

The Epistle to the Galatians
Lesson #21 • Galatians 5:19-21

“Life in the Spirit”

Part 2 of 3

• HANDOUT •

► Now, we continue with our study of Life in the Spirit with Part 2 of 3. This study will mainly focus on the works of the “flesh” – those actions we do when we are not walking in the Spirit. Paul builds on the concept he established in our last study: the Spirit and the “flesh” are in conflict with each other. He accomplished this by creating a list, showing the “works of the flesh” compared to “the fruit of the Spirit.” This list provides a measurement for evaluating the conduct of those who consider themselves to be spiritual.

Galatians 5:19-20 • The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

Q: Paul says the “acts of the sinful nature are obvious.” In what way are the acts of the “flesh” obvious? Is he saying that they are being committed publicly, therefore anyone and everyone can see them? Or is he saying something different?

Q: There fifteen [15] acts of the flesh listed in this passage. They seem to be divided naturally into the four distinct categories listed below. How would you divide the 15 “works of the flesh” into the four categories?

1	Sins that are moral violations	2	Sins that are religious in nature	3	Sins that affect our conduct with one another	4	Pagan Sins

Q: Which of the four categories are the greatest problem for most of us?

Q: How would you define each of the “Acts of the Sinful Nature?”

1. “SEXUAL IMMORALITY” [porneia]:

2. “IMPURITY” [akatharsia]:

3. “DEBAUCHERY” [aselgeia]:

4. **“IDOLATRY”** [eidololatria]:
5. **“WITCHCRAFT”** [pharmakeia]:
6. **“HATRED”** [echthrai] :
7. **“DISCORD”** (*eris*):
8. **“JEALOUSY”** (*zelos*):
9. **“FITS OF RAGE”** (*thumoi*):
10. **“SELFISH AMBITION”** (*eritheia*) :
11. **“DISSENSIONS”** (*dichostasia*) :
12. **“FACTIONS”** (*haireseis*) :
13. **“ENVY”** [*phthonoi*]:
14. **“DRUNKENNESS”** [methai]:
15. **“ORGIES”** [komi] :

At the end of Paul's list of these “Acts of the Flesh” he gives a dire warning ...

Galatians 5:21 • I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Q: What is the key to this warning?

Q: How do we determine how to walk in the Spirit when there is a controversy over what should be avoided, even if it is legal by cultural and governmental standards?

1Corinthians 10:23-24 • "Everything is permissible"–but not everything is beneficial.
"Everything is permissible"– but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

Q: How should we understand the statement: *those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God*? Isn't salvation based on God's grace and dependent upon faith in Jesus alone? It shouldn't be based on the way we live – which is a form of works – should it?

The Apostle John makes the truth Paul is teaching abundantly clear to us ...

1 John 3:4-10 • Everyone who sins is breaking God's law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God. And you know that Jesus came to take away our sins, and there is no sin in him. Anyone who continues to live in him will not sin.

But anyone who keeps on sinning does not know him or understand who he is. Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil.

Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God. So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.

**Paul chooses this point in his letter to change his focus:
From the Acts of the Flesh we go to the Fruit of the Spirit.
This is where we will pick up next time ...**



Next Time • Lesson #22

~~ Life in the Spirit ~~

Part 3 of 3

Galatians 5:22-26

