

Galatians Chapter 5 Continued

Galatians 5:14 "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, [even] in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

“All the law”: The ethics of the former Old Testament law are the same as those of the New Testament gospel as indicated in the quote from (Lev. 19:18; see notes on Rom. 7:12; 8:4; James 2:8-10).

When a Christian genuinely loves others, he fulfills all the moral requirements of the former Mosaic Law concerning them (Matt. 22:36-40; Deut. 6:5; Rom. 13:8-10). This is the ruling principle of Christian freedom (verses 6, 13).

“Fulfilled” means “obeyed.” “In one word” means, “one statement”.

Notice in the following verses, that love is the basis for Christianity.

Mark 12:30-31 "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this [is] the first commandment." "And the second [is] like, [namely] this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

We know the key word is love. Love does away with things not of God.

1 John 4:7-8 "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

Galatians 5:15 " But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

“Bite and devour one another”: The imagery is of wild animals savagely attacking and killing each other, a graphic picture of what happens in the spiritual realm when believers do not love and serve each other.

James 3:14-16 "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth." "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but [is] earthly, sensual, devilish." "For where envying and strife [is], there [is] confusion and every evil work."

We find in the Scriptures here from James and from the Scripture in Galatians above that trying to destroy others comes home to us and many times we are destroyed in the process. Fussing and fighting have no place in the church. Look, with me, in the next Scriptures how it should be.

James 3:17-18 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

Be a peacemaker, not a troublemaker.

Galatians 5:16 "[This] I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

“Walk in the Spirit”: All believers have the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 8-9; 1 Cor. 6:19-20), as the personal power for living to please God. The form of the Greek verb translated “walk” indicates continuous action, or a habitual lifestyle.

Walking also implies progress; as a believer submits to the Spirit’s control, that is, responds in obedience to the simple commands of Scripture, he grows in his spiritual life (see notes on Rom. 8:13; Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16).

“Walk in the Spirit” (i.e., “live by the Spirit”): Christians are to live with the Spirit’s help. How does one “live by the Spirit”?

- (1) The Christian must believe that the Spirit is with him, having been sent by God into his heart (4:6).
- (2) In every spiritual confrontation the believer must yield to the Spirit, that is, submit his own desires to those of the Spirit.
- (3) One must depend on the Spirit for help, enabling him to live a God-pleasing life (verse 5)
- (4) The believer should anticipate the effects of the Spirit’s help in his daily life. The believer who “lives by the Spirit” will “not fulfill” (accomplish, carry out), “the lust” (strong desires), “of the flesh” (sinful nature).

“The flesh”: This is not simply the physical body, but includes the mind, will, and emotions which are all subject to sin. It refers in general to our unredeemed humanness (see notes on Rom. 7:5; 8:23; see verse 13 of Galatians 5).

The lust of the flesh of man is what brings trouble and strife. When we walk in the Spirit of God, we have no lust of the flesh and have no desire to do wrong to anyone. When we make Jesus Lord of our life, He makes our decisions for us.

Galatians 5:17 "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

“Contrary the one to the other”: The flesh opposes the work of the Spirit and leads the believer toward sinful behavior he would not otherwise be compelled to do (see notes on Rom. 7:14-25).

One’s sinful human nature (“flesh”), and the Holy Spirit “lusteth against” one another. That is, they have desires and yearnings that are contrary to one another. The Christian then, is a battlefield, having desires to do good and evil. The outcome is the “ye cannot do the things that ye would”: The flesh seeks to thwart the Spirit who, in turn, attempts to frustrate the flesh’s evil desires.

The flesh is of the earth. It is then earthy. The flesh and spirit have been in mortal combat to control the will of man. The lust of the flesh has destroyed many a person. We must bury our flesh that our spirit might take control. The Spirit of God within us is the only thing that can overcome the flesh of man.

The flesh centers on the wants of man. The Spirit centers on the will of God. That which is born of flesh, is flesh, until the Spirit of God gives us new life in Him. Jesus spoke to the temptations the devil set before Him by saying, it is written. This is the only way that any of us can overcome the lust of our flesh. We must give our will over to the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5:18 "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

(Verse 17), may leave the impression of a believer being caught in a hopeless tug-of-war between the flesh and the Spirit. This is not the case. The Christian is "led of" (by), "the Spirit." When yielding to Him, to turn away from the flesh's evil yearnings, thus putting sin out of his daily life.

"Led of the Spirit ... not under the law": Take your choice; these are mutually exclusive. Either you live by the power of the Holy Spirit which results in righteous behavior and spiritual attitudes (verse 22-29), or by the law which can only produce unrighteous behavior and attitudes (verses 19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

The verb "led" indicates voluntary submission. The believer decides by whom he will be led, either by his flesh or by the Spirit. The Spirit-led person is "not under the law." The Christian does not need the restraints of the law because his moral life is governed by the Spirit.

Jesus was free from sin. If we are full of Him, we are full of His righteousness. There is no law against righteousness. When we are led by the Spirit of God, we are walking in righteousness.

Verses 19-23: By contrasting "the works of the flesh" (verses 19-21), with "the fruit of the Spirit" (verses 22-23), the believer can know whether he is walking by the Spirit or being controlled by the flesh. "Uncleanness" is sexual impurity. "Lasciviousness" is sexual excess.

In verses 19-21, these sins characterize all unredeemed mankind living under the impotent commands of the law which produces only iniquity though not every person manifests all these sins nor exhibits them to the same degree.

Paul's list, which is not exhaustive, encompasses 3 areas of human life; sex, religion, and human relationships. For other such lists (see Rom. 1:24-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Galatians 5:19 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,"

"Manifest": The flesh manifests itself in obvious and certain ways.

“Adultery” or “immorality”, the Greek word is porneia, from which the English word “pornography” comes. It refers to all illicit sexual activity, including (but not limited to), adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, and prostitution.

“Lasciviousness” or “sensuality”. The word originally referred to any excessive behavior or lack of restraint, but eventually became associated with sexual excess and indulgence.

When the man is walking in the lust of the flesh, he does whatever feels good to him, right or wrong. It seems that this adultery here, is also covering homosexual acts. There are two kinds of adultery. Spiritual adultery is when you follow and give allegiance to false gods. Physical adultery is having sexual relations with anyone you are not married to.

This includes having sexual relations man with another man, and also, women with other women. "Fornication", in the verse above, is speaking of sexual intercourse between people not married to each other. Uncleaness, here, means impurity, physical or moral. Lasciviousness covers many acts including wantonness and any filthy act. We would call it perversion.

Galatians 5:20 "Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,"

“Witchcraft” or “sorcery”. The Greek word pharmakeia, from which the English word “pharmacy” comes, originally referred to medicines in general, but eventually only to mood and mind-altering drugs, as well as the occult, witchcraft, and magic. Many pagan religious practices required the use of these drugs to aid in the communication with deities.

“Strife ... heresies”: Many of these sins manifested in the area of human relationships have to do with some form of anger: “Hatred” results in “strife”. “Jealousy” (hateful resentment), results in “outbursts of anger” (sudden, unrestrained expressions of hostility). The next 4 represent animosity between individuals and groups.

“Idolatry” is not just the worship of a graven image, but putting one’s chief affections on any object or person instead of on God.

“Witchcraft” is sorcery, which is tampering with the powers of evil. This would include dabbling in the occult. “Variance” is strife or discord. “Emulations” means “jealousy.” “Strife” is selfish ambition. “Seditions” are dissension. “Heresies” are permanent, organized division or cliques.

Paul is going on with many of the things so prevalent in our society today. He says they are all works of the flesh. Idolatry is image-worship. "Witchcraft", in this special instance, means drugs, magic and sorcery.

We all know what hatred is. Variance is wrangling and quarreling. It also includes debate. Emulations means jealousy, malice, indignation, and zeal. We know what wrath and strife mean. Seditions means divisions. "Heresies" means disunion and sect (meaning a group that has separated from an established church), which could be a cult, denomination, or a religious order.

Galatians 5:21 "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told [you] in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

“Drunkenness, revellings”: Probably a specific reference to the orgies that characterized pagan, idolatrous worship. Generally, it refers to all rowdy, boisterous, and crude behavior.

“Revellings” means excessive eating, or gluttony, as well as carousing. “Do” (practice): The person whose life is habitually characterized by the sins and vices of (verses 19-21), “shall not” inherit the kingdom of God.” That is, he will not be in heaven because he is not a Christian.

“Do such things (or “practice” such things)”: Here is the key word in Paul’s warnings. The sense of the Greek verb describes continual, habitual action. Although believers undoubtedly can commit these sins, those people whose basic character is summed up in the uninterrupted and unrepentant practice of them cannot belong to God (see notes on 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 John 3:4-10).

“Shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (see note on Matt. 5:3). The unregenerate are barred from entering the spiritual kingdom of redeemed people over whom Christ now rules, and they will be excluded from His millennial kingdom and the eternal state of blessing that follows it (see note on Eph. 5:5).

What this is really saying is that to continue to do these things would cause you to be a flesh man. Flesh does not inherit the kingdom of God. When you receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior and Lord, this is that old flesh that must be buried. You rise a new person in Christ. The Christian has given his will over to the Spirit of God.

These things may have been in his past, but must not be in his future. I do not mean by this that you never, ever sin again. I mean that this is not your way of life anymore. You become a new creature in Christ. If you do unwillingly sin, ask for forgiveness. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. He intercedes with the Father for us.

Galatians 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,"

“Fruit of the Spirit”: Godly attitudes that characterize the lives of only those who belong to God by faith in Christ and possess the Spirit of God. The Spirit produces fruit which consists of 9 characteristics or attitudes that are inextricably linked with each and are commanded of believers throughout the New Testament.

(1) “Love”: One of several Greek words for love, agape, is the love of choice. Referring not to an emotional affection, physical attraction, or a familial bond, but to respect, devotion, and affection that leads to willing, self-sacrificial service (John 15:13; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 3:16-17).

(2) “Joy”: A happiness based on unchanging divine promises and eternal spiritual realities. It is the sense of well-being experienced by one who knows all is well between himself and the Lord (1 Peter 1:8). Joy is not the result of favorable circumstances, and even occurs when those circumstances are the most painful and severe (John 16:20-22).

Joy is a gift from God, and as such, believers are not to manufacture it but to delight in the blessing they already possess (Rom. 14:17; Phil. 4:4).

(3) “Peace”: the inner calm that results from confidence in one’s saving relationship with Christ. The verb form denotes binding together and is reflected in the expression “having it all together.” Like joy, peace is not related to one’s circumstances (John 14:27; Rom. 8:28; Phil. 4:6-7, 9).

(4) “Patience”: The ability to endure injuries inflicted by others and the willingness to accept irritating or painful situations (Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12; 1 Tim. 1:15-16).

(5) “Kindness”: Tender concern for others, reflected in a desire to treat others gently, just as the Lord treats all believers (Matt. 11:28-29; 19:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:24).

(6) “Goodness”: Moral and spiritual excellence manifested in active kindness (Rom 5:7). Believers are commanded to exemplify goodness (6:10; 2 Thess. 1:11).

(7) “Faithfulness”: Loyalty and trust-worthiness (Lam. 3:22; Phil. 2:7-9; 1 Thess. 5:24; Rev. 2:10).

(8) “Meekness”: A humble and gentle attitude that is patiently submissive in every offense, which having no desire for revenge or retribution. In the New Testament, it is used to describe 3 attitudes: submission to the will of God (Col. 3:12), Teachability (James 1:21), and consideration of others (Eph. 4:2).

(9) “Temperance” or self control. This refers to restraining passions and appetites (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Peter 1:5-6).

The word “fruit” is significant for three reasons.

(1) It means the result, product, outcome, or effect produced by the Spirit in the believer’s life.

(2) Unlike “the gifts of the Spirit” (plural), only some of which are given to a Christian. Each believer is to have all nine virtues composing “the fruit of the Spirit (singular).

(3) As fruit on a tree takes time to grow and mature, so the Spirit does not cultivate these virtues in the believer’s life overnight.

“Fruit of the Spirit”: In contrast to the works (plural), of the flesh, which any individual is capable of performing. The fruit (singular), of the Holy Spirit can be produced only by God. Christian character thus results for “Christ living in me” (2:20). For this fruit to develop, all nine aspects of the fruit of the spirit must mature.

The character of Christ is the fullest manifestation of this fruit in the New Testament. Though Jesus did not recognize the traditions of men, His enemies were unable to prove any charge against Him. So today, Christians should allow the Holy Spirit to develop this character within them, so they might be blameless before others and not hinder the testimony of Christ. (Exodus 35:31; 36:2; Gal. 5:22-23; Phil. 1:6).

Notice the drastic difference in the fruit of the Spirit and the flesh. The fruit of the Spirit is all good. These are the type things that all Christians should have in their life. These seven are

examples of all the rest. Everything good in your life is from the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit of God brings these things into the life of the Christian.

I have found that as we walk with the Spirit in control, these grow every day, until one day we look around and they are all active in our life. Be filled right now, with the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5:23 "Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

"Meekness" is gentleness, that is, courtesy and consideration in one's relations with others.

A humble and gentle attitude that is patiently submissive in every offense, while having no desire for revenge or retribution. In the New Testament, it is used to describe 3 attitudes: submission to the will of God (Col 3:12), teachability (James 1:21), and consideration of others (Eph. 4:2).

"Temperance" or self control: The ability to harness and control one's passions and lusts. This refers to restraining passions and appetites (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Pet. 1:5-6).

"No law": When a Christian walks by the Spirit and manifests His fruit, he needs no external law to produce the attitudes and behavior that please God (Rom. 8:4). As we said earlier, there is no law against all of these good things. We would not even need a police force, if these were active in everyone's lives.

Galatians 5:24 "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

"Have crucified the flesh": One of 4 uses of "crucified" that does not refer to Christ's crucifixion (2:20; 6:14; Rom. 6:6). Here Paul states that the flesh has been executed, yet the spiritual battle still rages in the believer (see notes on Rom. 7:14-25).

Paul's use looks back to the cross of Christ, where the death of the flesh and its power to reign over believers was actually accomplished (Rom. 6:1-11). Christians must wait until their glorification before they are finally rid of their unredeemed humanness (Rom. 8:23), yet by walking in the Spirit they can please God in this world.

At conversion every believer "crucified the flesh," that is, in repentance he turned from and renounced his life of sin and all its wicked passions. This verse then, implies that the virtues of (verses 22-23), rather than the vices of (verses 19-21), should characterize them "that are Christ's."

Notice who does the crucifying. We must crucify our own flesh. We must get in obedience to the Spirit of God. God will not invade the will of man. Operating in our own free will, we must decide to give the Spirit of God control of our will. The Spirit does not lust, that is the flesh.

If we truly are Christ's, then we have turned everything over to Him. A man cannot have two masters, either the flesh will rule, or the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25 "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

“Walk in the Spirit” (see note on verse 16).

This verse means “Since we live by the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.” That is, since the Spirit gave us new life at conversion, we then should stay in step with His leading and promptings throughout life.

What is meant by walking in the Spirit? It means that all of the gifts of the Spirit will be evident in our life. We will no longer have a desire to sin. We will walk in the newness of life that Christ gave us. Our walk should be such that the world around can look at us and see Jesus in us.

Galatians 5:26 "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

To God be the glory for all things. The glory spoken of above, is speaking of one person glorying over another. What we are, what we do, and even what we will become, is because the Lord blessed us. We should not build our self up over others.

One of the problems in our society today is that everyone wants what everyone else has, even if they have not worked to get it. Be satisfied with what you have. If you desire more, work for it. Envy of others will not help you. Work hard; ask God to help you better yourself, and then be happy with what you have, whatever it is.

Galatians Chapter 5 Continued Questions

1. What one word is the law fulfilled in?
2. Beloved, let us _____ one another.
3. Everyone that loveth is _____ of God.
4. What will probably happen, if we bite and devour one another?
5. Where envy and strife is, there is _____.
6. How does James describe the wisdom that is from above?
7. When you walk in the Spirit, you will not fulfill the lust of the _____.
8. What lusts against the Spirit?
9. What are the flesh and the spirit in mortal combat over?
10. What does the flesh center on?

11. How can we overcome the lust of our flesh?
12. When are we not under the law?
13. Name some of the works of the flesh.
14. What two kinds of adultery are spoken of here?
15. What is fornication?
16. What are some of the things witchcraft covers?
17. What does heresies mean?
18. Those who commit these works of the flesh shall not inherit the _____ of _____.
19. These works of the flesh may have been part of your past, but must not be in your _____.
20. Who intercedes for the Christian?
21. Name 7 of the fruits of the Spirit?
22. If we live in the Spirit, let us _____ in the Spirit.
23. Who should all the glory go to.
24. If we want to better our position in life, what should we do?