comes, but it doesn't change you
 - a. Endure-Continue in the same state without changing; Sustain without breaking or yielding to pressure; To bear with patience and without sinking under pressure
 - b. If you change when your flesh gets uncomfortable it reveals you're dominated by the flesh
 - 1) To let a feeling like discouragement control you shows that you're weak spiritually; you're not enduring the hardness w/o changing
 - c. Spiritual peoples flesh can be uncomfortable and they'll just endure because they're not led by the feelings of their flesh
 - 1) When it got hard the Holy Spirit never led you to be discouraged
- E. Spiritual people are hardened to difficulties and pressure; pressure and difficulties don't change them
 - 1. Matthew 26:37-38, Luke 22:40 – Pressure is not changing him
 - a. A spiritually strong person put pressure on pressure
 - b. I will not do the will of my soul right now
 - 2. Isaiah 53:12 (MSG) – Jesus stared death in the face and didn't flinch
 - a. Jesus wasn't moved by death
 - 3. They are not easily moved or changed
 - a. Isaiah 50:7 – I've set my face like flint
 - 4. Spiritual people can be going through some stuff and you'll never know it because they're not governed by their emotions of feelings
- F. Spiritual people can suffer (the flesh not getting its way) quietly (1 Pet 5:10)
 - 1. Their flesh isn't getting its way, but you won't know it because they're led by the spirit and the spirit is leading them to stay in faith, joy, and peace
 - 2. Don't fall into have to have your way: you have to sleep, eat
- G. This life of character is one that is controlled by your spirit and not your flesh