

February 15/16, 2025

"The Flesh"

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**Beyond the
Weekend**

SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2025 Focus: 50 Key Truths

Each Friday, explore a key truth about our Christian faith and how we can live in light of this truth.

Day 1 [Ephesians 2:1-3](#) | The Enemy Within

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. Ephesians 2:3

Paul writes to the Ephesian church about life before Christ. He reminds them of their former way of living when they followed the cravings and desires of their flesh. By "flesh," Paul isn't referring to their literal, physical bodies but to sinful nature that opposes God's Spirit. They needed to understand that this internal enemy—the flesh—distorts good desires into sinful ones. As the early church leader Augustine would later write, the flesh either loves the wrong things or the right things in the wrong order.

We face this same battle. Our sinful flesh corrupts what God intended for good. Sin affects how we think and what we desire, encouraging us to take good gifts from God and turn them into the ultimate desires of our hearts. The longing for a relationship becomes lust. The desire for success becomes greed. The need for security becomes control. Like the Ephesians, we must recognize that this enemy within—our sinful nature—opposes God's work in our lives. Our flesh's nature can't be managed by self-effort. It must be put to death through Christ's work in us. Through Jesus, we experience victory over the flesh's control.

TODAY: Spend time praying about any disordered or distorted desires. Ask God to reveal longings or cravings that are at odds with God's desire for your life. Confess anything God reveals. As you confess, remember, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" ([1 John 1:9](#)).

Day 2 [Galatians 5:13-21](#) | The War Within

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. Galatians 5:17

Paul describes an internal battle that rages within every believer—the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. This isn't theoretical; Paul experienced this struggle personally. "For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing" ([Romans 7:19](#)). Similarly, Paul teaches the Galatian believers that the "flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit" ([Galatians 5:17](#)).

This war continues in us. Every choice we make either feeds our flesh or strengthens our walk in the Spirit. Individual choices may not have major consequences, but over time will reshape our character. When we consistently choose to walk by the Spirit, God grows in us spiritual fruit like love, joy and peace. When we regularly give in to the flesh, we develop patterns of sin that lead to destruction. Our choices today form who we

will be tomorrow. Victory comes by yielding to the Spirit's work in our lives. We must choose daily (and hourly) to walk with the Spirit and not the flesh.

TODAY: Spend time journaling about the person you want to become. Write down characteristics you hope will mark your life in five years (like patience, joy, integrity or self-control). Then, identify the daily choices you need to make to become this person. Ask God for power through his Spirit to grow and live in step with the Spirit to become this person.

Day 3 [Colossians 3:5-10](#) | Fighting the Flesh

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. Colossians 3:5-6

Paul does not mince words. Believers are to put the flesh to death. Kill it. Have nothing to do with it. He doesn't suggest managing sinful desires or finding a comfortable compromise. Instead, Paul calls believers to eliminate anything that belongs to their sinful nature. For the early church, this meant taking drastic action against sin in their lives. His language leaves no room for half-measures or partial obedience. The flesh is an enemy of the soul, and they are to do whatever is necessary to avoid its ways and traps.

The same call echoes to us today. We are not to play around with sin and temptation. Rather, we are to put sin to death. John Owen, a seventeenth-century theologian, wrote that we must "be killing sin or sin will be killing you." This requires honest evaluation and decisive action with the Spirit's help. It could mean getting rid of the smartphone to battle anger, envy or lust. It may mean admitting alcoholism and going to AA. It could involve cutting up credit cards that enable overspending. It could include ending an inappropriate relationship or deleting a phone number. Spiritual growth often requires painful but necessary choices to eliminate what feeds our flesh.

TODAY: Make a specific plan to "put to death" what feeds your flesh. What practical step can you take today to cut off sin's influence? If you need help, reach out to our care team at care@adabible.org.

For more help and discussion on how to fight the flesh, listen to this week's *Beyond the Weekend Podcast* [HERE](#). Got questions about the sermon? Submit your question [HERE](#). Your question could be answered on the podcast!

Day 4 [Romans 8:5-6](#) | Spiritual Practices

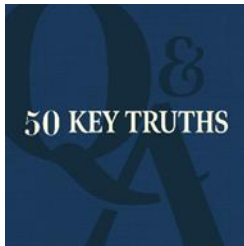
Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:5-6

Paul teaches Roman believers that mindset matters. Training the body requires specific exercises, and training the mind and spirit to live by the Holy Spirit requires intentional practices. The early church understood this well and engaged in regular rhythms of prayer, Scripture reading, worship, fasting and fellowship ([Acts 2:42-46](#)). Spiritual practices have been a key part of life for the people of God for generations.

The practices found in Scripture are essential for spiritual growth today. Much like going to the gym to train our physical muscles, we need to exercise our spiritual muscles and "train yourself to be godly" ([1 Timothy 4:7](#)). This

could look different for each of us, but we need to start somewhere. This could be setting aside a daily time for reading and memorizing Scripture. Or maybe this means starting a prayer list to pray over people and their concerns. Or maybe it is the weekly practice of setting aside a day for rest and worship. These practices position us to better hear and respond to the Spirit's leading. They help us develop patterns that sow to the Spirit and bring life and peace.

TODAY: Choose one spiritual practice and begin it today. Start somewhere, but start today. For help in understanding and growing in spiritual practices, sign up for the Ada Bible Academy course on Spiritual Practices that will start in mid-April. Learn more and register [HERE](#).



Day 5 [Hebrews 1:1-3](#) | Question 7: God Reveals Himself

Question: How does God reveal himself to us?

Answer: God reveals himself through creation, his Word (the Bible) and most fully through his Son, Jesus Christ.

But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. Hebrews 1:2

The author of Hebrews marks a pivotal moment in God's revelation to humanity. Throughout history, God revealed himself in various ways—through creation, his prophets and his written Word. But the writer of Hebrews announces something unprecedented: God has spoken definitively through his Son. Jesus is described as "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being," a complete and perfect revelation of who God is ([Hebrews 1:3](#)). Jesus isn't just another prophet bringing God's message. He is God himself, stepping into human history to reveal himself fully.

Today, we still experience all three ways God reveals himself: through the wonder and order of creation, through the truth and wisdom of Scripture, and most completely through Jesus Christ. When we read Jesus's words, witness his miracles and observe his character in Scripture, we see God himself. This changes how we approach knowing God. We don't have to piece together fragments of truth or wade through competing voices. In Jesus, we have the clearest picture of who God is, what he is like and how much he loves us. Through these complementary forms of revelation, we can know God personally and understand his will for our lives.

TODAY: Take time to notice God's revelation. Observe his power in creation, study his truth in Scripture and look to Jesus to understand God's character. Consider reading [John 14](#) today. Ask God to show you more of himself through Jesus's words and actions. Learn more about revelation in the Bible section of our We Believe document [HERE](#).