**Sins of The Flesh**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Galatians 5:16-21**

**Wednesday Evening**

**September 14, 2022**

**Galatians 5:16-21**

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 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. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

21 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.

**16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**

**Holy Spirit**

God sent the Holy Spirit to be with and within his followers after Christ had returned to heaven.

**John 14:25-30**

25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. 30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Saints, the phrase conveys the meaning of the literal translation “by the Spirit keep on walking.” Walking means “living” in this context, and it emphasizes the moment-by-moment contact with and guidance by the Holy Spirit for daily decisions and activities.

Living “according to the Spirit” should be a daily, continuous action by Christians. He is always present, but we must be in touch with him and stay open to his guidance and correction.

The result? You won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. When we become believers, our sinful nature still exists. But God asks us to place our sinful nature under the control of the Holy Spirit so that he can transform it.

This is a supernatural process. We must never underestimate the power of our sinful nature, and we must never attempt to fight it in our own strength.

Satan is a crafty tempter, and we have a limitless ability to make excuses. Instead of trying to overcome sin by our own willpower, we must take advantage of the tremendous power of Christ.

God provides for victory over our sinful nature—he sends the Holy Spirit to live in us and give us power. But our ability to restrain the desires of the sinful nature depends on how much we’re willing to “live according to” the Holy Spirit.

For each believer, this daily process requires moment-by-moment decisions.

**17 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.**

Saints, while believers live in this world, they face constant tension between their old sinful nature and what the Holy Spirit wants.

We must not infer from Paul’s words that our personality has two selves, nor that we have two equal and opposite forces struggling to gain control.

In Christ and in the Holy Spirit, we have a victorious new resurrection life. The Holy Spirit in us guarantees our future total redemption and change.

Though we have new life in Christ, we still have a mind and body prone to rebel and enticed by sinful desires. We must resist those desires.

**Romans 7:18-21**

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

Saints, we often experience resistance when we follow the Spirit’s leading. Satan serves as a persistent teacher of rebellion, and humanity has had centuries of practice. Whatever path we choose, we will hear the whispers of opposition—our choices are never free from this conflict.

Whenever we set out to do what the Holy Spirit instructs, we can expect our sinful nature to flare up in opposition. When we decide to share the gospel, our sinful human nature will make us feel foolish.

When we decide to commit ourselves to some service, evil desires hinder us, trying to thwart the leading of the Spirit. Conversely, each time we follow our sinful human nature, we will receive (through our consciences, God’s word, or even other believers) reminders not to follow those sinful desires.

True believers realize the deadly power of sin. No longer their master, sin now attacks like a powerful enemy. These two forces within are constantly fighting each other. Sinful desires still pop up, like guerrilla forces, attacking us when we least expect it.

**18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

Saints, freedom from the law does not imply freedom to do whatever we please. Neither do we live in the Spirit in some sort of “middle ground.”

Instead, we live on another plane altogether—we have truth as opposed to falsehood; we have grace as opposed to works; we act out of love as opposed to being subject to the law.

Saints, we are supervised by the Spirit as opposed to being supervised by the law.

**19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,**

**21 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.**

Saints, Paul contrasted the desires of the sinful nature and the works of the Spirit-filled life. Paul’s list of sins falls into four categories.

These particular sins were especially prevalent in the pagan world, and the Galatians would have readily understood them. With few exceptions, we recognize these sins as present in our own time as well.

In the first category three sexual sins are mentioned:

**1. Sexual Immorality**

Any form of illicit sexual relationship. The term serves to spotlight forbidden sexual behavior between people or indirect participation as an audience.

**2. Impure Thoughts**

Moral uncleanness. Perhaps no sexual act has taken place, but the person exhibits a crudeness or insensitivity in sexual matters that offends others.

An example today would be the excessive use of sexual humor (or what is supposed to be humor) where people make statements with a sexual double meaning.

**3. Eagerness for Lustful Pleasure**

Open and excessive indulgence in sexual sins. The person has no sense of shame or restraint. This is the outworking of sexual immorality and impurity.

Saints, the next two sins are religious sins particular to pagan culture:

**1. Idolatry—Worship of Pagan Idols**

A person creates substitutes for God and then treats them as if they were God. This person is giving in to sinful human desires.

**2. Participation in Demonic Activities**

Involvement with the powers of evil, at times using potions and poisons. With idolatry, a person acts in a submissive role in relation to evil; with demonic activity, the person is an active agent who serves the powers of evil.

Saints, the next eight sins pertain to conduct toward people (interpersonal relations) that has been motivated by sinful desires. It’s sad to note, but many of these social sins are often seen in our churches today:

**1. Hostility**

A condition of fixed enmity between groups. This may be real, unresolved conflict whose cause has been forgotten but which has yielded a harvest of bitterness.

**2. Quarreling**

Competition, rivalry, bitter conflict—the seeds and the natural fruit of hatred.

**3. Jealousy**

A feeling of resentment that someone else has what another feels he or she deserves.

**4. Outbursts of Anger—Selfish Anger**

The plural form conveys the meaning of continual and uncontrolled behavior.

**5. Selfish Ambition**

The approach to life and work that tries to get ahead at other people’s expense. Not only might this refer to what we call “workaholism,” it also implies a mercenary, aggressive attitude toward others in the pursuit of one’s goals.

**6. Divisions**

Strong disagreements or quarrels. The situation that can quickly develop between people when a disagreeable attitude prevails.

**7.** **The Feeling that Everyone is Wrong except those in your Own Little Group**

Dissension created among people because of divisions. This describes the tendency to look for allies in conflict. The almost spontaneous generation of cliques demonstrates this characteristic of sinful human desires.

**8. Envy**

A desire to possess something awarded to or achieved by another. Or even the twisted logic that cries “Unfair!” about another’s circumstances and expresses the wish, “If I can’t have that, they shouldn’t get it either!”

Saints, finally Paul lists three sins, that were common back then and practiced today as well:

**1. Drunkenness**

Excessive use of wine and strong drink.

**2. Wild Parties**

Drunken, carousing “parties,” often filled with sexual promiscuity, were associated with festivals of some pagan gods. The feasts in honor of Bacchus were particularly infamous for their immorality.

**3. And Other Kinds of Sins**

Paul added an “etc.” to show that the list was by no means complete.

Saints, anyone living that sort of life refers to the lifestyle of people who habitually exhibit these characteristics.

This does not mean that believers who lapse into any of these sins will lose their salvation and their inheritance. God will chastise His children.

But people who habitually exhibit these characteristics reveal themselves to be enslaved to sinful human nature. They are not children of God; thus, they cannot have any part in the inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

People who have accepted Christ and have the Holy Spirit within them will manifest that new life by making a clean break with such sins as listed above.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**