

## THE FLESH vs Spiritual

**Fleshly focused** = worldly    **Spiritually focused**=Heavenly

**A major purpose of the Word of God is to get and keep us Spiritually focused** - 2 Peter 3:1 - Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.

**There is a continual battle we deal with all the time** -Matt 26:41 - "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

**Jesus shows there are just two ways to base things on, God's way and the wrong way** - John 8:14-18 - 14 Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. 15 You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. 16 But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. **I STAND WITH THE FATHER**, who sent me. 17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. 18 I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

**Our responsibility is to live Spiritually not fleshly** - Rom 8:12-13 - 12 Therefore, brothers, we have an OBLIGATION — but it is **NOT TO THE SINFUL NATURE**, to live according to it. 13 For **IF you live according to the sinful nature, YOU WILL DIE**; but **IF** by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, **YOU WILL LIVE**,

**The answer to life is simply two choices with two drastically different outcomes** - Gal 6:7-8 -7 **DO NOT BE DECEIVED: GOD CANNOT BE MOCKED**. A man reaps what he sows. 8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

**\*Sinful nature is "what I desire", The Spirit is "what God says"**.

### WHAT IS THE FLESH

**\* The flesh (sinful nature) is not only our body, but also our desires, senses and reactions based on our senses**

**There are different kinds of flesh. We should be living to have our flesh transformed** - 1 Cor 15:39-44 - 39 **All flesh is not the same**: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. 40 There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. 41 The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor. 42 **So will it be with the resurrection of the dead**. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

**If our flesh is not changed our destination is destruction** - 1 Cor 15:50-53 - 50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood CANNOT inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but **WE WILL ALL BE CHANGED**— 52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, **the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed**. 53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

**Human nature without God, also known as the sinful nature, is flesh and there is nothing good in it** - Rom 7:18-20 - 18 I know that **NOTHING GOOD LIVES IN ME**, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19 For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

**The flesh is fueled by our desires which plants seed for death** - Rom 7:5 For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.

**The way to tell if a person is Spiritual or fleshly just watch how they live** - Rom 8:5-8 - 5 Those who live ACCORDING TO the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who **LIVE IN ACCORDANCE** with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; 7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

**\*Our actions are the EVIDENCE of Spirituality NOT the path.**

**Fleshly living is clearly seen** - Gal 5:19-21 - 19 The **ACTS OF THE SINFUL NATURE ARE OBVIOUS**: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 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**.

- *Sexual immorality or FORNICATION* - [Any sex outside of a God approved marriage.]
- *impurity or UNCLEANNES* - [Living as a Christian mixed with other things or removing Godly things]
- *Debauchery or Lasciviousness* - [Overindulging].
- **IDOLATRY** - Anything you make "the purpose"]
- **WITCHCRAFT** - [any supernatural or controlled solution outside of God]
- **HATRED** - [Without love]
- *Discord or VARIANCE* [Not striving to get along with others]
- *Jealousy or EMULATIONS* [Emotionally reacts to: not being included, not getting the same treatment, not having the same relationship (Do not mistake for a Godly jealousy (2 Cor 11:2))]
- *Fits of rage or WRATH* - [out of control anger]
- *Selfish ambition or STRIFE* - [Causing conflict]
- *Dissensions or SEDITIONS* - [misleading with viewpoint over God]
- *Faction or HERESIES* - [Small groups NOT in agreement with God]
- **ENVY** - [Wanting something you don't have]
- **Drunkenness** - [intoxication]
- *Orgies or Reveling* - [Fully controlled by flesh while Not controlling self]

**Flesh will manifest itself in 1 or a combination of 4 ways**

**Emotionally** – desires, dislikes, reactions, triggers

**Intellectually** – knowledge, experiences, perception

**Culturally** – location, era, race, gender

**Ignorantly** – not checking, ignoring, selective listening, denial

## WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY

**\* Being COMPLETELY led by God**

**The process of being Spiritual is to stop living worldly and allow God to transform you**

Rom 12:2 **DO NOT** conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but **BE TRANSFORMED** by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Eph 4:17-19 -17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God BECAUSE OF the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

**The Spiritual LIVE by faith** - Gal 2:20-21-20 I have been crucified with Christ and I NO LONGER LIVE, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

**If you are a Christians, you ARE spiritual so you must BE spiritual** - Gal 5:25-Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

**The Spirit is fueled by God which frees us** - Rom 7:5-6 But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in **the new way of the Spirit**, and not in the old way of the written code.

**When the Holy Spirit is what empowers us to deal with all situation the right way** - 2 Cor 4:7-12 -7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this **ALL-SURPASSING POWER IS FROM GOD and NOT FROM US**. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but **not crushed**; perplexed, but **not in despair**; 9 persecuted, but **not abandoned**; struck down, but **not destroyed**. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, SO THAT the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, SO THAT his life may be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

- Heavily pressured BUT NOT Crushed
- Not always clear and at time confused BUT NOT lost
- Attacked for doing what I'm supposed to BUT NOT Left alone
- Killed BUT NOT Destroyed

**The Spiritual recognize the real battle and deal with it appropriately** - Eph 6:12-13-12 For **OUR STRUGGLE IS NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 **THEREFORE** put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

**Many today, like many before, are trying to access Spirituality through fleshly means** - Gal 3:1-5 - You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, **are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?** 4 Have you suffered so much for nothing — if it really was for nothing? 5 **Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?**

**Worldly ways of being Spiritual are worthless** - Col 2:20-23 - 20 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: 21 "**Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!**"? 22 These are **all destined to perish with use, BECAUSE THEY ARE BASED ON HUMAN COMMANDS AND TEACHINGS.** 23 Such regulations indeed have an **appearance of wisdom**, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they **lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.**

**Spirituality is unmistakably** - Gal 5:22-24 - 22 But the **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 **THOSE WHO BELONG TO CHRIST JESUS HAVE CRUCIFIED THE SINFUL NATURE** with its passions and desires.

- **Love** – The Spiritual driving force an attribute of all I do is based on God (1 Cor 13)
- **Joy** – Spiritual State of mind driven by godliness
- **Peace** – Spiritual presence of mind directly from Christ, despite the situation or relationship
- **Patience** – The Spiritual restraint and process of dealing with others and situations
- **Kindness** – The Spiritual treatment of others ONLY based on God
- **Goodness** – Always Spiritually available for God to be displayed through us
- **Faithfulness** – Spiritually responsible to and totally depending on God
- **Gentleness** – Spiritually dealing with everyone delicately
- **Self-control** – Spiritually being in control of self

#### **WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF BEING FLESHLY**

**One of the main things that keep us fleshly is strength in the flesh** - 2 Cor 12:7-10 - 7 To keep me **from becoming conceited** because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "**MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, for MY POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS.**" Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I **DELIGHT IN** weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

**When we stay fleshly it hinders our growth** - 1 Cor 3:1-3 - Brothers, **I COULD NOT ADDRESS YOU AS SPIRITUAL** but as worldly — **MERE INFANTS IN CHRIST.** 2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

**When our focus is fleshly, we become a danger to others** - Matt 16:21-23 - 21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! **You are a stumbling block to me;** you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

**When we live fleshly, we invite Satan in** - Eph 2:1-5 - As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit **WHO IS NOW AT WORK IN THOSE WHO ARE DISOBEDIENT.** 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved.

**To resist Satan, we must Live Spiritually being focused and controlled by the Spirit, while being firmly in God's Word** - 1 Peter 5:8-9 - 8 **BE** self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 **Resist him**, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

**When we resist Satan he leaves** - James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

## HOW DO WE BECOME AND GROW SPIRITUAL

**All Christians have full access to Spirituality and freedom from the flesh** - 2 Cor 5:17-19 - 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 **All this is from God**, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

**The key to avoid living fleshly is to live Spiritually** - Gal 5:16-18 - 16 So I say, **LIVE BY THE SPIRIT**, and **you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature**. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But **if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law**.

**We must Deny Self** - Matt 16:24-25 - 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, **HE MUST DENY HIMSELF** and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

**It's up to us to STAY in Christ Jesus avoiding condemnation** - Rom 8:1 - There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are IN CHRIST JESUS, \*WHO WALK not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. KJV

**It is God's Spirit that makes anything in us good** Rom 7:23-25 - 23 but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. 24 **WHAT A WRETCHED MAN I AM!** Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

**We have the CHOICE OF what we live for** - Rom 6:19-23 - 19 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**The Church should deal with extreme fleshly living with complete seriousness** - 1 Cor 5:1-5 - It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. 2 **AND YOU ARE PROUD!** Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? 3 Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. 4 When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, 5 hand this man over to Satan, SO THAT the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

**How we live and how we deal with others must be based on Grace not flesh** - 2 Cor 1:12 Now **this is our boast**: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, **IN THE HOLINESS AND SINCERITY THAT ARE FROM GOD**. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom but **ACCORDING TO GOD'S GRACE**.

**Since we have the ability & freedom we now must clean and grow** - 2 Cor 7:1 - Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness OUT OF reverence for God.

**The freedom means we have choice and we must make the right choice** - Gal 5:13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But **do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature**; rather, serve one another in love.

**The Spiritual do not deal with life the way the worldly does** - 2 Cor 10:2-6 - 2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. 3 For though we live in the world, WE DO NOT WAGE WAR AS THE WORLD DOES. 4 The weapons we fight with ARE NOT the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

**We must come together as a Christian body United in Christ** - Phil 2:2-4 - 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 **DO NOTHING** out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

**We must stay heavenly focused, not worldly, in order to live Spiritually** - Col 3:2-3 **Set your minds on things above,** not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

**We must learn and live the ways of Christ** - Eph 4:20-25-20 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. 21 Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 **TO BE** made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and **TO PUT ON** the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. 25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

#### **WHAT THINGS WORK AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL TO BECOME FLESHLY**

**There are many dangers out here and their focus will be fleshly not Godly** - Phil 3:18-20 - 18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, **many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.** 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their **mind is on earthly things.** 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

**False teachers cater & lure based on the flesh** - 2 Peter 2:17-18 -17 These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. 18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by APPEALING TO THE LUSTFUL DESIRES OF SINFUL HUMAN NATURE, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

**The world caters to the flesh** -1 John 2:15-17 -15 **Do not love the world or anything in the world.** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For **EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD** — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

**The main battle we have that works to keep us fleshly is against our desires** - 1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, **as aliens and strangers in the world,** to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

#### **WHILE SPIRITUAL WHAT MUST WE DO TO STAY SPIRITUAL**

**Truly live a saved life the two very important attributes** - Phil 2:12-13 - 12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your SALVATION with FEAR and TREMBLING, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

**Making the right choice must be a life decision** - Col 1:21-23-21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23 **IF YOU CONTINUE IN YOUR FAITH,** established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

**How we view things must be Spiritually NOT fleshly** - 2 Cor 5:16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.

**Like Jesus, we need to go through a struggle against the flesh and in the end we will live a Spiritual life** - 1 Peter 4:1-6 - Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. 2 **AS A RESULT,** he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. 3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do — living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4 They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. 5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

**Make sure you know the difference between good and bad examples and teachings** - Col 2:18-19 - 18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, VAINLY PUFFED UP BY HIS FLESHLY MIND, 19 and **NOT HOLDING FAST TO THE HEAD,** from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God. NKJV

**Be warned, we can live Spiritually and be protected by God or live fleshly and be punished by God...Choice is ours** - 2 Peter 2:4-10 - 4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9 **IF THIS IS SO,** then **THE LORD KNOWS HOW TO RESCUE GODLY MEN FROM TRIALS** and to **HOLD THE UNRIGHTEOUS FOR THE DAY OF JUDGMENT,** while continuing their punishment. 10 This is **ESPECIALLY TRUE** of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority

**Question: (The flesh vs Spiritual)**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which part of us is weak and which part is eager to serve God?
2. All Christians have a responsibility NOT to live for what?
3. What are the good parts of the flesh?
4. What is the best way to know if you or someone else is living by the Spirit or not?
5. Describe one of the ways the flesh manifests itself.
6. What two things must Christians do to be Transformed to a Spiritual way of living.
7. Using 2 Cor 4:8-9 to explain the Spiritual way of looking at things vs the fleshly way.
8. Why is it called "Fruit of the Spirit"?
9. True or false, the stronger I become the more effective I am when being used by God.

10. Why is being self-controlled and alert, the weapon we use against Satan?
11. What is the most effective way not to give in to the sinful nature?
12. Give an example of the “fleshly” way of dealing with a situation verses the “Spiritual” way.
13. What are the 3 components that makeup what the world caters to?
14. What exactly was the attitude that Jesus had that we should duplicate?
15. In the end, what will happen to those who are living for the sinful nature?