

The Refuge
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Villains
8 January 2007

Fighting the Flesh - Leader
Romans 7:15-20

Our Enemy

Read Romans 7:15-20

1. What is the flesh?
 - The Flesh is something that lives inside of you.
 - The Flesh is basically your sin nature.
 - It is what enjoys doing wrong.
 - It is instinct.
 - It lives in us and war against us.

2. Have you ever felt like Paul? Have you ever felt this civil war in your soul?
 - Let the kids share. This should be interesting.
 - I totally feel this all the time. Whether my body is lazy and wants to go to bed instead of read my nightly Psalm. My flesh is always warring against my heart and will.
 - Let the kids share experiences. Guide them. Listen. Have ready your own story to tell.

The Defense

3. Read Romans 8:13. What does it mean to mortify the flesh?
 - To mortify means to deaden; to subdue.
 - To mortify the flesh means to beat it up.
 - How do you beat up your own sinful nature?

4. Read Romans 13:14. What does it mean to “make no provision for the flesh?”
 - Let the kids reach for this one.
 - Hopefully, they can put words to this reality. Here are some word pictures if they falter.
 - Making provision for the flesh is like a fat guy going to a buffet.
 - Making provision for the flesh is like a shoplifter in an open air market.
 - Making provision for the flesh is like a gossip queen writing a weekly blog.
 - Basically, making provision for the flesh is giving your sinful nature a playground to grow in.
 - So, what does it mean to “make no provision for the flesh?” It means to not let it go places where it can grow and play!

5. Read I Corinthians 9:27. What does Paul mean when he says, “I buffet my body?”

- Paul is simply saying he beats up his flesh. Again, we have this idea of mortification.
 - How do you beat up your sinful nature? How did Paul beat up his sinful nature. How did he tell his body that it would not rule over him?
6. So, how can a believer defend himself against the flesh?
- There are two ways to fight the flesh.
 - First, starve it. Don't give it food. Don't give it what it wants. Make no provision for it.
 - Secondly, beat it up. Deny it even things it is allowed to have. Wage war against it. Make it do what you say.

Your Gameplan

7. Fasting is how Jesus used to fight the flesh. What is fasting?
- Fasting wages war on the flesh. It sows to the Spirit instead of sowing to the flesh.
 - Fasting is going without food from sunrise to sunset.
 - Water is needed when fasting.
 - Some guys in the Bible did partial fasts, where they went without only certain dietary items (see Daniel).
8. How does fasting fight the flesh?
- In America, the belly is one of the strongest parts of the flesh. It wants to eat, so we feed it. We feed it when we are not hungry. We feed it till we are full and can barely move. We feed it grossness like White Castle.
 - Food is not wrong. What we are doing is telling our body that it is not our ruler, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
 - So, during meal time, there is a time a prayer or Bible Study or song.
 - This fights the flesh because it doesn't give the flesh what it wants. It denies it something. Then you will see it stand up and pout! When you deny the flesh, it gets ticked! It will rumble, hurt, and cry. It will make you feel weak (though you are not). It will fight you.
9. If you wanted to fast, where would you begin?
- Some of you maybe need to fast to something else. But if you are gong to fast with food, here are some helpful hints.
 - First, if you have parents who are believers, you need to ask them if you are allowed to fast. They are your parents. They know if you have low blood sugar or eating disorders. So get permission from mom and dad.
 - Start with a baby fast. This means you get up in the morning, eat breakfast, and then eat lunch. But you skip dinner and breakfast the next day. You will eat again at lunch, and you have successfully fasted!

- Once you have done the baby fast a few times (you generally don't want to fast more than once a month) you can ask Ernesto and he will show you where you can go next.