



# World Christian Fellowship

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## Galatians

### Lesson 50 – Works of the flesh

**Galatians 5:16-22**, *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup>envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness*

- Even though we have been justified,
- Even though we have been regenerated,
- Even though we are a new creation,
- Even though we have a new life,
- Even though we have new affections, longings and desires,

Our flesh is still there!

We have not yet reached our glorification. Until our glorification we will not be free from the sinful impulses that remain in our fallen humanity.

So, as believers in Jesus Christ, we need to very clearly understand what is going on in our lives.

Last lesson we came to understand is that there is a standard that has been set for us by God as to how we are to live as believers. At the same time, we fight against our remaining humanness to even come close to that standard.

The standard that God has set for us is very high.

**Matthew 5:48**, *Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

Of course, God cannot set a standard lower than perfection. God who is absolutely holy, holy, holy will always affirm the absolute holy standard as His only acceptable standard.

That is why we must receive full righteousness from Jesus Christ, because we can't be justified by our own righteousness, the standard is too high.

In the matter of sanctification, living our Christian lives, the standard doesn't drop. Now that you become a Christian, God is not making suggestions, but making commands.

The standard hasn't dropped. There is grace and mercy available for us.

We go to the throne of mercy to find that mercy, to find that grace in time of need. But the standard of God does not change, and God's standard is still absolute holiness.

Peter calling the believers to whom he writes to the standard that is the same for us and all believers.

**1 Peter 1:13**, *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

Live according to divine priorities and look for the day when we leave this world and enter into the presence of Christ.

**1 Peter 1:14-16**, *as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;<sup>15</sup> but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,<sup>16</sup> because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

Peter takes it from the book of Leviticus its mentioned many times.

God cannot set a standard lower than His own holiness.

**1 Peter 1:17**, *And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;*

We are to live in the fear of God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We are to pursue holiness at the very divine level.

**1 Peter 1:22**, *Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,*

Now these two things sum up the command for the Christian:  
**Perfect love and Perfect holiness.**

We are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, we are to love our neighbor as ourselves, and we are to be obedient to the law of God perfectly.

That standard of God cannot be lowered.

**1 Peter 2:9-10**, *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; <sup>10</sup> who once were not a people but are now*

*the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

Because of this you have got great implications on your part.

**1 Peter 2:11-12**, *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, <sup>12</sup> having your conduct honourable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

The standard is the same.

- You are a chosen race,
- a royal priesthood,
- a holy nation,
- a people that belong to God, and
- you are to proclaim by what you say and what you live,
- the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

This is a high standard.

This High standard we can attain on our own, which we know that very well.

### **Why?**

Because in our flesh we have only the disobedience and death. Yet this standard is established as the standard by which we are to live.

Remember **1 John 2:6**, *“The one who says he abides in Him”* – you say you belong to Christ, you abide in Christ, you are one with Christ – *“ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.”*

You are to live like Christ; That is the divine standard.

You are called to holiness, to pure love, and to Christlike obedience. Because of that standard being so high and the weakness of our flesh, our only hope for coming anywhere near that standard is to walk by the Spirit. This is what we are studying in Galatians.

**Romans 8:3**, *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

The reason the law can't save anybody is because the law depends on human obedience, human potential, human ability. The law offers no help. The law does not empower anyone, it is weak.

In order to overcome that God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as an offering for sin and condemns sin in the flesh.

**Romans 8:4**, *that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*

Paul is not talking about the fact that the righteousness of God, the law perfectly kept, was imputed to us, accredited to our account – although that is true.

Paul is not talking about our standing or our position, but rather Paul is saying that the requirement of the law can now be fulfilled as we walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

The only way you can live the Christian life is in the power of the Holy Spirit.

If we are going to get anywhere near the standard that God has set, we must have a power that is not natural one but a supernatural one.

That is why we have become the temple of God the Spirit. The Spirit of God has taken up residence in us. Your body is the temple of the Spirit of God. That is true of every believer.

Receiving the Holy Spirit is not subsequent to salvation, it occurs at salvation.

**1 Corinthians 12:3**, *Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

When you are saved, Christ takes you by the power of the Holy Spirit, places you into the body, and then places the Holy Spirit in you to live in you.

If the Holy Spirit is in you, then the Father is in you, and the Son is in you as well as the Spirit, because God is one and indivisible.

God Himself in His fullness dwells in every believer. Therefore, we can live the Christian life.

**Galatians 5:16**, *Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."*

The only way that you overcome your fleshly desires is by walking in the power of the Spirit.

### **What did means?**

One step at a time following the path the Spirit lays out.

It is not some kind of emotional experience.

It is not some kind of miracle.

### **What is ministry of the Holy Spirit?**

You walk in the Spirit when you go the path that the Spirit is moving/leading in.

The path that the Spirit is moving in is the path of divine revelation, it's the will of God.

**Ephesians 5:18**, *"Be filled with the Spirit,"*

The parallel passage,

**Colossians 3:16**, *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."*

So, as the Word of God pours into your life and begins to control your behaviour, under the power of the Word and by the power of the Holy Spirit, you walk in the way of the Holy Spirit.

It isn't something miraculous or your feelings.

The Spirit dwells in us because you love the Lord. You desire to worship God, to please God, to honour God, and serve God.

The normal Christian life is to desire to follow the impulses of the Holy Spirit as He illuminates the understanding of Scripture.

- If you don't understand the Word of God,
- If you don't know what the Word of God teaches,

Then you are limited, and you would not know the path the Spirit of God leads you.

Remember the word of Jesus Christ.

**John 17:17**, *Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

- When you know the Word,
- When you are filled up with the Word,

Then the Word dominates your life, then the Spirit of God prompts you to move in the direction of what Scripture says.

When you continue to do this for a long time then you will start think scripturally. You will be dominated by the Word of God. Eventually you will have mind of Christ and the Holy Spirit will lead you the path to obedience, holiness and Christlikeness.

This is what it means to live the Christian life. It is to walk by the Spirit.

**Romans 7:5**, *For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.*

The problem is when you are in the flesh either you are a believer or not, the law doesn't help you.

- The law arouses sin.
- The law stirs up sin.
- The law rouses new ways for you to be sinful.

Instead of the law limiting or restricting your sin the law aggravates your sin.

The more things you know that God forbids, the more things your fallen flesh longs for. So, Paul says the law just aroused sinful passions.

**Romans 7:8-12**, *But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. <sup>9</sup> I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. <sup>10</sup> And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. <sup>11</sup> For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. <sup>12</sup> Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.*

**What good is the law of God imposed upon a person who is in the flesh?**

It is of no use!

It is not going to produce righteousness.

The Judaizers who had come to Galatia and said, “You can’t be saved or sanctified unless you keep the law.

Remember they were talking about the external religious, ritualistic Mosaic ceremonies not God’s moral law.

**Summary:**

The standard is high, and we are still fleshly.

We have not yet received the redemption of the body;

We still have our fallen flesh.

### **Challenge:**

**How do we live an overcoming life?**

**How do we live a triumphant life?**

**How do we live a joy-filled life?**

**How do we get out of the deeds of the flesh, in verse 19-21?**

**How do we produce the fruit of the Spirit in Verses 22-23?**

That is the question.

### **Answer:**

**V16**, *“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”*

Yes, the flesh is powerful. It is so powerful that Paul says in Romans 7, “I find that I do things I don’t even want to do, and I don’t do things I want to do. I see two laws in me, two principles, two forces.

- One is the law of my mind which loves the Word of God,
- the other is the law of my flesh,

They war against each other. The only way that I can have victory is by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**V17-18**, the things that you please are the desires of the flesh. That is just natural human pleasure and desire.

Your flesh wants what you want but you have been given the Spirit.

Because the Spirit sets His desire against the flesh and is in opposition to what you desire.

The Holy Spirit is there to restrain you from merely doing all the time what you please.

It's by virtue of supernatural power.

**Acts 1:8**, *“When the Holy Spirit will come upon you, you shall receive power,”*

Not only power to proclaim the gospel, it's power against the normal impulses of your fallen flesh. Unrestrained desire, lust comes up out of who we are.

### **Where did Apostle Paul get this?**

Mark 7. Our Lord is the one who initiated this kind of teaching when He taught in the Gospel of Mark.

**Mark 7:18-20**, *So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,<sup>19</sup> because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?”<sup>20</sup> And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man.*

Your problem is not outside of you!

**It is inside of you!!**

All that is wretched and all that is evil comes out of you.

You are not a product of your environment; you are a product of your nature.

It is not because you live in a

- bad neighborhood,
- bad parents,
- bad people,
- bad influence,
- bad culture,
- bad society,
- bad media,
- etc.,

It is because you are rotten from the inside out.

You generate your own sin.

You generate your own pollution.

- You can run away and hide in a cave and you will take your sin with you.
- You could gather with other people in a monastery and try to cut yourself off from the world, and you just have a collection of sinful monks.

- You can't get away from it, you can't run from it because it's in you!

Our Lord gives the list, I am sure Paul learnt it from Him.

**Mark 7:21-23**, *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>22</sup> thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within and defile a man."*

It all comes from the inside of us.

We are sinful to the very core of our nature.

We produce sin.

We generate sin in a natural condition.

In Romans chapter 1 the wrath of God that's revealed.

**Romans 1:18**, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*

What explains here is two things.

- ❖ One, you are like a manufacturing factory produce sin.
- ❖ Secondly, you oppose God and suppress the truth.

This is the human condition.

When that judgment comes.

**Romans 1:24**, *Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves,*

When God unleashes His judgment on a culture or on a society, one of the first things you will see is a sexual revolution.

God turns them over to the lusts of their hearts to impurity to dishonour their bodies.

### **Why did God do that?**

**Romans 1:25**, *who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

Second step in God's wrath.

**Romans 1:26-27**, *For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.<sup>27</sup> Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

Lesbianism and Homosexuality.

So, when God puts judgment on a society, you have a sexual revolution, followed by a homosexual revolution. This is normal

human pattern. They reject God, and eventually the divine Judge lets them go down the path of their own sin.

The final step in judgment.

**Romans 1:28**, *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;*

### **What is a debased/depraved mind?**

A mind that doesn't function.

This is the insanity that has now gripped our society where you are a man and you think you are a woman, or where you are a woman and you think you are a man, where you think gender is fluid. This is insanity.

This is a failure to acknowledge reality. Reality is what is, and you can't create your own reality.

You will have a sexual revolution,  
You will have a homosexual revolution, and  
You will have insanity take over.

This is part of the judgment of God.

Out of that insanity will come all kinds of things that the human soul produces.

**Romans 1:29-31**, *being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,<sup>30</sup> backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,<sup>31</sup> undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;<sup>32</sup> who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.*

You have a society that is completely unleashed in all these patterns of wretchedness.

Man manufactures sin, that people collectively in a culture then collectively manufacture sin. Maybe for a while they are restrained by some affirmation of God.

- When they turn against God,
- When they rebel against God,

the wrath of God is unleashed.

Then you have a full-blown sexual revolution, followed by a full-blown homosexual revolution, followed by the final step, which is a kind of insanity where we don't have any idea what's what in terms of human gender.

That is insane.

That is a depraved mind.

## **What is the contrast between the deeds of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit?**

**V 19-21**, *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: [i]mmorality, impurity, sensuality,<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,<sup>21</sup> envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Things like these means to say this is not an exhaustive list, this is a representative list. This is a suggestive list. These sins are not hidden, we know them very well.

Paul divides the sins that he lists there into four categories.

1. Sin which defiles individual
2. Sin which defiles individual relationship to God
3. Sin which corrupts own life
4. Sin corrupts all other human relations

### **1. Sin which defiles individual**

The sin that defiles the individual: sexual sin.

Paul begins with immorality, impurity, and sensuality.

These are characteristic of every human being's evil desire.

These are collectively characteristic of society.

When a society allows them to run rampage and rejects God, they are multiplied, and face Gods judgment.

The first word is “immorality,” and that’s the word **‘porneia’** from which the word “pornography” comes.

This word means be inclusive of adultery, premarital sexual activity, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, prostitution, pedophilia. Any and all sexually deviant behaviors are encompassed in this word “immorality.”

This is a work of the flesh, not a work of the Spirit.

Christians who call themselves, who are living together as man and woman without marriage. That is the flesh, that is not the work of the Spirit.

There are homosexuals who call themselves Christians and demand to be accepted in the body of Christ.

That is not a work of God, that is a work of the flesh.

Any kind of sexual behavior outside the relationship between a husband and a wife falls into the category of **porneia**.

**1 Corinthians 5:1-5**, *It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife! <sup>2</sup>And you are puffed up, and have not*

*rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. <sup>3</sup>For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. <sup>4</sup>In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>5</sup>deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

**1 Corinthians 6:18**, *Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:3**, *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;*

So, the flesh produces immorality and the flesh is still hanging on, and sometimes this immorality, finds its way, as we saw in Corinthians, into the life of the church.

The second word is the word “impurity/uncleanness,” It’s a Greek word, **akatharsia** is the opposite of pure, it is impure, it is unclean.

So, this simply defines immorality by another word, the word akatharsia is used to describe the puss leaking out of an open wound on a physical body.

The word “sensuality” The Greek word is *‘aselgeia’* means “with no restraint,”. It is without restraint, without limits, with no stopping point, the one who goes so far in lust and desire that there is not end to what the person will do.

## **2. Sin which defiles individual relationship to God**

The defilement of the individual’s relationship to God.  
V 20, “idolatry.”

What comes out of the human heart?

Idolatry. It twists and perverts one’s relationship to the true God.

The flesh will make idols.

The flesh will develop other gods.

The flesh will make you worship

- something,
- someone,
- some event,
- some act,
- some experience,
- some hobby, and
- some form of entertainment.

It makes you to worship that more than you worship God.

It chases you in the direction that is opposite worshipping God.

This encompasses any kind of false religion or any other idol that you might invent in your life, whether it's a material idol, whether it's some kind of goal in life, some kind of achievement, or some kind of object.

Paul uses the word "sorcery." The Greek word is ***pharmakeia*** from which your "pharmacy". Pharmacy is a drug-dispensing business. ***Pharmakeia*** means "drug."

Drugs were associated with ancient religion.

Drugs were used as a common medium in the practice of magic and sorcery and false religions to introduce people supposedly into the presence of the gods.

Aristotle and Polybius and the Septuagint used the word and connect it with witchcraft, because it was common for witches in the ancient world to use drugs.

*Revelation 9:20, But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.*

When God comes in final judgment at the time of tribulation, men don't repent of their idols, and they don't repent of their murders, nor of their drugs, nor of their immorality, nor of their thefts.

### **3. Sin which corrupts own life**

It corrupts all other human relations. The most of these identifications are attributed to this category of human relations.

“Enmities” is the first word, *echthra*. It means “hatred, hatred.”

#### **What is that in the flesh is for you to hate?**

Its natural.

You may find some people that you love your children and your spouse and family. But basically, the flesh hates by nature.

It’s the opposite of love and this word has the idea of hostility.

It’s a plural use of the word, so it’s “hatreds.” We are marked by all kinds of hatreds. There are hatreds at every level and for almost every occasion.

### **4. Sin corrupts all other human relations**

As a result of those hatreds, the flesh is marked by *contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,* <sup>21</sup> *envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries,*

We are also marked by “jealousy,”

#### **What is natural to you?**

Work of the flesh!

This is human life.

V 21, Paul says, *“I forewarn you now, I am telling you now, and I have told you before, those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

That is absolute.

It is not what you profess, it is how you behave!

That is why the Bible says men are going to be judged on their works, because their works are an evidence of their nature, if that’s what you do.

Those whose lives are marked by these things, they are not in the kingdom, they are not God’s children, they are not on the way to heaven. People who do that fall into the category of

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11**, *“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”*

People who behave like that are on their way to hell.

**1 John 3:4-5**, *Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. <sup>5</sup>And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.*

Now let me remind you of that.

Jesus appeared not only that you might be justified, but that you might be converted.

Not only that you might have the righteousness of God imputed to you, but that sin might be taken away from your life.

What happened when you became a believer was He took sin away, not only the guilt of sin forensically, but the power of sin really.

He took sin away and you know that He appeared to take away sins.

**1 John 3:6-9**, *Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. <sup>7</sup>Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. <sup>8</sup>He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. <sup>9</sup>Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed*

*remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*

The children of God and the children of the devil are obvious:

anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.”

So, if your life is marked by the deeds of the flesh, you are in the flesh, you are not in the kingdom of God.

Kingdom people, while they struggle with those things that are of the flesh, walk in the direction of the Spirit by the power of the Spirit and the blessing a regenerated heart.

Christians will sin, but the course of their life is the pattern of righteousness.

I have often said it this way: it is not the perfection of your life, but it is the direction of your life.

All this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

If you were left to your own flesh, you couldn't please God, even if God gave you the law.

You can give this person who is completely under the control of the flesh all the laws of morality and religion that you want, but

they don't have the power to keep any of them, because the flesh is weak, and the law gives no power at all.

The only way we can ever do what is right is when we have the Holy Spirit in us.