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Controlling Our Flesh Is Like Riding a Green Broke Horse, by Jim Burks

He's big and muscular, weighing around a 1000 lbs. You can get upon him, only you better know what you're doing. He isn't mean, he's green broke and it will take many miles on the trail to get a real good handle on this big fellow. You need knowledge, respect and a little fear to ride any horse, but especially a green broke horse. Whoa!

Knowing what could happen keeps you alert and safe. Respect keeps you aware of what he's bred to do. And Fear keeps the heart ready at all times. At any moment, you might be air borne. Easy, Big Fellow!

Biblical, as well as empirical knowledge, tells us that the flesh will spook and run away in a flash, just like a green broke horse. A look from a roof top for David, or a few fleshly statements by Peter, may be just a fleshly reaction away, if we are not careful. Better be ready!

Knowledge is be experienced and applied, of course. If we don't use what we know, how can we have respect for what we are up against? Any Equestrian knows there is a huge difference between "horsing around" and correct horsemanship. And, Christians need to realize that we can't "horse" around with the flesh. It weighs too much. Paul's "Present you bodies a living and holy sacrifice"(Ro 12:1) is illustrated in I Cor. 9:27, "I beat my body and make it a slave." "The flesh sets its desire against the spirit," Ga 5:17.

But, too many church members ride correctly only on Sunday and Wednesday nights. Even then, the ride is often out of control. Suddenly, there are taken off into the sunset by the flesh. It's nothing new to Paul. "And, I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ," 1st Corinthians 3:1. Babes are NEVER put on a green broke horse. They learn off a seasoned horse.

A Babe has not learned, or they have lost respect of, who they are and what they should be doing as members of His body. The problem in Paul's day is the same problem today. That is, the flesh will never get past green broke. The flesh never will be seasoned. Thus, until it is changed, it has to be controlled.

Before someone quotes scripture about the flesh being dead, I assure you it is still alive. What Jesus accomplished at Calvary did not to remove our carnality of the flesh. What happened was, God's declarative will released our spirits, in order that we may follow the Holy Spirit. The Devil's control over the flesh has been destroyed. But, we must understand what the victory involves. It is spiritual, not a flesh victory. Notice, this explanation in these condensed verses of Ephesians 2:1-10.

"You were dead in trespasses and sins where you formerly walked, according to the prince of the power of the air, indulging in the desires of the flesh... But, God loved us, and even in this state, he made us alive and raised us up with Jesus to show His kindness by grace...Therefore, we are His workmanship, that we might walk in good works."

And, herein, I believe, lies the problem that many Christians have. People attempt to fight the spiritual battle by fleshly means. They follow the flesh, allowing it to control (tongues, new revelations). It feels so good that they engage the flesh in fighting this spiritual battle. It may even look spiritual. But, not to Paul, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according

to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.” 2 Cor.10:3,4. Paul says anything raised up against the knowledge of God, is to be taken captive to the obedience of Christ, V5. The war Paul fought was divinely powerful, commanded by the Holy Spirit. When our flesh takes in speculations, we are to take them captive and turn them over to our Commander in Chief, the Holy Spirit.

Certainly, the victory is secure, but our witness to His work may not be. It requires knowledge, respect and even fear. We have to stay on top of fleshly desires or find ourselves flat on our spiritual backs, watching the flesh skedaddle off into the world. “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,” Jesus said, Mt 26:41, And, James says a hearer and not a doer, is like the image in a mirror, easily forgotten. If the Bible is not studied, our flesh becomes a behemoth, running out of control. Let’s listen to James 3, and ride the flesh accordingly. First, we need a good bit that goes over the tongue, and a strong bridle to control the head.

Even on a green broke horse, turning the head in the proper direction, forces the body to follow behind.