## ***Systematic Theology 018: Hamartiology III, The Sinful Flesh***

## The flesh, or the old sin nature.

## The flesh is the source of lust, the inclination to sin, Romans 13:14 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

* 1. Ephesians 2:1-3 connects the will of Satan and the desires of the flesh, showing that the two are one in the same, 1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others..
  2. Hebrews 2:14–15, tells us that the power of Satan is in the fear of death, 14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

## The flesh and the Spirit are against each other, Galatians 5:17 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

* 1. The law of the flesh wages war against the law of the mind, the spiritual law which comes from the standards of God’s law.
     1. This here is much the same as what Peter has to say in 1 Peter 2:11, “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”
     2. The objective in warfare is the destruction of the forces of the enemy. If the law of the flesh wages war against the soul, the objective is the destruction of the soul.
     3. The destruction of the soul means the removal of its willpower, its ability to say ‘no’ to the flesh. This Paul describes by making the soul a prisoner of war to the flesh.
     4. This is brought about by a systematic method of temptation, failure, guilt, and temptation, as we have studied.
     5. This is the full blown development of sin in the soul and body of man, and not just the sin nature alone. It is a complex of sin in the soul.

## We cannot please God or do any real good from the flesh:

## Romans 7:18 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

## Romans 8:8 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

* 1. The sinful nature is constantly corrupting, and deceitful, Ephesians 4:22, "22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, (τὸν φθειρόμενον κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τῆς ἀπάτης)
  2. Romans 7:4-6 tells us that the ultimate destination of the flesh is death: 4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. 6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

1. The state of sin, or unrepentance:
   1. Repentance and unrepentance are states:
      1. The state of constantly crucifying Christ, Hebrews 6:4–6: "4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame."
      2. The state of thoughts fixed on the flesh, Romans 8:5–7: "5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 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,"
      3. The state of walking in darkness, apart from divine revelation, 1 John 1:5–7: "5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."
      4. The state of walking only by sight, i.e. the senses, 2 Corinthians 5:7, 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.
      5. The state of fleshliness:
         1. Galatians 5:16–21: "16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."
         2. 1 Corinthians 3:1–3: "1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"
   2. Recovery:
      1. Confession:
         1. 1 John 1:9: "9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
         2. Psalm 32:1–5: "1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! 2 How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! 3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah."
      2. Abiding in “repentance.”
         1. Psalm 32:6–11: "6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. 7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah. 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. 9 Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, Otherwise they will not come near to you. 10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the LORD, lovingkindness shall surround him. 11 Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart."
         2. John 15:4: "4 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me."
         3. 1 John 2:6: "6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."
         4. 1 John 2:24: "24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father."