

FLESH & SPIRIT

God, Gender, and Sexuality 2

Your flesh is your body.

Our soul is the part of us that is us.

Our spirit is the part of us that connects with God.

The flesh and the Spirit interact and battle.

There are parts of the flesh that we cannot control at all.

There are parts of the flesh over which we have total control.

Galatians 6:8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. NIV

There are parts of the flesh over which we have some control.

There are parts of the flesh over which we have total control, but our flesh fights like a Tasmanian devil.

There are struggles of the flesh over which we can have total ongoing victory.

There are struggles of the flesh which may continue to be struggles.

Some actions and thinking patterns may rewrite parts of our flesh.

The struggles of the flesh can be weird, vile, gross, and nasty.

Ephesians 5:12 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. NIV

Galatians 5:19-21 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery [excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures]; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. NIV

Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. NIV

The temptations of the flesh are common.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. NIV

James 3:2a We all stumble in many ways. NIV

Your temptations might be different from someone else's.

Although the struggles of the flesh are common and normal (although at times weird), they are not acceptable in the eyes of God.

Galatians 5:16-17 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. NIV

God expects us to control our sexual desires even when it is difficult.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God. NIV

Being inclined to or predisposed toward a certain temptation does not make it okay.

Understanding people's flesh struggle can help us be compassionate.

Jesus came to deal with the brokenness of our flesh.

Colossians 2:11 In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ. NIV

Romans 8:3-17 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. NIV

Jesus set us free from sin.

Romans 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. NIV