

THE MASTERCRAFT:

“OVERCOMING THE FLESH”

SEPT 06, 2020

OVERCOMING THE FLESH

TEXTS

MATTHEW 26: 40-43

“⁴⁰ Then Jesus returned to His disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” He asked Peter. ⁴¹ “watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. the **Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.**”

JAMES 4: “⁷submit yourselves, then, to God. resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded... ¹⁰ humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

From these two scriptures, it is even clear that to overcome flesh, we must:

- ***be Watchful, Prayerful, Come near to God and Submit ourselves to God,***
- ***flee from sin, don’t be double-minded about and Humble ourselves before God.***

Revelation 3:21: Jesus said *“to him who overcomes I will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my father on His throne.”*

Brethren, the flesh always fights to bring us down and keep us down.
The Lord expects us to consciously overcome the flesh.

Flesh does not necessarily mean our physical body, but that part of us that is stiffnecked and stubborn, that resists Spiritual things, word of God and Spiritual mindset. It is that part of us that when we try to pray, fidgets and would have us pondering and wondering around and even make us sleep off.

In Matthew 26, Jesus said: ⁴¹ “watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

Galatians 5:25 says ²⁵ “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

PEOPLE WHO SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME THE FLESH WORK WITH GOD

1. In Gen 39:9, after Joseph challenged his flesh and said
“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”
Joseph became a Prime Minister in Egypt

2. Elijah challenged the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.
Elijah was empowered to stop rain in the land for 3 and ½ years

3. David, refused a free land because of God “But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.” 2 Samuel 24:24 **Dave became known as a man after God’s heart.**

4 Esther said “if I perish, I perish” – suppressing her flesh

She said “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.”

Esther 4:16

Esther defied the odds and was chosen as queen.

5. Paul on the other hand, shows it is dangerous not to overcome flesh.

If God wants to use you and He is concerned that you will not be able to overcome flesh in a particular area, He could step in with some painful decisions:

Paul said “to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, ... to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. ⁸ Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹ Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.”

It is important that we proactively overcome our flesh and avoid God stepping in Himself.

To Overcome the Flesh, we must:

1. Bring our thoughts under control

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” Prov 4:23

“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” Prov 23:7

“Be not conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2)

2. Meditate on the word of God all the time

- **Focus:** *“I will meditate on your word and fix my eyes on your ways”.* (Ps. 119:15)
- **Make effort to understand:** *“Make me understand the way of your word, and I will meditate on your wondrous works.”* (Ps. 119:27)
- **Remember:** *I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands.* (Ps. 143:5)
- **Open your mouth and praise/worship God:** “I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.” Psalm 34:1
- **Apply the word of God daily:** “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?”
Luke 6:46

3. Make no provision for the flesh

Romans 13:14 “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.”

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, ... being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:5-8

4. Resist the demands of the flesh

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”
James 4:7

5. Let the fruit of the Spirit become our nature

²² *“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires and live by the Spirit.” Galatians 5:22-25*

Brethren, each time we find ourselves pushing back the word of God or resisting to obey the word of God or even trying to submit to doing anything contrary to the word of God, it means we are operating in the flesh and we need to quickly caution ourselves and get our mind and thought out of the fire of flesh.

Bible tells us to “**save others by snatching them from the fire**” (Jude 1:23)

- People who dwell in the flesh are in fire that consumes and must be quickly snatched out.

- The devil manipulates our life through our flesh. In any part of life we are in flesh, the devil comes in through that loop hole. Reason the bible tells us to “Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies/schemes of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:11)

CONCLUSION

Romans 8:37 says ³⁷ No, in all these things (challenges of the flesh) we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

1 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

Bible describes us as overcomers. So,

- Let us PUSH BACK every thought that goes against the word of God.
- Let us resist everything that stops us from praying often and always.
- Let us meditate upon the word of God and enjoy reflecting on the word
- Let us take bold steps against the demands of the “weak flesh” and stop the devil from using us to execute his schemes/strategies

God Bless You!