

STRONG FLESH!

By Randal Stephens

You've seen it. A little boy and his mom in line at the grocery store; as they're standing there, that little boy sees something he wants so he tugs on mom's shirt or pants or whatever's handy and asks for it, as nicely as a little boy can. Mom ignores him.



Johnny tugs again, more forcefully; mom says "wait a minute," but Johnny really wants that gum or candy or whatever it is, so he won't be ignored. And he won't wait a minute.

Now it doesn't happen all at once; mom points a finger, little Johnny crosses his arms and pretty soon the two are going back and forth, each reacting to the other, locked in a struggle of wills.

And before you know it, the scene has deteriorated into chaos. Mom is flush with anger at her wailing little boy who is sitting on the floor, refusing to move.

She pulls his arm, but he's just doing that thing where he makes himself as heavy as possible. She pulls harder and he wails louder. She's growing increasingly embarrassed. You see the frustration and helplessness. And then the unthinkable happens.

She gives him what he wants.

If you've ever been shopping anywhere you've witnessed this scene. Perhaps, God forbid, that little boy is yours. Ouch!

Now, think of this little child as your flesh.

Your flesh, as the Bible defines it, is your natural tendency to sin. Paul gets specific in Galatians 5:19-21 when he lists the acts of your sinful nature: sexual immorality, hatred, jealousy, rage, drunkenness, etc. He says, "...those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

In Matthew 26:41, Christ said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (KJV) It's true; when you're trying to serve the Lord, it's very hard to get your flesh to follow. Your spirit wants to serve, but your flesh is like an undisciplined child.

However, sometimes your flesh is so forceful at asserting its own agenda, it's almost impossible for you to follow Christ's. Your flesh will fight against your every desire to serve the Lord and when it sees something it wants, it will fight to get it.

That's when you must *find a will of your own* and choose to resist, because the absolute worst thing you can do is give your flesh what it wants.