

**August 30**

**Scriptures:** Read Romans 13

**Key Verse:** “But put on the Lord, Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” (Romans 13:14)

## **Overview**

He was an over-eater. He came into my office grossly over-weight and self-disgusted. As he told me his story, I received an education in the devastating bondage of “gradualism”. What’s that, you ask? Well, you might call it suicide by degrees.

Just like a chronic smoker or pill-popper, he was destroying himself in incremental measure—numb to any short-term effect, but literally degenerating over the long-term. This is what “the flesh” will do if you let it. It’s bent on self-destruction.

Even under the best conditions and the most committed self-moderation, the flesh eventually gives out. Wrinkles, aches, pains, cholesterol, and decrepitude of one form or another eventually lay you low. The old body expires, and we fly away.

But the question is: to where are we flying? The Bible makes it very clear, tough as it seems, that our spiritual well-being has a lot to do with the moral choices we make on earth. It may seem unfair, but if we yield to the “works of the flesh”, the Bible says we won’t “inherit” eternal life—we’ll “fly” to a Godless eternity.

That’s why we’ve got to starve our lusts. Feeding them will only hasten our self-destruction. That’s not to say that our physical appetites are wrong; if we indulge them according to God’s word, we’ll bring blessing not destruction. But the key is obedience. And obedience is usually hard on us—at least in the initial stages.

On the other hand, if we choose to ignore the long term and simply enjoy the short term, we may find ourselves one day, like my fat friend, overwhelmed with self-indulgence and self-disgust. It’s only an extra piece of pie today—tomorrow it may be plugged

## **Prayer**

Dear God, help us to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” daily as we draw closer to Him through our Bible reading and prayer, that we may not give in to our fleshly lusts.