



## #1 Reasoning With Stupidity (Flesh)

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Have you ever tried to reason with stupidity? I have and have been on the stupid side of discussions more times than I want to admit. I have also been on the side of dealing with fruitless discussions, as a man representing righteousness. Neither are fun and both are wearing to the soul. There is an old adage, “Stupid is as stupid does.”

Knowing the Exchanged Life is *not* living it. Like most things, to know is not to be. We are exhorted in Romans 8:12 & 13, that as indwelt believers we have no obligations to “the flesh” – that tendency of self-serving to which we have so often offered ourselves to “do” what it says. Rather, Paul is telling us that life results when the “deeds of the body” are mortified (put to death). In Colossians it says:

“Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices” (Colossians 3:5, 8-9).

This mandate cannot be appropriated unless one understands experientially their identity in Christ. It is impossible to even understand this truth unless we are seated at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1).

What actually are these “deeds of the body” that Paul is talking about here? Let’s review the list both in English and by Greek definition:

- Immorality (sex before marriage, homosexuality, incest or any kind of sexual sins)
- Impurity (lustful thinking)
- Passion (rage, suffering or temper)
- Evil Desire (thoughts of Satan, harm or revenge)
- Greed (idolatrous worship of people, places, or things)
- Anger (violent passion)
- Wrath (passion demonstrated)
- Malice (hateful motives)
- Slander (character assassination)
- Abusive Speech (filthy communication)
- Lying (attempting to deceive)

In no uncertain terms, we are told to put these to death. Yet, without question, these are the very things we tend to work effortlessly to “crucify” or put to death in our own strength. The sobering reality is that God did not ask us to focus on the “put them to death” but rather, on “consider the members of our earthly body” to be dead to them. There is a monster-sized difference between the two.

When we try to curb, control, or eradicate any deed of the flesh – we are certain to end in a pile of ashes much like Job. The secret is really not so much of a secret, but it is to receive the life of Jesus Christ into our mortal bodies, in order for Him to remove these deeds by way of the overflow of His life. If you’re like me, it really sounds too good to be true. But *by faith* it is to be accepted and *by faith* it is what’s appropriated through the efforts of Christ’s Life (Holy Spirit) in me and through me.

The “old man” (Romans 6:6) loved and lived off of the deeds of the flesh. Before we became indwelt by the life of Christ, Satan fed them to us like jelly from a jar. The old man not only fed off these “goodies,” but grew into a monster of control and pleasure - just as Satan had planned. He knew their could come a day when this mortal being might ask Christ into his life, so to fast plant these deeds of the flesh became a top priority for him.

The old man, in God’s reality, is as truthfully and completely crucified with Christ as was Christ Jesus. What this helps us conclude is this: The old man has been crucified with Christ, buried with Him, and therefore, remains in the tomb. What did come out of that tomb were Christ and our *new man*. Then, we were resurrected and seated at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1-6). When did all this happen? - upon the moment of our Salvation, when Jesus indwelt our mortal bodies.

Due to this victorious position in Christ, sin should be as alien to our new nature as it is to that of the resurrected life of Christ Himself! What sin does appeal to is our “flesh” (trash the old man left behind – self-seeking desires), which is in every cell of our mortal bodies. This is why the body of sin must stay in the grave and thus, why God will be giving us a new glorified body in the future (Phil. 3:21). Here are the facts: We are no longer bound to this vicious cycle of pleasure seeking! To yield ourselves to sin is to walk after the memory of the old man and to experience a living death (Rom. 8:13a), but this is NOT inevitable. Since we are IN Christ and Christ is IN us, we can, through the power of the Spirit, consider ourselves dead to these deeds (Gal. 5:19-24).

I would like for you to ask yourself these questions:

1. What do you as an indwelt believer find overcoming and defeating you?
2. Have you been led to believe that because you fail, this is the continual and inevitable lot to which all believers are subject?
3. What does “mortifying (reckoning dead) the deeds of the body” mean to you?
4. What is your understanding of the Holy Spirit’s function bringing this about and what is your part in all this?
5. What has been your experience of continuous steady victory?
6. Is victorious living in Christ Jesus what you deeply long for?

These are real questions we ask those whom we disciple and counsel. These are questions that demand answers. If you are the type of Indwelt Believer who seeks deeper life and growth – you are going to love our new series: ***77 Identity Truths – For the Seven Areas of Life.***

In this yearlong series, I will be offering key Truths the Word has given us regarding our identity in Christ and how it practically applies to the seven (7) areas of life: physical, spiritual, psychosocial, social, financial, marital, and parental. If you are one of our regular readers, you may guess that we will follow the series with the publishing of a book – God willing. Until then...

**“So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Romans 8:12-13).**

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