

"EIGHTEEN WORKS OF THE FLESH"

Gal. 5:17

INTRODUCTION:

Every believer is the scene of a Civil War. The old man, the flesh, (or) the Spirit is governor of life.

Some old houses have dark basements. One might find there an old broken chair, empty fruit jars, old trunks, broken down beds, old pictures that are stored, broken down furniture - it is a damp place. Spider webs are plentiful and crickets sing. And an old frog gets in occasionally. It is dark down there. And you need a flashlight or a lantern to see your way around. Every thing you see there brings back memories and reminds you of something of the past. And this junk is always present.

In fact, there is a man in you that lives in the basement. He is knocking at your door. He wants to get in. There is a war going on. And Satan makes all sorts of temptations to get upstairs.

Now it is true - a man has two natures. Even a believer. When God saves us, it does not destroy the old carnal nature, when we receive the new birth. There is a conflict, and many of us have known this since we have been converted. It is a conflict between flesh and spirit. Jesus said, that which is born of the flesh is flesh. And that is the old nature. And that which is born of the spirit is spirit. And that is the new nature. These two natures stand (side by side) until we are received in the redemption of the body at the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we learn to walk in accordance with the new nature, the new spirit, the new birth is in operation.

It is so easy to fulfill the lust of the flesh. The desires of the flesh.

Now it is one thing to say that you have the Spirit dwelling within you. But it is quite another thing to walk in the Spirit. As the Holy Spirit implies.

But the works of the flesh means that you live on the (worldly) plain. You yield to these things of the world. And your life becomes self-centered. The flesh desire is one thing and the Spirit desires another thing. The warfare is like this -- I rise up this morning and I say today, I will not allow that tongue of mine to say one unkind thing, one unChrist-like word. Some unexpected circumstance arises, and almost before I know it - I have said something for which I could bite my tongue. The thing I never meant to do, I did. On the other hand, things I meant to do - I did not do.

What does that tell me. There is a conflict. The Spirit of God has not had his complete right of way in my heart. I am hindered - and my life is not a life of full surrender. So many defeated lives, disappointed lives - why? Because the Spirit of God is not supreme.

Now Paul was by no means the first person to see life in terms of internal conflict. The Jews had such a doctrine. The good nature and the evil nature in man

as they saw it. There were two men who were always in the situation. Being drawn in two different directions - one, and at the same time.

Even the imagination of a man's heart is evil according to Gen. 8:21.

And what was true of the Hebrew thought - was equally true of the Greek thought. They (described) it as the soul - a chariot driver has a double harness on two horses. One of the horses a noble breed. The other was the opposite in character. The noble horse was (reason). The untamed horse was (passion). The horse of evil nature weights the chariot down, pulls it to the earth. A picture of the warfare and tension in a man's life. What then is the reason for this warfare. Wherein lies the power of the evil force.

Man is to have a vital connection with the Spirit. The Spirit indicates that he has the very life of God within him. In the ancient world it was (a seal) - (a trade-mark) that was used. For an article. So for instance, here was a jar that was sealed with the owner of the vineyard from which they came. This then means the possession of the Holy Spirit is the (guarantee) that a man belongs to God. And (if) a man has the Spirit - that man's life is the product of the workmanship of God. In the thought of Paul, the Spirit of man is the part of man which is implanted in him by God. It is the presence and the power of God in him. It is the coming of the risen Christ to reside within him. And the result of this is a new fellowship and a new link with God's power.

But (inspite) of this - there is the flesh. We are always in danger of this mortal body. Romans 6:6. Which is doomed to death. Romans 7:24, 8:10. And it

is dead because of sin. So the body here is a part of man. And yet, it is a part of man that has sinned.

Paul goes further to say that the flesh is in deadly warfare against the soul. He uses a term called Spirit. It is very much more than the body. In the thought of Paul, the sins of the flesh include far more. Than the fleshly sins - which have to do with the body. And Paul lists the works of the flesh - and he certainly begins with immorality. And he goes on. Beyond that. The sins of the flesh in a normal modern sense of the term, are far from being the only sins of the flesh that Paul has in mind.

We come to this that Paul says - to live in the flesh is the precise opposite of being a Christian. You are not in the flesh - you are in the Spirit. Romans 8, 9, 12. It is the non-Christian man who lives in the flesh. And Paul looks back on the time while we were living in the flesh. A Christian has crucified the flesh. With the passions and the desires to live in the flesh - which is opposite to the life of the Spirit. But in Christ, he is to be a Christian.

So to be dominated by the flesh is to be dominated by sin, Paul says. Flesh is the great enemy of the good life.

And we are responsible for the human situations. That even though nothing good dwells in us, it is the flesh that man serves the lost sin, Romans 7:25. And a man cannot please God. I Cor. 3:1-3. Romans 8:8. Worse than that, it is essentially hostile to God. Romans 8:7. It is quite clear then, that we have a considerable problem here as we think about the flesh, that is going to reap corruption. But he who

sows to the Spirit, he is going to reap eternal life. If a man sows in the field of his lower nature, he will reap from it a harvest of corruption. But if he sows in the field of the Spirit, the Spirit will bring him a harvest of eternal life. In all of these cases, we discover, concerning flesh - flesh, is clearly not just a body. But it is equally clear - it is thought of Paul that the flesh is not just the natural man. But Paul says the flesh becomes the unChristian man. The pagan man. And it does not need to be totally bad. Even though, a man has this nature. He can live on this lower level. But Paul says, he is capable of goodness. Now, man cannot make a fruit. That is to say, man can easily produce evil for himself. Paul calls this the works of the flesh. The truth is, that here is the lower nature of man. The essence of flesh, the Army that comes to invade must have a bridge here. They must have somebody to open the gate. Temptation can gain no foothold. Unless somebody is willing to open the door. And let sin invade. And the flesh is like that. The flesh opens wide the gate to the enemy.

It is plainly understood that the flesh is contrary to the spirit of grace.

And by flesh, the whole man is meant by the Spirit.

Since the fruits ~~are~~ works, are difference, these take place in the body.

Did you not know said Paul, that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Your body. So the whole man is involved here in the condition that he is in.

Now this includes all desires of the natural man. Not only his appetites. But

his passion. But the animal part of him that lusts after evil.

Now in these two sermons, one today - and one next week hopefully - we are going to discover how life differs in practice according to the flesh and according to the Spirit.

Now Paul catalogues the crimes and the vices. He lists these. And of course, this is not a complete list.

In Mark 7:20-23, Jesus gave a long list of evil. Coming out of the heart of man. He listed 13 things or more, that would come directly out of the heart of man - out of the flesh.

Now Paul had experienced after his conversion, a terrible conflict. Between the higher and the lower nature.

And he knew what it was to try to serve two Masters. He confessed to being carnal, fleshly minded. Sin was lurking, he said, in the flesh.

But in Gal. - we discover here that he lists a long list of things. At least 18 things. Probably two or three of these were not in the original group.

Dr. Robertson says this is the lively list of sins. Lively and earthly.

The Catholic (Roman Catholic) lists seven deadly sins. Gluttony and laziness. Which are not included in either of these lists of Paul or Jesus.

But Paul takes a look at himself. We will do that which we would not. The nature of a man stays in conflict. And the flesh forces him to do what a saved man knows is wrong.

Thus, he is cautioning men to really know what is down in the basement of their lives. By these 18 works of the flesh. Which we will now consider. Paul does not attempt to oppose each fruit of the Spirit. With each work of the flesh. Nor does he set one over and against the other. He barely gives us a long list of vices. And as we search these, we will discover that these are present today in our own world. Rightly used, many of these things that Paul mentions can be a blessing. Wrongly used - they become a great curse.

Basket ball score 18 points - Someone try so little that you can play B.B. Bare hole in each end court - little in hole instead of hoop

Let us look at these 18 - and this list we shall comment very briefly - so that we might cover the entire list.

1. Adultery. Now the works of the flesh are manifest - they are evident.

Which are these. Adultery. Maybe some of you think or say, I wish the Preacher would not use these words. I do not like them. They are nasty words. My friend, let me remind you, there is nothing the matter with the words. It is the sins that are expressed in these words, that are so evil. Many people who do not like these words are living in sin. And God drags things out into the light. And he calls sin by name. There are people living in the sin of adultery. Who do not like to hear their wickedness called by name. You take the words of Jesus in Mathew 5:32,

16
Whosoever shall put away his wife, say for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery. Whosoever shall marry her, that is divorced committed adultery. There are those committing adultery, according to that passage. And others are thinking about it.

If you have allowed yourself any unholy love, permitting yourself any unholy familiarity that you seek to enter a marred relationship. You are guilty in God's sight of the sin that is mentioned here.

Modern Man: Calls this "Living Together"
God: "Adultery"

2. Fornication. Which is well known enough and means - sexual intercourse with a pre-marital or extra-marital. It is a word for unlawful and immoral sex relationships. The truth of the matter is, that love may be bought and sold. Which is not love at all. He may be a true instrument here in this sin. It is significant that it is with this sin that Paul begins something of the (immoral) life.

Jay Chapman, "describing the time in which the first century writers were writing, said that some lived in an age (when shame) seems to have vanished from the earth."

In Greece there had never been any shame in relationships before marriage or outside marriage. It was common place to keep a mistress for pleasure.

For the day to day needs of the body. But we have wives, the historian said, in order to produce children, in a legitimate way. To have a trustworthy guardian for our homes.

Nature - my husband fights all the time!!
-9-
In Rome, things had been very different and purity had been the rule. But in this the conquered and the conqueror - Rome learned the sins of Greece.

Still worse, was the unnatural vice, that was even in the household of the ruler. Incest. One living with his sister. And not even the mother was spared. From the highest to the lowest, society was filled with homosexuality. This was a vice which Rome learned from Greece.

It was like a fungus spreading through a forest. It was better not to need marriage. But to follow Plato and Socrates and to be content. With the love of boys. In literature, they played up homosexuality. Gibbon writes, of the first fifteen ~~emperors~~ *Emperors* Claudius was the only one's whose taste in love was entirely correct. All of the others gave way to their passion.

Against this sexual immorality, Paul's face is set. He finds that a man is living with his father's wife. I Cor. 5:1. And he speaks of the immorality that is very prevalent.

3. Uncleanness. Here is impurity in a broader term. Meaning unclean. It denotes moral depravity.

Impurity of mind - unclean lives. Fowl desires. Eph. 4:19. Based motives. I Thess. 2:3. Indecency. Eph. 5:3. Sexual immorality. Eph. 5:3. Dirty mindedness. Col. 3:5.

So here is a word in this physical world, in which the matter of uncleanness - like a house that is unclean.

Like the ownership of the house - the outgoing tenant. Undertakes to leave the house clean. The house is to be left clean - free from dirt. And this is what this is closely connected with. That here is a life that becomes filled with dirt. Dirtiness - such as impurity. This is a term that can be applied in the medical world. That things have to be clean. And of course there are rituals and other things in which people think of things ceremonially. But moral uncleanness. It is a quality here in which something is soiled and dirty. And the impurity is repulsive in quality. And the idea is that its going to separate a man from God. God is pure. Here is a man that is unclean.

4. Lasciviousness. Now this has to do with indency and sensuality. This is a word that speaks of vile, filthy thoughts. That people indulge in. It comes into a (man's mind) and it makes him unholy. It's complete (wantedness) in sex relations. He no longer cares what people think or say about his actions. Early preachers and their Gentile conduct had to deal with these issues because the Gentiles generally felt that sexual immorality was not only present - but it was condoned. It was regarded not as something abnormal - but something that was expected.

Today's world is a world that over-emphasizes sex. And many people are making this an idol. And it's instead - of putting it in a holy and a rightful place.

We find that it is defined as meaning readiness to indulge in any pleasure.

Here then we have the meaning - it denotes sin, that is open. And that we have ceased to regard anyone for what they may think, may feel, or what they may say. It is undisciplined action. It has respect neither for man nor the rights of anyone else. And it is completely indifferent toward public opinion or public decency. A man starts off to do wrong in secret. At the beginning - he has one enemy - to satisfy his desire and to hide it from the eyes of men. But he may love the wrong thing until it has mastered him and he is not as much ashamed of it. So openly he does it. And he no longer cares what others see. Or what others may say or what others may think.

5. Idolatry. On the face of it - this has to do with the worship of idols. For modern man to understand this - that putting anything in place of the true and the living God. How does a man take a piece of wood or stone and shape that and carve it - and then bow down and worship it. As they did - the Goddess, Diana in the famous temple in Ephesus.

And an idol had a couple of functions. It was first localized, as a God. And then it was meant to visualize the God it represented. I suppose at first, an idol is not meant to be worshipped. It was simply to make it easier for a man to worship God. But soon, a man takes the idol and that becomes his God.

And here is the first basic error. It is interesting that idol worship comes immediately after a group of words describing sexual sins. In the ancient world sexual sin and immorality were (closely connected) Solomon says the idea of making idols was the beginning of fornication. And the invention of them was the corruption of life.

Jeremiah described idols as termite ridden roofs, ⁴⁰batts, birds, and cats. Not Gods at all. But the best work of man's hand. They were helpless useless.

6. Witchcraft. This had to do with sorcery. And it was the matter of the use of drugs. The words begins in its base meaning - to denote the misuse of drugs. The use of drugs to poison. And not to cure. So finally it takes on its meaning as sorcery and witchcraft. For instance, in Egypt, they had these charmers. Ex. 7:11, 8:18, and magic and witchcraft is one of the sins which Isaiah foretells the destruction of Babylon. Isaiah 47:9-12.

This is the matter of magic and arts that have been practiced. So the magicians use drugs for witchcraft. It is not just confined to ancient pagans. But here in America there are those who resort to forms of magic and superstition. Before they fail to realize it. For example, a horoscope. As a guide to living is one example. The misuse of drugs is another. To produce effects. So I think to get the sensation that I want in a normal and a natural way - use other methods. Christianity grew up in an age when the use of sorcery and magic arts was wide spread.

There were those who put stripes on a person. And a cursing prayer that was dedicated to the Spirits of the underworld. And bones were buried under a man's house to have relationship to his own death. And they tell how this was done in places of murder. The evil was universal - fear. In the ancient world, magical practice in Acts 19:19 - there were experts. And they burned their books. And Paul gave a demonstration of power in the name of Jesus.

Here is a point of a fact about the works of the flesh. Everyone of them is a

perversion of something within itself is good. Immorality, impurity, lasciviousness,
sexual instinct, idolatry perverts worship. Sorcery takes healing drugs which can be
used as medicine and turn them around for that which is evil.

So Jesus prayed Thy will be done. And all of these things are competitors of
true religion. Claiming to specialize in the impossible. It prostituted faith to
superstition, and divorced it from religion and ethics.

Today, some professed Christians use magic in being successful in performing
a few miracles.

Peter warned Simon Magus that possession of the Holy Spirit required a heart.
Act. 8:14-24.

Paul's spiritual arithmetic was - faith plus miracles minus love amounts
exactly to zero.

There are those who pretend to have traffic with the dead. This is an
abomination in the sight of God.

7. Hatred. This is a sin which we have to guard against. The Scripture
says whoever hateth his brother, I John 3:15. Hatred comes from the old nature.

It is emnity. It brings on quarrels for example. It is not necessary to spend a long time discussing the meaning of this word. But it appears in the New Testament - Romans 8:7 - that the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God. The outlook of the lower nature is emnity with God. There was emnity between class and class. And then, we discover, that the iron curtain of racial prejudice and racial bitterness is no new thing. Which produces racial riots. And it is something that is as old as civilization. And Paul stands condemned in the Christian faith.

8. Variance. This is disputing. A contentious temper. (Quarrelsome.)

There are many of us who would shrink from the first sins that we have mentioned. But we are not very easy to get along with. Some people are very touchy. And this is a true evidence of the works of the flesh. This is the works of the old nature. In the New Testament, strife is always an evil thing. And Paul said, it was a part of the pagan world. The world is divided because of this emnity. Which people have. But in Christ, there is unity in life. So here is the significant thing. There is no sin that more commonly invades the church, and that is more destructive to Christian fellowship. Whenever it can gain entry in the church. It cannot get in if Christ is supreme.

9. Emulations. This has to do with jealousy. This is a constant desire to excell so that we'll be admired by other people. That here is one who sings a little better than someone else. And it excites admiration. But there is trouble about it. Here is a Sunday School Teacher - but some other teacher seems to be preferred before her. And she is in a frinzie and almost ready to quit her work. When you trace these

things back to their source, you will find that they all come from the flesh. Therefore, they should be judged in the sight of God. Emulations mean jealousy, rivalry. And envying. The words here taken together. Here is a man, who at the sight of someone else possessing a thing, that he does not have. Will do the utmost to prevent the other man from possessing it. It is ill nature. Maybe it is true - say, there is no better test than his reaction to the greatness or success of someone else.

10. Wrath. This may be a fit of rage, temper, outburst, passion. A word that is almost unlimited in its potential for good as well as for evil. It can describe the quality of a good character - and also that of a bad character. It can be used of man in a bad sense. Cain departed from wisdom in anger. And through this, destroyed his brother.

On the other hand, we may say that this can be used of God - who has mercy and wrath. Who can deal with sinners. Who can warn them of the judgement to come. Paul wrote at one time - be angry and sin not. Eph. 4:26. The usefulness of medicine as here is anger. But if it is for a selfish purpose - such as pride, then it is wrong. But it can be a weapon used by God.

11. Strife. This means factions - secret grudges. It means contentions. There are many many things that we could weave into the matter of strife. Which results in seditions. In general, meaning it is plain enough. It describes a wrong attitude. In the doing of work or the holding of an office.

Phil. 1:17 - Paul uses this in a matter of proclaiming the Gospel.

It is something like
the great Japanese
Christian. Who said I cannot

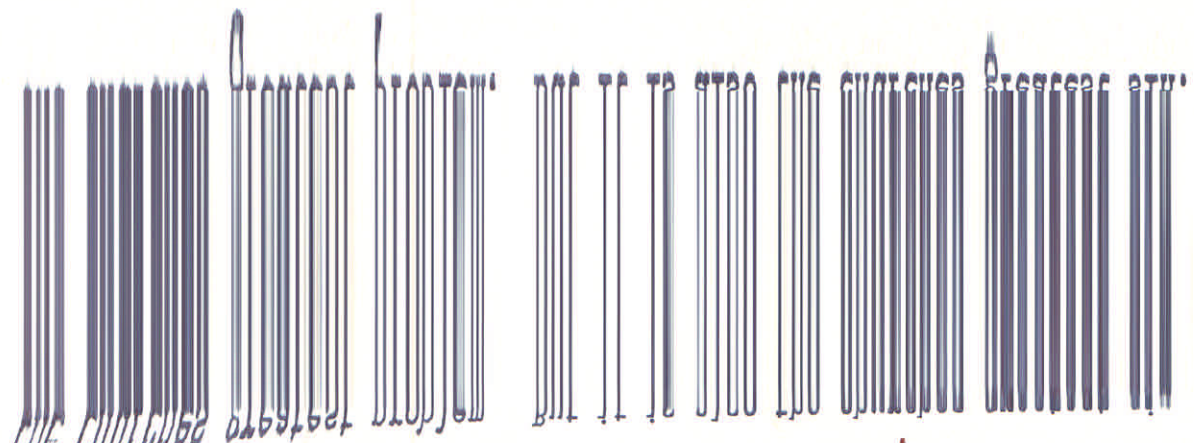
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There were those who preached - but were more frustrated than in exalting Christ. He urges them, as he tells, of the emptying of Christ. He says, it is bad that this splitting parties are in the world. But when it invades the church, it is a tragedy. But yet in fact, it does. Those who are in church work, whose own design is for prominence and importance. And who are bitterly disappointed when they do not receive the place of honor. They believe they have earned it. And then there are those who are cruel, it seems, who serve on committees. Because these are the one place in the world where they can succeed in being someone. And this voluntary service is gratifying for them in their desire for power.

In the church, this is the worst type.

When one is more interested in self than the general welfare of the church, Christ needs to be the center.

12. Seditions. So here is something that has to do with taking delight. In vexing or (picking fights). Here are two that are hostile, and they take every opportunity to rangle, over some issue. So it leads to divisions, resentments, and those who cause trouble. What a work of the flesh this is that Paul has something to say on. It is a picture, literally, a standing a part. The fellowship, all togetherness is gone. It may be well that the greatest problem that the church of the present faces, is the problem of her own disunity. This may, and could be the churches greatest problem. But it is also the churches greatest sin.



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