

What is 'The Flesh'

The Kingdom is about reality, so we need to get real and speak in real terms when we communicate with 'rational' (reasoning) people. One term we need to change is 'the flesh'. This is an archaic term that the church system uses, so it needs to be translated into simple, modern-day terms.

Let's do it.

There is an old-fashion expression, "wanton destruction", which is a good starting point to understand what 'the flesh' means. This is destruction caused by a person (not an animal) who does it maliciously and with unnecessarily cruelty. It is done in an unrestrained manner. The expression is derived from the word 'wanton' which means 'without care'¹. It outworks as 'dissolute', 'licentious', 'immoral', 'without motive, provocation, or justification'.² It's the type of thing a drunk person would do in their anger, or a person 'blinded' by rage'. It's also indicative in modern times of the destruction and mayhem caused by a person using the drug called "ice".

Wanton is the term that fits well with 'the flesh' as both are about being unrestrained.

'The flesh' is easy to see in little children because they can't restrain themselves – they don't have self-control. It appears as self-centredness and manifests as 'hissy fits', 'paddies', hysterical screaming performances, manipulation, bullying, grabbing, not sharing, punching, biting, hating, disobedience, sullenness, hurting animals, etc. These are recognised by adults as anti-social behaviours and undesirable, especially from a Christian perspective. To eliminate these in children takes years of discipline, correction and, yes, corporal punishment, to override them.

Is it any wonder why our society is in such a mess these days, now that undisciplined children are our young adults. Removing corporal punishment from the home and school under the guise of preventing abuse and protecting the emotional development of children has had its devastating downside on our nation. One could say, "That was the purpose all along, the destruction of Western society".

The term 'flesh' used in 1st century Greek comes from *sarx* (σάρξ), meaning 'the body' and 'flesh of a person or an animal'. It's use in the NT refers mainly to carnality – i.e. 'the sensuous nature of man', 'the animal nature with cravings which incite us to sin'.³

The best example of this, in the extreme, is what occurred in Sodom in respect of deviant sexual activity.⁴

The term we should use, rather than 'flesh', is '**base nature**'. 'Base nature' is what a person would do without any form of personal restraint. It allows the enemy to manipulate their mind and desires so they do whatever they want to do (i.e. 'wanton') without any control of themselves.

BASE = the bottom, lowest level

Our base nature comes from the fact that our body, mind and soul weren't regenerated when we were spiritually reborn. Our spirit was regenerated, but nothing else. We have to work on the remainder of our person, with Holy Spirit's assistance, to renew it. Unfortunately, if we stop working on keeping all non-spirit areas of ourselves in a renewed state, it will quickly degenerate back to where it was, or where it could lower itself to. This is why we need to be vigilant and keep watch over ourselves.

Debauchery is another word that aligns with the meaning of 'the flesh'(our 'base nature') because of The Fall. Debauchery may feel good to the person involved in it, and they may feel that they are being loving

1 – dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/wanton

2 – Google dictionary search

3 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G4561/sarx.htm

4 – Genesis 19:1-10

in what they are doing, however, debauchery is still debauchery.

A person's base nature can manifest in a range of ways, like this.

No base activity  **Full blown base activity**

We all have our base nature manifest in some way, every day. We can't get away from it because we aren't perfect.

The signs of our base nature coming through are:

- Areas of our lives where we are undisciplined (where we don't have full control)
- Areas of our lives which aren't under the control of our spirit and Holy Spirit
- Any non-essential activity that could be classified as self-gratification

So, does that change of terminology for 'flesh' make sense?

We can now talk to 21st century people using 'base nature' and they'll have more of an idea about what we mean. That's because the term is being used by commentators of the chaotic, destructive, "evil" behaviour that's being exhibited by ordinary people all around the world in our day.

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)