

# The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 37, MAY 2001

*"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5*

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Dear Life-study Listener,

We mentioned before in the *Hearing of Faith* that we would begin conducting seminars in areas where we receive a fair listener response. This year, we have conducted seminars in northern California and in London, England. These times have been joyous as we met some of you face to face and heard your testimonies. At each seminar, Chris Wilde, our radio program host, joins a life-study guest speaker to record an actual radio session.

We have scheduled three seminars for the immediate future: Washington DC, June 2; Tampa, Florida, June 3; and Kansas City, June 9. All recipients of this newsletter will receive an invitation with specific details of the seminar in their area. If you are not in one of these three areas but would like to be included in our planning for future seminars, please let us know by writing to us using the enclosed reply card or telephoning us.

After *Life-study of Numbers*, we will broadcast a short review of programs from *Life-study of Revelation*, and then we will cover *Life-study of Luke*. Many of you like to follow the radio program with the printed volumes. We strongly encourage this since the printed version of the life-study is a more in-depth study than what we can have on the broadcast. It includes many Scripture references for your further study. If you are interested in ordering *Life-study of Luke* in printed form, please see the enclosed form. For the audio version, call (888)543-3788.

Living Stream Ministry

### Life-Study of the Bible

W E L C O M E S

KANSAS CITY, MO

KEXS 1090 AM  
11:30 A.M. MON-FRI

PITTSBURGH, PA

WWNL 1080 AM  
8:00 A.M. SUNDAY

## WHAT IS THE FLESH?

In our Christian fellowship and study of the Bible, we generally prefer to dwell only on positive matters concerning the Spirit. But the apostle Paul, while writing so much concerning the Spirit, warns us concerning a negative matter, the flesh. For example, in the last four chapters of Galatians, he contrasts the flesh with the Spirit; here he clearly identifies these two as the only possible choices for our daily walk (5:16). Although it may not be a

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## THE FLESH

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popular topic, it is supremely important for believers to understand the biblical view of the flesh.

The term *flesh*, on the most obvious level, refers to the physical body, man's literal flesh and blood. But the flesh is more than just the physical body. In Genesis 6:3 God said, "My Spirit will not strive with man forever, for he indeed is flesh." Here God made a profound contrast between His Spirit and mankind as flesh, declaring that created man had become simply flesh. This indicates that *flesh* refers to man corrupted by the fall to such an extent that man's entire created being, not just his physical body, is flesh.

Paul confirmed the age-old struggle between the Spirit and the flesh: "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these oppose each other" (Gal. 5:17). God's Spirit dwells in our spirit (Rom. 8:9). For a believer to walk by the Spirit means he walks by this mingled Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17) and is regulated by the law of the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2). This is to walk by the indwelling resurrected Christ who is our life (Rom. 8:9, 10). Thus, we spontaneously fulfill the law (Rom. 8:4).

For a believer to walk by the flesh means that he walks by the fallen self that is constituted with sin and death. Since the flesh is the consummate expression of fallen man, it is powerless to keep God's commands (Rom. 8:3, 8). In effect, to live and walk by the Spirit is to express Christ, and to live and walk by the flesh is to express fallen Adam.

We should not think the flesh is only inclined toward doing evil. The Galatian believers were exerting their flesh to keep the Old Testament law (Gal. 3:2, 3). If we do this, the inevitable result is failure since God's law fully tests and ultimately exposes the fallen flesh. The reason for this failure is that all works of the flesh—whether good or evil—are lifeless and therefore fruitless. It is possible, then, for believers to be distracted from God's plan and the enjoyment of the Spirit by their self-effort to please God by the sweat of fallen human energy.

*As we enjoy the Lord,  
we effortlessly bear the fruit  
of the Spirit.*

The living expression of Christ, which fully satisfies God's righteous requirements, is produced solely by the believers' enjoyment of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2). Therefore, our primary objective every day should be to have a personal, intimate, living, and organic relationship with the Lord who indwells us as the Spirit. Such a walk by the Spirit effectively counteracts the flesh (Gal. 5:16). As we enjoy the Lord, we effortlessly bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

For further reading on this subject, please see *The Spiritual Man*, by Watchman Nee and *The Flesh and the Spirit* by Witness Lee, both published by Living Stream Ministry.

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**E**VEN THOUGH GOD IS PLEASED TO ALLOW US TO SPEAK HIS WORD, THE GREATEST MEASURE OF OUR USEFULNESS AS A MINISTER OF THE WORD IS NOT THE AMOUNT OF OUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE OR EVEN THE ABILITY TO ELOQUENTLY PRESENT THE TRUTH; RATHER, IT IS THE DEGREE TO WHICH OUR FEELINGS, THOUGHTS, OPINIONS, AND CHARACTERISTICS HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY DEALT WITH BY THE LORD.



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