

The Characteristics of Sin

Facts on "Flesh" / "Sin Nature"



What do you want in your life?

Galatians 5:19-21 "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." ESV

OR

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..." ESV

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned...

Matthew 1:21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Fact 1:

The flesh is weak: experiencing some incapacity or limitation, weak.

Romans 6:19 I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing

wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

NKJ Romans 6:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of

uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.

NKJ Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Fact 2:

The flesh gives us passions that are sinful and pleasurable; that cause us to bite and devour one another when we should love one another. The passions cause us to do what God says not to do and not do what God says to do.

Romans 7:5 For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, {5 Or the flesh; also in verse 25} the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.

NKJ Romans 7:5 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.

Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

NKJ Hebrews 11:25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

Galatians 5:13-15 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; {13 Or the flesh; also in verses 16, 17, 19 and 24} rather, serve one another in love. 14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." {14 Lev. 19:18} 15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

NKJ Galatians 5:13-15 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

Fact 3:

Nothing good dwells in the flesh. Although we desire to do right we often don't do the right we desire to do, but we do the wrong thing.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

NKJ Romans 7:18 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.

Fact 4:

The flesh produces misery, deep distress, dissatisfaction, unhappiness and causes a wretched person to want to be rescued.

Romans 7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body (somatos) of death?

NKJ Romans 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body (somatos) of death?

Fact 5:

The flesh enslaves non-believers to sin and deceived believers allow themselves to be enslaved to sin. The Christian is not a slave to sin, unless he/she submits as a slave to sin.

Romans 7:25 Thanks be to God-- through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

NKJ Romans 7:25 I thank God -- through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Hebrews 3:13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

NKJ Hebrews 3:13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Romans 6:18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

NKJ Romans 6:18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Fact 6:

Futile thinking, darkened understanding, hardened heart, and callousness toward sin are characteristics of the flesh that the Christian is to no longer walk in.

Ephesians 2:1-3 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature {3 Or our flesh} and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

NKJ Ephesians 2:1-3 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.

Ephesians 4:17-19 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

NKJ Ephesians 4:17-19 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Fact 7:

The flesh wars against the soul seeking to get us to do what the Lord commands us not to do or not do what the Lord says to do.

1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

NKJ 1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

Fact 8:

The flesh causes us to think sinfully, according to the ways of the world. (Romans 12:2a)

Romans 8:5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

NKJ Romans 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Fact 9:

The thinking of the mind of the flesh leads to death.

Romans 8:6 The mind of sinful man {6 Or mind set on the flesh} is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

NKJ Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Fact 10:

The flesh won't and can't submit to God and cannot please God.

Romans 8:7-8 The sinful mind {7 Or the mind set on the flesh} is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

NKJ Romans 8:7-8 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Fact 11:

People without Christ are in the flesh and people in Christ can choose to live according to the flesh.

Romans 8:9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

NKJ Romans 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

1 Corinthians 3:1 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly-- mere infants in Christ.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.

Fact 12:

People without Christ are obligated to live according to the flesh (sinful nature), and Christians are not obligated to obey the flesh, but can. People who obey the sin nature will die.

Romans 8:12-13 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation-- but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. 13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,

NKJ Romans 8:12-13 Therefore, brethren, 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.

Lists of Sins of the Flesh:

Practical Exercise: Read through each passage below and list each sin as you find it. Spend time confronting your own sin and prayerfully asking the Holy Spirit to shed light where darkness remains (1 John 1:5-10).

Romans 1:24-32

Galatians 5:19-21

Ephesians 4:25-31

Colossians 3:5-9

1 Peter 2:1
