

Identity Matters

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MY FLESH

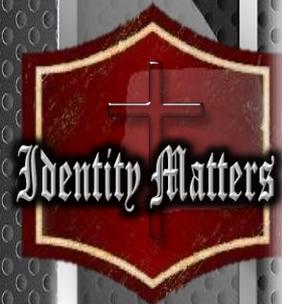
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Advancing Life Within

MY FLESH, GOD'S ENEMY

Flesh exhibits patterns, reactions, and/or sinful actions that reveal the believer's self-life - trash left behind by the old nature. These fleshly reactions lead the believer to Life (Christ) or death (flesh) decisions. If the believer continues to choose self-life decisions, we believe God will bring this person to the end of himself through consequences formed by their own flesh. This, without question, leads the person to repentance (Luke 9:23).



Purpose of This Teaching

Key Truth: My Flesh

Indwelt Christians walking after the flesh produces problems! When a believer chooses their own way over God's way, that person is walking after the flesh, leading to death. Satan lived out his self-life and became God's enemy, and thus, was removed from Heaven. The believer's flesh is a direct reflection of the life of our enemy.

Key Verse

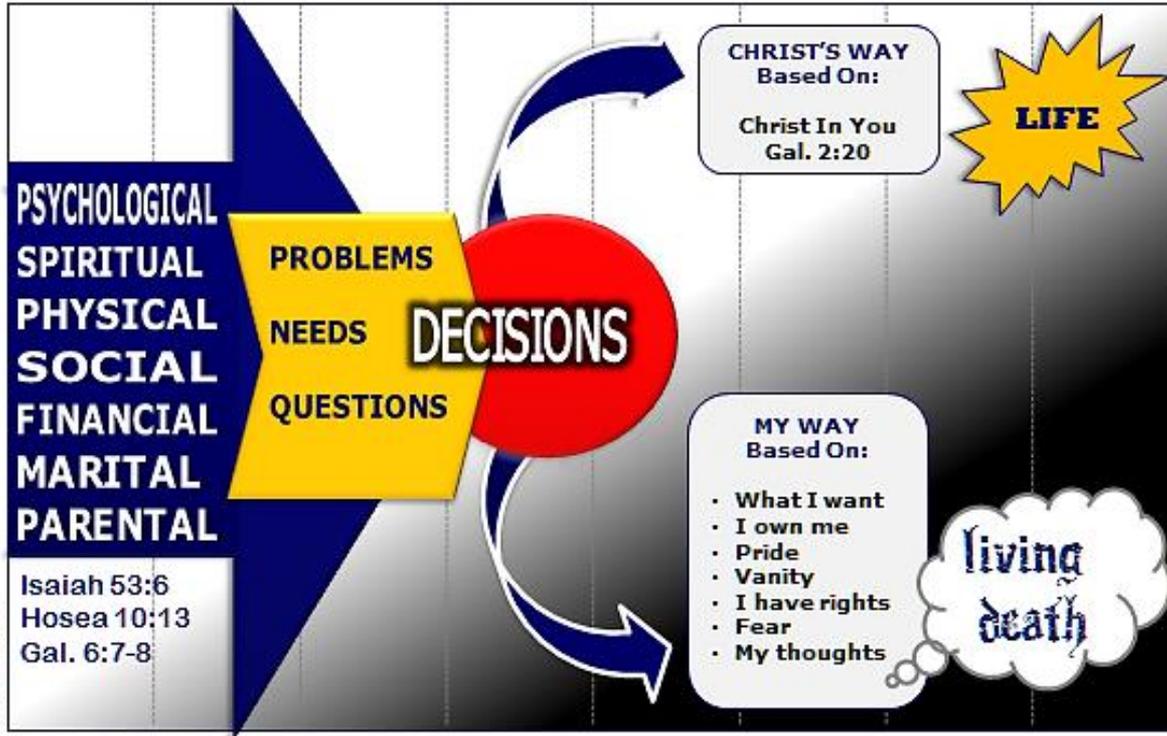
Romans 8:6-8 – *"For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."*

Goals in Discipleship

To reveal that when the indwelt believer is NOT making life (Christ's Life) decisions, but rather death decisions (self-life), he/she needs to be led to the Cross for confession and restoration.

Life & Death Decisions

Deut. 30:19-20



Christ not only has the ability to make Life decisions through the believer, but He will do it.

- **This diagram points out** that the seven areas of life will lead to problems, needs, and questions setting the believer up for a decision.
- **Decisions are made either** “my way” (according to the flesh) or “God’s way” (according to the Spirit).
- **Each decision is a matter of Life** in Christ or death, depending on how it is made (Duet. 30:19-20).
- **Many believers make decisions** without any thought of what God says. This is why they experience a “living death.”
- **Decisions made “my way”** are based on a will other than God’s. Jesus didn’t come to do His will, but only the will of His Father, which is done through the believer.

Discipler: Have the disciple read aloud each Scripture stated on this diagram.

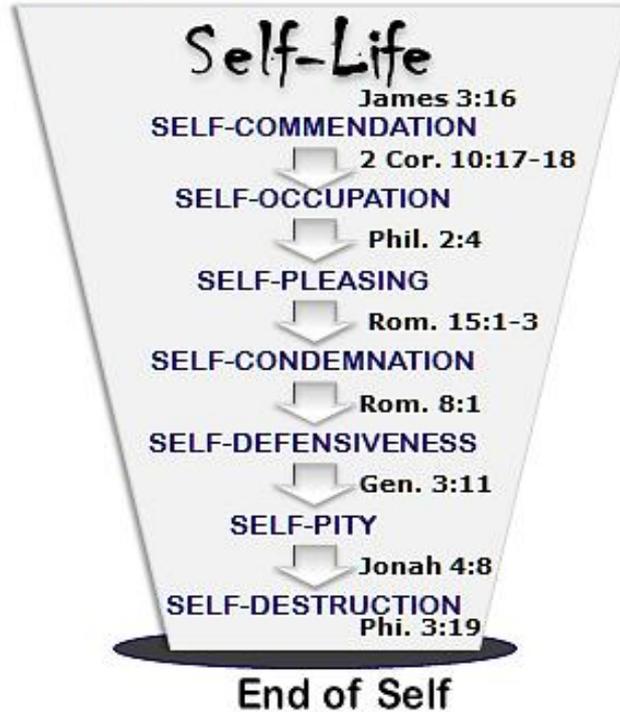


Downward Spiral



MF-102

Matthew 16:25a



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Christ is interested in bringing all indwelt believers to the end of themselves.

- **Focusing on oneself**, or the self-life, is a death spiral because it is a path away from God (Rom. 8:6).
- **This shows the natural conclusion** of making decisions of living death. A consistent choosing of "my way:" leads to a fleshly lifestyle.
- **James 3:16 reveals** to us how the downward spiral starts with a strong self-life.
- **Self demands** "self-life spoiling."
- **Self-commending** always leads to being occupied with SELF.
- **Self-occupation** leads to self-pleasing, then to self-condemnation and self-defensiveness, if confronted.
- **After confrontation**, self-pity settles in and finally, ends in self-destructive behavior.
- **All these are used** by God to allow the disciple to slip into the dark place of being at the end of himself.

Upward Spiral

Ministry To Others

John 15:16

OUTREACH

Matt. 28:19-20

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

Gal. 5:1

MATURE LOVE

1 John 4:11-12

EXPECTATIONS FROM GOD

Psalms 62:5

WORSHIP & PRAISE

Psalms 50:23

CROSS-BEARING

Matt. 16:24

DENY SELF

Luke 9:23

Christ As Life



End of Self-Life

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It is estimated that over 90% of ministry workers minister from their own mind, rather than the mind of Christ from within.

- **Understanding** exactly who's mind the believer functions from is crucial in daily living.
- **All Christ as Life** living starts with denying self from the believer's brokenness.
- **Bearing one's own cross** cannot be done until the self-life is rendered dead with Christ.
- **Appropriation** with the believer's co-death, burial, resurrection, and ascension results in pure and honest worship of God – no longer self.
- **When releasing the mind** of Christ from within occurs, the believer's expectations can and will be from God.
- **Mature love** is not a choice, but a result of abiding in the indwelling Life of Christ.
- **Spiritual freedom** comes with the fruit of the Spirit, when Christ as Life is rendered as life.
- **Ministry to others** is the pinnacle of realizing and appropriating the mind of Christ from within.



Identity Matters

DISCERNING THE FLESH

TEST YOUR MOTIVES: Proverbs 18:1

Are my decisions to benefit my FLESH?

- Am I doing it for my self-interest? (Phil. 2:3-4)
- Is it against God's Word? (Ps. 119:11)
- Is it contrary to those in authority? (Rom. 13:1; Heb. 13:17)
- Am I feeling frustrated, angry, or fearful? (Gal. 5:16-21)
- Is there a lack of contentment and of God's peace? (1 Tim. 6:6)

If so, the result is DEATH, LOSS, AND CORRUPTION!

Are my decisions through the Spirit from within?

- Am I doing it in and through Christ? (2 Cor. 5:15)
- Am I acknowledging God's sovereign control in everything and trusting Him to work things out through me? (Rom. 8:28)
- Am I confident that Christ is in control? (Gal. 5:1)
- Am I free from self-condemnation? (Rom. 8:28)

If so, the result is LIFE, PEACE, AND GRACE!

1

2

Few enjoy being tested. This diagram asks questions begging for an honest appraisal – flesh or Spirit.

- **Box #1 reveals** questions that test the believer's motive in determining fleshly decisions.
- **It is imperative the disciple understands** self-life decisions promote: self-interest, going against God's Word, rebellion against God's authority, development of fleshly feelings, and the revelation of a lack of commitment to the Life of Christ from within.
- **Box #2 reveals the evidence of a believer** walking in and after the Spirit.
- **Walking in the Spirit gives** the believer benefits of: Christ being released in them, submitting to the sovereignty of God, allowing Christ to do the self-control through them, trusting in Him, confidence in Christ (rather than self), and freedom from self-condemnation.
- **This kind of living produces** Life, Peace, and Grace in daily living and decision making.

Discipler: Make sure to have the disciple read each question, look up the Scriptures, and answers the questions.

BOTTOM LINE



My Flesh exhibits patterns, reactions, and/or sinful actions that reveal a believer's self-life - trash left behind by the old nature. These fleshly reactions lead the believer to Life (Christ) or death (flesh) decisions. If the believer continues to choose self-life decisions, we believe God will bring this person to the end of himself through consequences formed by their own flesh. This, without question, leads the person to repentance.

(Luke 9:23)

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NEXT UP



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REPENTANCE

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