

## 6. Romans: Flesh vs. Spirit

*...the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*  
Romans 8.4

*Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold....*  
Matthew 13.7-8

Paul lays out his thinking in Romans on the dynamic of \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ drawing on his own spiritual experience.

The core difference between life in the flesh and life in the Spirit is the motivation of my \_\_\_\_\_. I am *walking according to the flesh* when I am motivated to seek the things of this world, rather than the things of God, and I have learned, not only can the difference be subtle but I can also have mixed motives. With that in mind, even motivation to live in Christ is not enough, for I need to rightly discern the Word of God.

The flesh, that is our bodies, is, in and of itself, \_\_\_\_\_, for God created our bodies, and all that God does is good because God is good! Along with our bodies, however, come desires. Desires are not, in and of themselves, evil.

We eventually become \_\_\_\_\_ to disoriented desires.

We need the wisdom and guidance of God's Word and Spirit to \_\_\_\_\_ between the works of the flesh and the Spirit.

Faith does not come through understanding! It's just the other way around; understanding comes through faith. When we attempt to acquire faith through understanding we end up walking a crooked path, calling evil good and good evil.

While we hold onto certain \_\_\_\_\_, the Spirit will nurture and nourish us in the areas of our hearts that are open, but only to a point. For at some point, all the doors of my heart have to be opened if the messenger is to be the message. Otherwise, my growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ will be blocked.

I have learned that if I **desire** to bear fruit in my life for Christ then other desires of my heart need to come under the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word and Spirit. Jesus wants us to ask ourselves, "Which sort of soil am I?" The answer can be a mixed bag!

Our hearts have different rooms with different kinds of soil, some are receptive to the Word of God, some are not! Life's choices are always between the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit. But it takes \_\_\_\_\_ and effort to sort out what is of the flesh and what is of the Spirit.

The flesh! The Spirit! Desires! What truly is the \_\_\_\_\_ force of my life? Yours? The love of Christ? Or, the love of the thing of this world?