

How to Overcome Carnality, Part 2 - Galatians 5:19-21 – November 5th, 2017

- Today's teaching will be part two of a series I've titled, "How to Overcome Carnality."
- For those of you who read ahead to stay ahead, you're already aware of what's before us in this well known scripture passage.
- Namely, that of the fruit of the Spirit as it's contrasted with the works of the flesh specifically related to our overcoming the flesh.

- Thankfully, this is one of those places in the Word of God where we have the "what" of God's Word packaged with the "how."
- As such, woven into the fabric of our text, are very practical ways in which we as Christians can overcome the lusts of the flesh.
- Last week we looked at two of the "how's" and this week we'll look at one more but first let's revisit the first two ways in v.13-18.

1. Humbly serve and love one another – (Verses 13-15)

- Here, Paul is saying that in order to not use our freedom to indulge the flesh, we're to serve one another humbly in love instead.

2. Stay busy in and be led by the Spirit – (Verses 16-18)

- What Paul is saying is if we're in step with, busy in and led by the Spirit, we won't have time to, nor be able to gratify the flesh.

3. Starve the lion of the flesh – (Verses 19-21)

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- I think you would agree with me when I say this is quite a list, in the sense that it includes everything from sexual sin to partying.
- It's important to understand what Paul is saying in verse 21, about those who live like this not inheriting the kingdom of God.
- Paul is not referring to those who struggle with the flesh, rather, those who desire to, and love to, live according to the flesh.

- If you're anything like me and I suspect that you are, you're prone to just quickly read through a list like this without any thought.
- However, I would suggest to do so is to err greatly by virtue of the implications of each and every one of the works of the flesh.
- I'm hoping you'll kindly indulge me as we take a closer look at them, because it will be germane to our understanding of them.

- The first one listed is that of sexual immorality, which in the original language of the Greek New Testament is the word, porneia.
- It's the English word pornography. It's sexual sin including adultery, sex outside marriage, and fornication, sex before marriage.
- The next one is impurity, or as some translations render it, uncleanness, which means someone not living a pure and holy life.

- The third one is debauchery, also translated lasciviousness or licentiousness, which can mean doing anything without a license.
- Fourth is idolatry, which means worshipping another god. The fifth is witchcraft, which in the Greek is the word "pharmakeia."
- In English it is "pharmacy," and speaks to the use of drugs as a satanic gateway inducing an altered state of consciousness.

- The next ones are hatred, discord, jealousy; fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions factions and envy, which all go together.
- The reason being is hatred due to jealousy, selfish ambition, and envy, leads to discord, fits of rage, dissensions and factions.
- It's interesting to note that these would be included in a list with such things as last two in verse 21, drunkenness and orgies.

- It's also interesting to note that we have similar lists like this elsewhere in scripture, one of which is in Paul's letter to Colossae.

Colossians 3:1–10 — 1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. 5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV) — 9 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 homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Ephesians 5:3–5 (NKJV) — 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

- Here's the bottom line in closing, if we are ever to have any hope of overcoming the lusts of the flesh, we must put it to death.
- We do this by not feeding those desires, or putting ourselves in an environment that's conducive to us being overcome by it.
- There's one verse in Romans that I'll end with because I think it speaks very specifically to this matter of overcoming the flesh.

Romans 13:14 (NKJV) — 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.