



The Invisible Threat – (Sat.) April 18, 2020
The Enemy Within (Sin) [#4 - 4. Irreconcilable Differences]
Romans 8:7–8; Romans 13:14

What Does Jesus Smell Like to You?

2 Corinthians 2:14–16

¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads *the fragrance of the knowledge of him* everywhere. ¹⁵ For *we are the aroma of Christ to God* among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

The Flesh Hates God

Notes:

I. Captain Ahab's Hatred (Romans 8:7-8)

Towards thee I roll, thou all-destroying but
unconquering whale; to the last I grapple with thee;
from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake
I spit my last breath at thee. —Herman Melville

Romans 8:5

⁵ For those who **live according to the flesh** set their minds on¹ the things of the flesh (Gal. 5:19–21), but those who **live according to the Spirit** set their minds on the things of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–24).

A. The Flesh Takes...

Galatians 5:19–21 (“things of the flesh,” “like these”)
“sexual immorality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, envy”

B. The Spirit Gives...

Galatians 5:22–24 (“the fruit of the Spirit”)
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³
gentleness, self-control...

Romans 8:6-8

⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

¹ “to keep on giving serious consideration to something—‘to ponder, to let one’s mind dwell on, to keep thinking about, to fix one’s attention on.’” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 351). New York: United Bible Societies.

⁷ For the *mind that is set on*² the *flesh* is hostile³ to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.⁸ Those who are *in the flesh* cannot please God.

"The flesh hates everything about God."ⁱ

II. Hidden Hatred (Romans 8:7-8)

Luke 16:15

¹⁵ And he said to them, "You are those who *justify yourselves before men*, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men **is an abomination in the sight of God**.

2 Timothy 4:10 (Cf. Philemon 24; Col. 4:14)

¹⁰ For Demas, *in love with this present world*, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.



James 4:4

⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

"Since it [the flesh] resists everything about God, it resists every way we try to taste him and know him and love him. ... It takes its battle to every quarter of the soul: When the mind wants to know God, the flesh imposes ignorance, darkness, error, and trivial thoughts. The will can't move toward God without feeling the weight of stubbornness holding it back. And the affections, longing to long for God, are constantly fighting the infection of sensuality or the disease of indifference."ⁱ

The Spirit Gives Us Life

I. Help For Our Heart

Romans 8:9-11

⁹ You, however, are *not in the flesh* but *in the Spirit*, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. *Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him*.¹⁰ But **if Christ is in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, **he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies** through his Spirit who dwells in you.



² "the psychological faculty of thoughtful planning, often with the implication of being wise and provident—'thoughtful planning, way of thinking, outlook.'" Ibid. (p. 324). New York: United Bible Societies.

³ "a state of enmity with someone—'enmity, being an enemy of.'" Ibid. (p. 492).

Treat the Flesh Like the Corona Virus

Sin is poison and
“every drop of poison is poison.”ⁱ

I. The Spirit Battles the Flesh to Kill it

Romans 8:12-13

¹² So then, brothers, *we are debtors*, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if *by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body*, you will live.

“Captain Ahab was driven by his rage to chase the whale to the end. The flesh is just as driven, and will with its last breath spit at God. But there is in us a Warrior just as committed to the flesh’s destruction. The Spirit wars against the flesh (Galatians 5:17).”

Galatians 5:24b

...And those who belong to Christ Jesus have *crucified the flesh* with its passions and desires.

II. Give No Quarter to Sin “Sin won’t quench the flesh, only stoke it.”ⁱ

Romans 13:10–14

¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹ Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to *wake from sleep*. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is far gone; *the day is at hand*. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

[HCSB] ¹⁴ ...and *make no plans to satisfy the fleshly desires*.

III. Does Your Sin or Jesus Smell Like Death?

A. Illustration: TGC – FEB. 29, 2020 by ALISA CHILDERS
[Let’s Deconstruct a Deconversion Story: The Case of Rhett and Link](#)
“Rhett said, “If I don’t *have* to believe [Christianity], then why would I?” Link expressed, “Why was I working so hard to make Christianity work for me if it wasn’t even true?” Aside from encountering intellectual stumbling blocks, it seems that, to YouTube’s favorite pair, the gospel had begun to stink. It would appear that despite how

destabilizing and difficult their deconstruction processes were, **they no longer *wanted* Christianity to be true.**" (Italics theirs, bold mine)

B. Learn to Hate Our Hidden Sin (Three Trees)

1. Self-Righteousness
2. Missing Fruit

[TURN OF RECORDING]

Questions for Reflection and Discussion ⁱ

(I modified the questions to match my weekend sermon)

1. Can you explain, using concepts from this chapter, why Israel so easily turned from the true worship of God to bowing down to idols, and even sacrificing their children to Moloch?

Does this also help explain why modern false religions and cults often seem to prosper and grow more easily than the one true religion?

2. What do you think about someone who says he doesn't find this hatred seething somewhere inside him?
3. How does this teaching make you feel toward your flesh?
4. What are some ways you have tried to make peace with your flesh, or appease it? Think specifically about the sins of self-justification and spiritual indifference.

Describe the results. What happens when a person tries to get relief from the flesh by gratifying it (for example, trying to make lust go away by giving in to illicit sexual desires)?

5. Spend time thinking about what you will be like when your flesh is finally disintegrated. How will you be freer to love God? Try to imagine your love specifically as your love at last liberated.

ⁱ **Lundgaard, Kris.** The Enemy Within: Straight Talk About the Power and Defeat of Sin. P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition.