

DESTROYING THE FLESH

Christian Character in Action: Lesson 10

29 April 2022

The Amalekites were a constant enemy of the children of Israel, and God uses them as a picture of our flesh, teaching us what a dangerous enemy our flesh is. We are told to mortify our flesh. If we don't, it will be ready to defeat us when we are at our weakest.

- Deut 25:17-19** God reminded the Israelites of the great harm Amalek did to them when they were travelling from Egypt to the Promised Land.
- Genesis 39:9-12** Amalek is a descendant of Esau, the rejected firstborn son who had no heart for God.
- Exodus 17:8-16** Because Amalek waged war with God's people, God promised to war with Amalek from generation to generation.
- Romans 8:12-23** Born-again Christians are saved, redeemed, have the Holy Spirit of God, are children of God, and are on our way to heaven. Nevertheless, we are in a constant battle with a relentless enemy: our flesh. We will have this enemy till the day we die.
- Romans 7:18-24** This passage points out that the Christian has two natures like twins (Esau and Jacob). The firstborn (Flesh) has no interest in the things of God and will fight for dominance your whole life (Amalek). As you try to live your Christian life, your flesh is looking for an opportunity to attack, trying to prevent you from enjoying your deliverance from bondage (of sin).
- We can never let our guard down. This is a constant battle.
 - There is no ceasefire, there is no truce. If you give up, the flesh will continue to fight.

SAUL'S REFUSAL TO DESTROY THE AMALEKITES (1 Samuel 15)

- Vs 1** Saul, you're free because God delivered you. It is important for you to harken to the words of the Lord.
- Vs 2** God remembers what Amalek did to Israel. This reminds us that a Christian, over time, can forget what the flesh did to them before they turned to Jesus Christ. That forgetfulness can stop you from living for God and serving God. Don't ever drop your guard.
- Amalek laid in wait to attack Israel. Your flesh is laying in wait for an opportunity to attack.
 - Activities that used to occupy your time, friends from your past life, old habits.
- Vs 3** God wants everything that pertains to Amalek destroyed. He doesn't count anything to be of value among the Amalekites. Everything pertaining to them is harmful to the Israelites.
- God doesn't leave it up to us to decide what is dangerous or what is harmless. He tells us very clearly in the bible. Our opinions must be weighed against the word of God.
- Vs 4** Saul had a big enough army to be completely victorious if he chose to obey God.
- We too have what is necessary for victory in Jesus Christ. We have all things that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). We have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Eph 1:3). We have the Holy Spirit. The "new man" has more at his disposal than the "old man. You have a greater probability of being victorious (1 John 4:4).
- 5-7** It appeared that Saul was obeying the Lord's commandment. He took the battle against the Amalekites all the way to the border of Egypt.
- 8-9** Here is Saul's compromise. He called something *good* that God said was bad. He thought he was smarter than God. He spared the *useable* stuff that God told him to destroy because it's worthless.

- What is in your home that God said will harm you, but you said, “No, I can handle it?” That is the flesh, lying in wait to ruin your life.

Vs 10 The word of the Lord brings correction. Unfortunately, God’s people don’t like to be corrected. God said Saul had turned back from following Him. Saul would disagree because he made up his own standard for following the Lord and stuck to that standard. We have many weakling preachers today that have a different standard than the one that God laid out in the bible.

11-13 God said Saul did not perform His commandments (11). Saul said he DID perform God’s commandments (13).

- We all see ourselves as better than we really are.

Vs 14 We need others to show us that we are not living up to God’s standard. If Saul had truly obeyed God, there shouldn’t be any sheep or oxen from Amalek.

- What are the “sheep” or “oxen” that you decided to hold onto even though you know it’s not good for you? That’s the flesh lying in wait.

Vs 15 Saul said they did it to offer a sacrifice to the Lord.

- Don’t do something sinfully wrong and say, “I did it for Jesus.”

Vs 16 Saul seems to be confident that he is okay with the Lord. Many Christians live in a “gray area” that God did not provide. They excuse sins as being “not so bad” or “understandable.” God doesn’t excuse any sins.

17-19 Samuel gives Saul the word of the Lord to correct his wrong thinking. We need people who care about us to show us whenever we place our opinions above the word of God.

Vs 20 Saul tried to convince himself that what he did was right. People often try to find an ally in their sin.

Vs 21 Saul thinks he had honorable reasons to disobey God. “*It was for God.*”

Vs 22 Obedience is better than doing something *for God* that He didn’t want you to do.

Vs 23 Rebellion and stubbornness are not “*minor sins.*” They are as bad as witchcraft and idolatry. We need to look to God to determine what is good and what is bad.

Vs 24 Saul disobeyed God’s commandment because he feared the people. We need to separate ourselves from people who encourage us to disobey the word of God. My flesh is already urging me to rebel.

- Don’t get offended when people who care about you challenge you to live by the bible.

25-31 Saul begs Samuel to pardon his sin. Samuel refused to fellowship with him unless he repented.

32-33 Samuel showed Saul how serious God is about obeying His commandments. He cut Agag the Amalekite (type of the flesh) to pieces. Agag tried to be friendly. Your flesh will often be agreeable with your Christian life, but it’s just waiting for you to let your guard down.

Jeremiah 48:10 is a commentary on this bible passage about King Saul. We must put our flesh to death.

Colossians 3:1-8 Mortify your members (things that the old flesh used to do). Don’t carry your bad habits from the old life into your new life in Christ.

2 Samuel 1:1-10 King Saul ended up being killed by an Amalekite (One that he left alive).

Don’t trust your flesh. Trust the word of God to show you what you need to remove from your life to get the victory.