

POD Teaching Session 3 Module B

Our Struggle with Getting Our Needs Met

Learning Objectives:

- Learn how we attempt to get our needs met apart from God.
- Understanding those forces that draw us away from God.
- Identify your brand of Flesh.



We all have inherent needs, both physical and psychological. These needs are legitimate and God implanted, and it is His intention to satisfy them and thus draw us to Himself.

Physical Needs: food, clothing, shelter, rest, and protection from danger

Psychological Needs (related to our personal worth):

- Love and acceptance
- Significance and Identity
- Competence and Fulfillment

But we are easily deceived into the world's thinking that our needs can be met in some place other than the hand of God.



2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of *devotion* to Christ. NASB95

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. NASB95

Thus people generally seek to validate their personal worth through appearance, status, and talent. Carried far enough, efforts to find love and acceptance lead to sensuality and immorality; efforts to find significance and identity lead to materialism and greed; and efforts to find competence and fulfillment lead to excessive competition and aggression, these in extreme cases can lead to perversion, theft, and violence. It is deceptive to turn to people, things, and circumstances to meet our needs because none of these can fully satisfy. Yet many believers fall into this trap.



Wilderness Christians :“Do you mean to tell me after forty years I still don’t know how to live the Christian life?” – and they will shoot off all hot round the collar, to make another accelerated circuit round the course, and try to make up in speed what they lack in direction! If you insist on going round in circles, you will always get back to where you started, and the faster you go the quicker you get there.”.

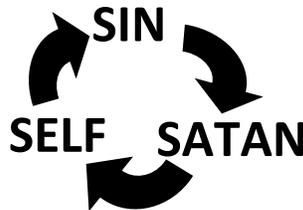
Major Ian Thomas

This is not to say that it is wrong to be concerned about our appearance, our possessions and or our accomplishments. But if our joy and peace depend upon how we [look](#), what we [own](#), or how well we [perform](#), we are not looking to the Creator but rather to the creation to meet our God-given needs. (Ken Boa)

Comments: _____

What is at work to draw us away from God meeting all our needs?

The Unholy Trinity



➤ **SATAN = His Worldly System, spiritual forces, evil:**

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the [rulers](#) , against the [powers \(exousia\)](#) of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of [evil](#) in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:8 NIV

So, our struggle is carried out on a [spiritual](#) plane.

Who or what are these forces? [fallen angels, demons, Satan, people under their influence](#)



2 Corinthians 10:4-5 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, NASB95

According to this verse what are we warring against? Fortresses/strongholds (KJV), speculations, lofty things raised up against the knowledge of God, i.e. personal walls and barriers manifesting in hardness of heart , -

What to think the battle is for? the mind/our thought life

John 8:43-44 “Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. “You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies .

Therefore, what is Satan’s world founded upon? Lies, not truth

How do you suppose Satan lies to us? _____

Refer to “The Believers Guide to Spiritual Warfare”
by Thomas E. White in the Resource Guide

- **SIN** = An unholy force or power within but is not a part of the Christian. Sins are the actions which violate the expressed character and will of God. (Rom3:23; 6:14-23; 7:7-25)



Note: “SIN” in this section of scripture is a noun not a verb! (Sin occurs 41 times in Romans 5 thru 8 yet only once as a verb) Vine states that SIN is, “a governing principle of power” that is “personified” in the following passages, he then list sixteen verses in which this holds true. Personifies means represented as a person!
Vines

What is the significance of sin being a noun? It is talking about a persona. It is not talking about behavior (the act of sinning) but the cause of the act (a persona)!



Romans 7:20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but **SIN** which dwells in me. NASB95

Who or what is causing Paul to sin/the action? the personification of SIN

You could call sin, Mr. Sin (personified): “What liberty there is in knowing that the rebellious, evil, and hateful thoughts I experience are being presented to my mind, not generated by it.”
..... Bill Gillham. Note: We will cover more of this in Session 4 “Mind Renewal/Solomon’s Temple”.

Romans 7:21 So, I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. *NIV*

Romans 7:21 It happens so regularly that it’s predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. *The Message*

Romans 7:21 So I find it to be a law (rule of action of my being) that when I want to do what is right *and* good, evil is ever present with me *and* I am subject to its insistent demands. *AMP*

Watch the demonstration of this principal:

The Law of Sin or Power of Sin:



Romans 7:22-23 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, vs. 23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the **law of sin** which is in my members. *NASB95*

What is the war being waged against? my mind and the law of God

Where is “sin” located? in my members/body and NOT in my spirit but can strongly influence my soul. So there is a struggle. His mind wars against his body, which has been hijacked by sin.

Paul said he saw another law or principle at work within him. This is the principle of sin. Paul called it “sin living in me” (Rom. 7:17, 20), “evil” right there with me (v. 21), and “flesh*” (vv. 5, 18, 25).

This principle is continually doing two things: waging war against the law of the believer’s mind and making him a prisoner of the law of sin at work within his members. The indwelling principle of sin is constantly mounting a military campaign against the new nature/identity, trying to gain victory and control (cf. “slave” in vv. 14, 25 and “slaves” in 6:17, 19-20), of a believer and his actions. The new nature is called “the law” of the “mind” (*noos*; cf. 7:25) because it has the capacity for perceiving and making moral judgments. Further, despite a believer’s identification with Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection and his efforts to have Christ-honoring attitudes and actions, he cannot in his own power (flesh) resist his indwelling flesh*. In and of himself he repeatedly experiences defeat and frustration.

Source: The Bible Knowledge Commentary.



* Note: Some versions (NIV) use the term “sinful nature” instead of flesh in Rom 7:5,18,25. (Flesh = sarx (G4561)) = the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God. The term is an unfortunate translation because it can lead to a confused view of who we are “in Christ” and our new identity in Christ.

Discuss the implications of the above statement about the flesh: [If we call out flesh the sin nature it can deceive us into believing/thinking that is who we really are, which is a lie and a false identity. We have a new identity, a new nature. We are a new creation a new person!](#)

Power of Sin = an indwelling power or source that is in me but not me and that tempts me.



1Cor 15:56 “the sting of death is sin*, and the **power of sin*** is the law,.....” * here sin is a noun.

The power of sin is NOT our flesh. SIN indwells your body (Rom. 7:23) an agent of the devil which works through the flesh (old ways) to try to control the soul (personality). The law is the source of Mr. Sin's strength. To couple law with Mr. Sin is like pouring gas on a fire. This personage called sin needs a law to aid it if it is to optimally control you. It "eats, breathes and sleeps" via the Law.



Be sure to read the article [The “Power of Sin” Is Not the Sin Nature by Bill Gillham](#)

Beware of the law or legalism!

Legalism = focusing on the law rather than the law giver, Satan loves this. Much like the Pharisees (and all other religions) who looked good on the outside but were dead on the inside (white washed tombs) performing in order to be accepted and recognized by man. This could be labeled, PBA , performance based acceptance.

➤ **SELF = The Flesh:**

The flesh (self-life) is the condition(mind-set, attitude, strategy of living) where my focus is primarily on myself (even if it is “good looking” self, well-adjusted self, or socially acceptable self) where I am living out of my own resources (such as heritage, education, IQ, sense of humor, looks, talents, abilities, etc.) in order to:

- 1) Cope and deal with life.
- 2) Solve my problems.
- 3) Meet my needs: my need for security (love), significance (meaning and impact), hope (forgiveness).
- 4) Become a success.

During our early formative years we learned how to cope, succeed, or just plain survive independently of God. Psychologists call these strategies defense or coping mechanisms. Some of the more common defense mechanisms are: lying, denial, projection, blame shifting, fantasy, emotional insulation/ isolation, regression, escapism and rationalization. If they are repeated for several weeks, it will become a habit and ultimately become an established part of our temperament. They become like ruts in a road, the car almost steers itself and any attempt to get out of the rut is met with great resistance.



Coping or defense mechanisms are how we have developed ways and habits of getting our needs met apart from God. Some Christian groups call them flesh patterns. They represent an attempt to resurrect the old nature/Adamic spirit. They are similar in concept with what the Bible calls strongholds or fortresses, which Paul talks about “tearing down” in 2 Cor. 10:3-5. Strongholds are mental beliefs often rooted in a lie. These beliefs are reinforced through our experiences (good or bad). Strongholds distort our view of God and others.



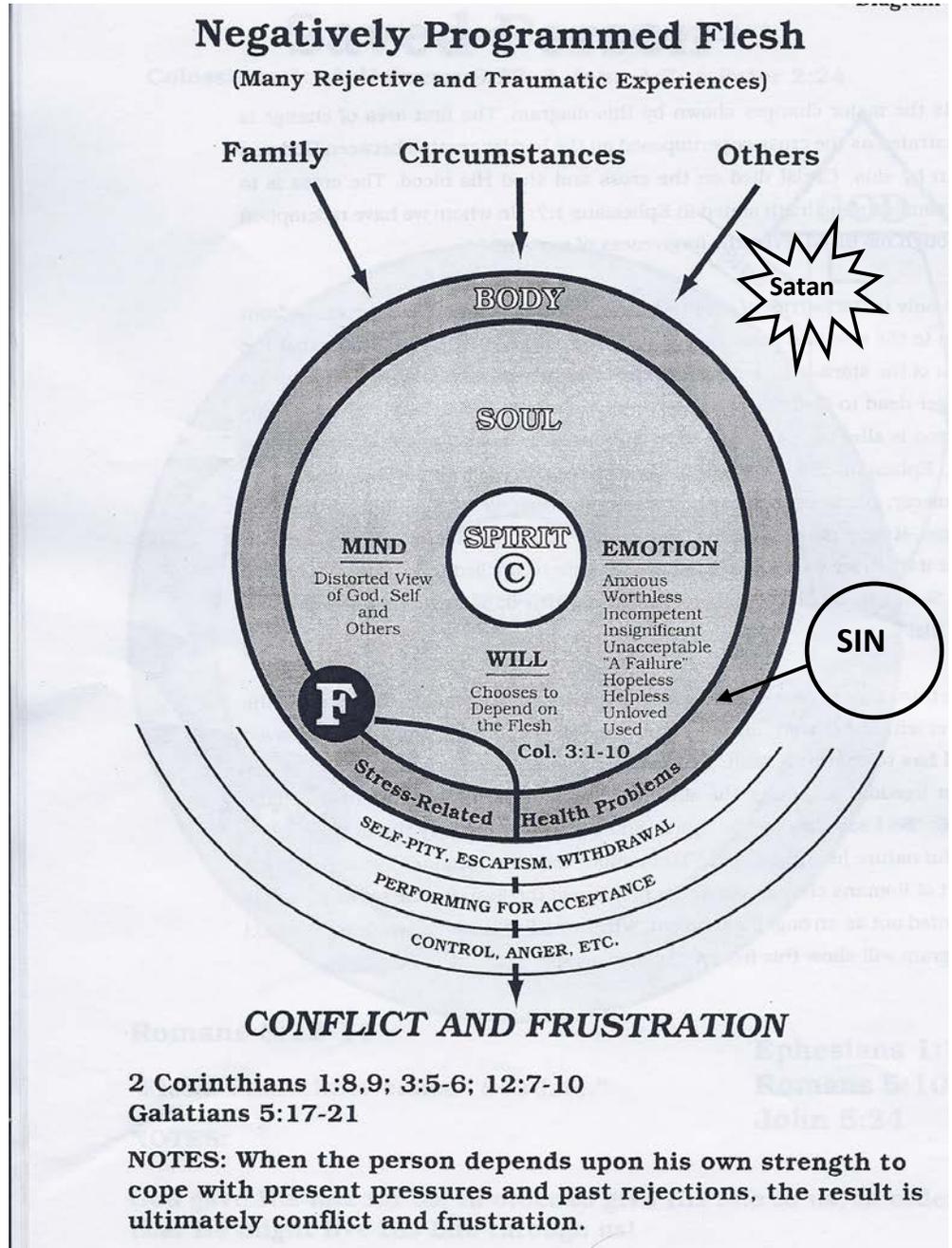
Over the next few weeks take time to do a “this is your life” with the Lord. Ask Him to begin to reveal to you those coping/ defense mechanisms that you have learned from infancy and their source: _____

There are various varieties of the flesh: They demonstrate the problem Christians face living after the flesh as contrasted with God's will for us to live or walk in the Spirit.

Negatively Programmed Flesh (“ Yucky ” Flesh):

When the major experiences and people in an individual's life have been primarily negative, the individual learns from them negative ways to deal with life. When the experiences are predominantly negative, it distorts the persons (mind's) view of God, self and life. The result of a distorted view of life is a distorted emotional response. Because of distorted thinking and negative feelings the choice is made to resort to the flesh as the best way to deal with life.

Simply put: Whatever you believe in your mind (regardless if it true or false) that belief creates an emotion which is followed by your actions.



For instance, an inferiority complex is a stronghold or flesh pattern based on a lie. We weren't born inferior to one another, but many began to believe that way because of the world system in which they were raised. Somebody always did better on their exams, ran faster, look prettier, played better, had more money, a better job, a bigger house, more education, etc, etc., ad nauseam.

Most adult children of alcoholics have developed mental strongholds or defense mechanisms in order to survive. Suppose a father of three boys is an alcoholic. All three boys choose to respond to their father in different ways. The older boy stands up to his father and physically defends himself if he has to. The middle son chooses to accommodate his father, and the younger one runs and hides whenever his father comes home drunk. Thirty years later, their father is long gone and the three boys are now adult men. When confronted with a hostile situation, how would they respond? Chances are the older one will fight, the middle son would accommodate, and the younger son would run and hid. These are their flesh patterns. The world has recognized that most people do not have a healthy sense of who they are, and most struggle with a poor sense or worth. Some people respond by trying to be prettier, stronger, wealthier, and more popular than anyone else. They are going to beat this fallen world system. Other people employ more humane approaches and try to build up the self-esteem of those who are beaten down by the system. Stroking one another's egos and picking ourselves up by our own bootstraps won't work, however. Others rebel against the system and become part of the counterculture. In the end, everyone loses in the kingdom of self-sufficiency.

taken from FICM International.org

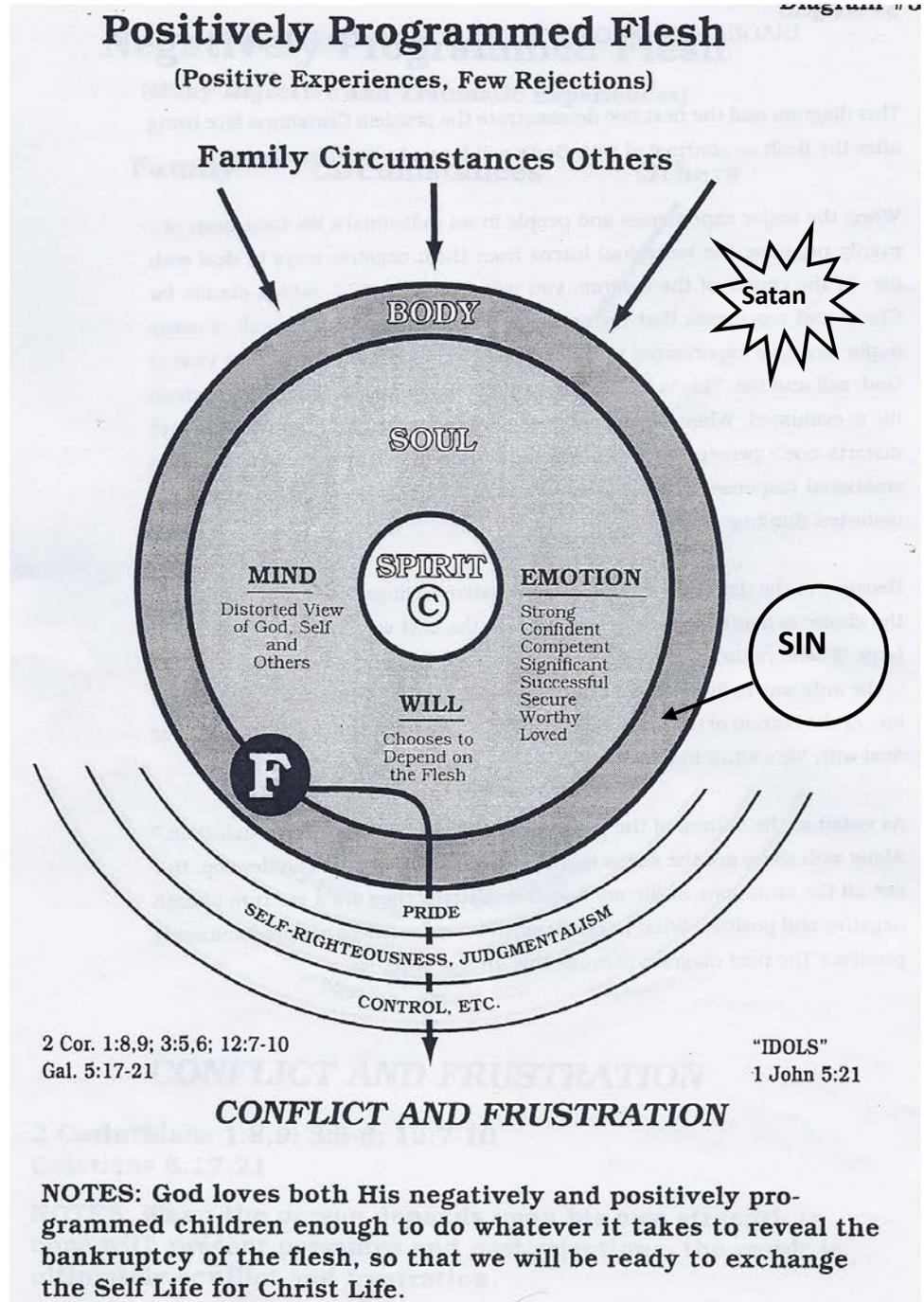


There is a wonderful recourse in the resource guide entitled "Flesh Inventory". It is an extremely important exercise to complete. Please allow time over the next few weeks to complete our own "flesh inventory". Ask your spouse or a close friend to help you in this assessment (without being defensive/ just listen!) and thank them for their observations. As you identify and become more aware of these patterns or ruts in your life you have a choice. Choose to call upon the good Lord. He will by His grace help you escape from their trap. We will be using this inventory in Session four.

Positively Programmed Flesh (“USDA” Flesh)

Not all situations in life is negative. Usually there is a mixture of both positive and negative. The result of many positive influences leads to the mind being distorted so that the view of God, self and life is not in accordance with the truth of God. The emotions would look good to most people, except for the fact that they are based on a strong self-centered concept.

The large “F” leads to all kinds of actions such as pride, self-righteousness, judgmentalism and control. This way of fleshly living is often not easily recognized. It ultimately leads to a life of conflict and frustration.



BEWARE!

Satan is well aware of the Flesh. He knows our “Hot Buttons”. He will tempt us to choose to live by our old flesh patterns instead of the New Life we have in Christ.

Do we have to live this way the rest of our lives? Can these mental strongholds be torn down in Christ? Can our temperaments be transformed by the renewing of our minds? If we have been trained wrongly, can we be retrained? If we have been taught wrongly can we be taught the truth that will set us free? If we have believed a lie, can we renounce that lie and choose the truth? The answer is an emphatic **YES !**, and that is the purpose for discipleship. It is the primary purpose of the POD ministry which is focused on our relationship with God and His word resulting in spiritual transformation. The answer to these questions will be addressed in detail in module C of this session and during the next teaching training session 4, “Mind Renewal (Solomon’s Temple)”.

Satan is well aware of the Flesh. He knows our “Hot Buttons”. He will tempt us to choose to live by our old flesh patterns instead of the New Life we have in Christ.

REMEMBER: 1 Cor. 8:1 “Knowledge puffs up but love builds up”. Studying the Bible is important, but the goal is never knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Being a disciple of Jesus Christ means that we learn from Him, fellowship with Him, and obey everything He commands us. Love is the goal thru obedient holy living.

APPLICATION NEXT STEPS: As you review this session in your own personal quiet time, with your POD mates and others, ask yourself; What is God saying to me? and How am I going to respond? Begin now to look for opportunities to start sharing what you have learned with others. That is disciple making. Take advantage of the transformative power of prayer, journaling, writing out personal application/next steps, and memorizing key scriptures. Also, be sure to read the articles and one or more of the books mentioned in the resource guide at the end of each of the seven sessions.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS AND MY PERSONAL APPLICATION/NEXT STEPS:

Scripture I will commit to memorize from this session:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.