

Galatians

Lesson 12

Galatians 5: 19-26 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,

21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

In our last study, we saw that walking in the Spirit fulfilled the Law.

We saw that walking in the Law was bondage to an outside force, while the inner voice of the Spirit leads in love, which does not bind but sets at liberty.

In this study we will look closely at this Spirit walk.

Whatever way you interpret this passage of scripture, Paul's point is so very important.

We can allow ourselves to be led by our old man or our flesh, or we can be led by the Spirit.

The one we choose to follow will determine the direction our life takes.

To walk in the Spirit (or by the Spirit), is to walk in love.

If we will listen to the dictates of our own reborn human spirit, we will walk in the Spirit of love and, therefore, will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

We will not need an outward law but will fulfill all righteousness because our spirit (quickenened by the Holy Spirit) will never lead us into disobedience to God or in opposition to His desires and will.

It is not as hard as you might think to walk in the Spirit.

You can do it while you drive a car, do housework, teach a class, or run a business.

Walking in the Spirit is not some kind of mystical exercise in which a person falls into some sort of trance.

Nor is it a just a feeling.

Walking in the Spirit is simply walking in constant fellowship and communion with the Spirit of God resident within us.

It is walking in line with the Word of God, moment by moment.

Let's begin this week's lesson by looking at:

Galatians 5: 19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,

21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Focus now ***Verse 19a, Now the works of the flesh are evident:***

It is important that we understand that the list of the works of the flesh that Paul is about to give is not all-inclusive.



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In other words, it does not include every possible work of the flesh.

There is no such list available to my knowledge.

This is because man can be so creative when it comes to sin.

That's why he ends the list with the words, "***and things like these.***"

However, it's a pretty good starter list.

Notice also that these are specified as, "***works of the flesh.***"

This word is plural, that strongly implies that there are many manifestations of the fleshly, carnal nature of man.

In addition to the works of the flesh, let's consider for a moment the "wages" those *works* earn.

When you and I work in the physical sense, we earn a salary or wages.

So it is in the spiritual sense.

Works produce wages.

We know from ***Romans 6: 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

So now we know that walking in the flesh does produce a product.

That product may seem to be pleasurable and appealing.

In fact, it almost always does for a while.

Even the Bible tells us that there is pleasure in sin, for a season.

Hebrews 11: 25 choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

But that pleasure is short-lived.

On the other hand, the Psalmist says of God in ***Psalms 16: 11 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.***

Now we know more about the fact that the product of a sinful life is temporal pleasure while the product of a Spirit led life is peace and joy.

Verse 19b sexual immorality,

In many translations this phrase is interpreted as “***adultery.***”

It usually refers to illicit sexual activity by an individual who is married to someone other than his sexual partner.



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Verse 19c impurity,

The original rendering of this word is the same as, ***“fornication.”***

This word is usually used to refer to sexual activity by an unmarried person.

Verse 19d, impurity,

This word deals more with the thought that leads to the physical sex act rather than the act itself.

Have you ever noticed that no sin, especially sex sin, ever begins from the outside, rather it begins in the mind of the person who commits it.

So impurity, has to do with evil sexual thoughts and desires.

In this respect, it could be translated as, ***“lust.”***

Verse 19e, sensuality,

When evil thoughts control a person, it's called, ***“sensuality,”***

This causes a person to seek after sexual activity.

Sensual people have given themselves over to sexual cravings.

Verse 20a, idolatry,

In the day in which this was written, idolatry referred to the worship of graven images.

Today it includes anything given pre-eminence to anything other than God.

You name it, money, power, position, fame, glory, even a business, or even a hobby.

Notice that in and of themselves, none of the things in this list are evil, but they become evil the moment that a person elevates that thing to a higher position than God in their lives.

In that sense, we must all be on guard against spiritual idolatry.

Verse 20b, sorcery,

This word is intriguing.

In the Greek, it is *pharmakeia*, from which we derive the English word, pharmacy.

Witcraft has often revolved around drug use, as evidenced in the origin of the word.

To us in our modern world, the word conjures up images of an old woman in a long black dress and maybe a tall hat flying around through the air on a broomstick.

True witchcraft is no joking matter.

It is not to be confused with child's play.

It is a multimillion-dollar business, involving not only spiritists and the occult, but also the thriving drug culture which threatens to destroy our way of life.

Verse 20c, enmity,

This word shows up in many translations as, ***“hatred.”***

Hatred is defined as a personal hostility toward someone else.

Like lust, it is a mental sin.

A person can be smiling and cheerful on the outside and still be seething with internal hatred.

Sooner or later, that emotion will find expression, through words or deeds or by destroying the mind and body of the person who harbors it inside.

Like all mental sins, hatred is a cancer.

It harms the who it inhabits far more than the one to whom it is directed.

That's why we endeavor to live by scriptures like ***Colossians 3: 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.***

Verse 20d, strife,

This can happen over something as simple as a disagreement that gets out of hand.

It has to do with constantly being at odds with people.

The results of which can become a dislike between two people or two or more groups simply because of a difference of opinion.

Remember this, as Christians we are not required to agree on every issue of life, but we are clearly warned against allowing differences of opinion to lead to animosity, another of the mental sins with its attendant power to destroy the one who harbors it.

Verse 20e, jealousy,

This word has also been translated as, "***emulations.***"

This is like jealousy but usually revolves around spiritual matters.

In a sense, it's trying to play, "spiritual king of the mountain."

It is an attitude that will not cooperate with others unless it gets its own way.



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We would call it ambition or rivalry.

Verse 20f, fits of anger,

This is an outward manifestation of inward hatred.

It refers to emotional outbursts, explosions of anger.

Verse 20g, rivalries,

This simply means discord or disharmony.

These are musical terms relating to musicians playing together so that their instruments or voices blend as one.

Would it not be impossible for one person alone to be in discord or disharmony unless it is with himself?

For there to be discord there must be more than one person involved.

This kind of strife is somewhat of a group-related activity.

It manifests itself in temper tantrums, complaining, troublemaking, but its root source is lack of love.

Just as darkness is the result of the absence of light, strife is the result of the absence of love.

Verse 20h, dissensions,

These are factions or divisions over points other than personalities.

What causes religious groups to split apart one from the other?

Isn't it usually over some minor viewpoint rather than an individual?

One person or group decides that some point must be made or kept at all cost.

Unless it is done, they threaten to draw apart and dissolve their union with the rest of the group.

That is better known as sedition, it is spiritual treason.

Verse 20i, divisions,

This has to do with divisions over heresies in the church.

A heresy is an opinion that is contrary to the Word of God.

When people disagree over these opinions, one group, holding to its opinion, splits away to follow its own interpretation.

Verse 21a, envy,

Envy is jealousy without a target.

This too is an inward or mental sin.

It's an attitude that, "everyone gets a better break than me."

Whereas jealousy directed towards a specific person, envy is toward all.

Verse 21b, drunkenness,

The word of God has always condemned drunkenness, which is the excessive use of alcohol.

Need I say more?

I think not.

Verse 21c, orgies,

Oddly enough, this word from the original rendering has more to do with parties of any kind that do things that are not uplifting to God, such as carousing, brawling, or any kind of partying based on the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

Verse 21d, and things like these.

This is a reminder from Paul that this list is not all-inclusive.

It is only a partial representation of the listing of the manifestations of the flesh, because after all, we can be quite creative when it comes to sin.



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Verse 21e, I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

There should be a special caution sign that accompanies this passage of scripture.

I have counseled some who have been buried in fear over this passage of scripture.

While this passage is a stern warning against sin and should not be diminished in any way, because sin in any form is dangerous, it should also be noted that even Christians find themselves in battles over their own personal lives that only the Holy Spirit can help them with.

Don't fear going to hell because of what this scripture says, let it cause trust in God to rise up and deliver you from these things in your life that you know are so dangerous to your spiritual well-being.

Examine I John 3: 8-9 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

Paul is saying, why are you Galatians looking and acting like those that will not inherit the Kingdom of God?

Next Big Question, Carnal or Spiritual?

For four chapters Paul spoke to the Galatians legalism verse true spirituality.



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Then beginning in chapter 5 he began to tell them to learn to listen to their reborn spirit rather to their flesh.

He wanted them to understand that before they were born again, they were slaves to their unregenerated flesh which could not please God.

But now they have been born again of His Spirit which abides within them, they should put away the flesh and its desires and habits and begin to live by the Spirit of life which does not practice sin but which, like Jesus, does always those things which please the Father. (John 8: 29)

Look at *1 Corinthians 3: 1-3* ***But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.***

2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready,

3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

This passage sounds like it was written to the Galatians, especially since Paul calls them carnal and refers to their envying, and strife and divisions.

So, Paul is saying that although these people are believers, they are behaving like unbelievers.

Carnal believers look and act like unbelievers.

This is what the Galatians need to do.

Any sinner can live by the Law, but he will not get any closer to heaven.



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The Galatians do not need to live like sinners.

They need to use the Spirit of God inside them and live like God in this world.

The Fruit of the Spirit

Verses 22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

In verses 19 through 21 Paul talked about the works of the flesh.

Here in verses 22 through 23, we have the contrasted fruit of the Spirit.

There are several differences between works and fruit.

We already know that flesh produces works, but the Spirit produces fruit.

Works are recompensed by a reward which comes at a definite stated moment, like a paycheck at the end of the week.

On the other hand, fruit does not have a predetermined time to appear.

So. The rewards of work come as soon as the work is completed.

Fruit, since it is the product of a seed which must grow and develop through a long process, takes longer to materialize.



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Even when it makes its appearance, it must still remain attached to its support source before it is ready to be used to meet needs.

Look at it this way, although sowing to the flesh and sowing to the Spirit both eventually produce results, the rewards of spiritual seed will many times manifest themselves later than those of the carnal seed.

But, being spiritual, their fruit is much longer-lived than that of a carnal nature and can reproduce itself indefinitely.

Throughout human history, carnal man has been sowing seeds which produced a harvest of sin and death.

That process of sowing and reaping will go on until the end of the age.

But throughout human history, the Spirit of God has been sowing spiritual seed which has also produced fruit.

Verse 22a, But the fruit of the Spirit is love,

There is one final difference between works and fruit.

Notice that works is plural, and fruit is singular.

There is but one fruit of the Spirit and that is Love!

You might be thinking that you were under the impression that there were nine fruits of the Spirit.



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But you would be mistaken.

All the other eight are manifestations of the one, love!

There is only one spiritual substance that is shed in the heart by the Spirit.

The other eight qualities mentioned are simply manifestations of the one great fruit of love.

Look at what Jesus said in *Matthew 22: 36-39* “**Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?**”

37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

38 This is the great and first commandment.

39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Now look at *I Corinthians 13: 4-8* **Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant**

5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;

6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

It is interesting to note that every one of the other eight fruit of the Spirit can be found in this passage about love.

If we are filled with the Spirit of God, we have within us the power to display all of these attributes of our Father Who IS Love.



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That power comes from the Holy Spirit, but the fruit is manifested in our reborn human spirit because we are the ones that need these qualities, not God.

Let's look at these qualities one by one.

Verse 22a, love,

I know, I know, we already looked at 22a, but now I want to focus on the word, "love," in this passage.

The word in Greek is one that most of you are familiar with.

It's "Agape," divine love, the kind of selfless love that God displayed toward us in His Son Jesus Christ.

With this kind of God-type love, we will fulfill all the Law because we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and we love our neighbor as ourselves.

This is the primary fruit of the Spirit, the one from which all others are derived.

Verse 22b, joy,

Make no mistake about it, joy has nothing to do with happiness.

Happiness is an outward expression of pleasure, a superficial emotion dependent upon our current situation or circumstances.

Joy, on the other hand, is that deep-seated sense of well-being which no outside circumstance can alter.

Remember ***Nehemiah 8: 10 Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."***

Possessed with this divine strength, we can face the worst that life can hand us and, though our outward faces may reflect the heartbreak or turmoil we are

experiencing at the moment, deep within we are secure knowing that God has not left us, nor has he forsaken us.

Joy means that no matter what life throws at us, God is still on the throne and we will emerge victorious from every fiery trial.

It's not something we work up, it's something we rest in.

Verse 22c, peace,

Peace is an inward stability that endures even when it seems that everything around us is falling apart.

Like joy, it is a deep-seated assurance, a calm in the midst of the storms of life.

The joy of the Lord, as well as the peace He provides, allows us to sing at midnight while chained in prison with our feet in the stocks.

It's the peace provided by God that allowed Daniel to lie down and sleep with the lions he shared a den with.

Verse 22d, patience,

Do you remember KJV words for this one, longsuffering.

This reminds me of the kind of patient endurance that works hand in hand with faith so that we inherit the promises of God talked about in Hebrews 6: 12.

Verse 22e, kindness,

Self-explanatory, have you ever noticed how far even a little of it goes?

Verse 22f, goodness,

Goodness refers to treating others in grace as Christ treats us.



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Verse 22g, faithfulness,

Did you know that it is possible to operate in faith and not in love?

Look at ***1 Corinthians 13: 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.***

Faithfulness in its simplest form means dependability.

Of all the additional traits listed here after love, this is probably one that ranks highly with God, as well as one that He rewards most.

Look at ***Matthew 25: 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'***

Notice in this case that joy did not come because of hand clapping or praise shouting, though they both have their positive places in worship.

This time joy came because of his faithfulness in carrying out His assigned task.

This is why we are exhorted not to grumble and complain but to be faithful in whatever the Lord has put before us to do.

A faithful person is a humble person, one who accepts his assigned task and fulfills his calling with devotion and integrity.

In due time, the Lord will promote him as he humbles himself under the mighty hand of God.

Verse 23a, gentleness,

This also translated as meekness.

Some people tend to equate this with weakness.

Meekness does not mean being a doormat for others to walk on.

It has more to do with having a teachable spirit.

Look at ***James 1: 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.***

The truth is the truth no matter what.

If we are meek, we will receive the truth as from the Lord.

We will be teachable.

Jesus said that it is the meek that will inherit this earth in Matthew 5:5.

Verse 23b, self-control;

This speaks of self-control in all aspects of life.

One might want to summarize this by the rule, moderation in all things.

This obviously doesn't mean moderation in sin.

We need this to control our every need in order to give God as much of our time as possible.

Verse 23c, against such things there is no law.

When we walk in the Spirit and produce its fruit, the Law has no power over us.

We fulfill it – not by keeping it, but by following the Spirit of God.

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Look at ***Verse 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.***

We have already seen in Galatians 2: 20 that we were crucified with Christ so that the life we now live in the flesh we live by faith of the Son of God Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Therefore, while we are free, we also have a responsibility to live our lives in accordance with the will and desire of the One Who loved us so much He gave His only begotten Son that we might have life in Him.

Look at ***Verse 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.***

When did we start to live by the Spirit?

When we got saved.

Living life in the Spirit is the essence of Christianity.

Look at ***Verse 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.***

Sinners seek power while we seek the Kingdom!