

"The Application of Grace"

Galatians 5-6

Part 4

Introduction: Last week in our study we started into what can be considered to be the most important portion of this letter for the believer.

Notice Galatians 5:16

Here we considered a command and a promise. The command tells us this is not something that naturally happens when we are saved. This is taking one step at a time. It is a learning process. It is learning to depend upon the Holy Spirit to give us victory over the flesh. It is learning to walk by faith in what the Bible says about us as believers. When we walk in the Spirit, the promise is that we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. The Law could never do this for the believer. It can show man his problem but it offers no remedy. That is also the problem with following rules made by a church or by anyone. The list of rules offers no remedy. To follow rules or the Law is to walk in the power of the flesh which leads only to a life of frustration.

Romans 7:18

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Notice Galatians 5:17

Here Paul talks about the conflict that exists within each believer. There is within each of us who are saved, two natures and they clash with one another. The Divine nature was given the moment we were saved and when we submit to Him, we are walking in the Spirit and we have victory over sin. The sin nature is something that we were born with. It was inherited from Adam and it has been stripped of his power but he is still with us. He still wants to be in control and the flesh/sin nature despises the things of God. We looked at a picture of this in the book of Esther last week. Haman despised Mordecai and all the Jews. It was his desire to kill each and every one of them. I want you to notice another lesson from Esther.

Esther 3:1-6, 10

After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

² And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

³ Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

⁴ Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

⁵ And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

⁶ And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

¹⁰ And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

¹³ And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

¹⁴ The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

¹⁵ The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; **but the city Shushan was perplexed.**

The city was **perplexed** because Haman was given authority by the king. The word "perplexed" means they were entangled in a state of confusion. This is what happens to the believer who is under the control of the flesh. There is no spiritual stability in their life. They are double minded as they try to live for God and they try to please the flesh. When the flesh is permitted to be in control in the believer's life there will be no peace or stability. There is also something else.

Esther 4:1

When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry;

Mordecai represents the Holy Spirit here and we see that he was deeply grieved when Haman was in control. This is what happens in the believer when the flesh is permitted to rule in our lives. This grieves the Holy Spirit and we are therefore walking in our own power which will certainly lead to a fall.

Notice Galatians 5:18

To be under the Law is bondage but to walk in the Spirit is liberty/freedom. This now brings us to where we are in our study tonight.

➤ **Walking in the Spirit**

➤ **Part 2**

Now as we move on Paul is going to remind his readers about what the flesh will produce in a person's life. For those who desired to live under the Law and walk by the flesh he reminds them here how sinful the flesh is.

Notice Galatians 5:19

The works of the flesh are "manifest" which means they are known and often displayed in public. I believe that what Paul says here helps us to understand just what the culture was like in his day. Now in this section Walvoord says that the sins are in 4 categories.

1. Sexual sins.
2. Religious sins.
3. Societal sins.
4. Sins related to alcohol.

The sexual sins are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness. Why does Paul present these sexual sins first? Most likely it is because of what was happening in the Roman Empire. Immorality was completely out of control. We see that in the church at Corinth.

1 Corinthians 5:1-2

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

² *And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.*

Let us look a little closer at the sins.

Adultery - This is exactly what we would think. It is unfaithfulness to one's spouse.

Fornication - *The Greek word is "porneia" and it covers a variety of sins. Notice the words from the Expositors Greek Testament.*

The term porneia (fornication) is to be taken in its proper sense and is not to be restricted to any one particular form—the license practiced at heathen festivals, concubinage, marriage within prohibited degrees, or the like. The moral life of the Greco-Roman world had sunk so low that, while protests against the prevailing corruption were never entirely wanting, fornication had long come to be regarded as a matter of moral indifference, and was indulged in without shame or scruple, not only by the mass, but by philosophers and men of distinction who in other respects led exemplary lives."

Christianity brought chastity, a virtue that was foreign to the Greco-Roman world. Into this world of pagan idolatry where sexual immorality was not only condoned, but regarded as normal, the Christian faith came as a purifying fire. Twentieth-century America has reverted back to the "normality of sexual immorality" and the revival fire of the Christian faith is desperately needed.

Remember the context of the society Paul was addressing. In the Greek culture of that day, prostitution and fornication were considered permissible activities. A married man in Greece could engage in extramarital sexual intercourse as much as he wished, but this practice was forbidden for the wife! Athenaeus, a writer in the second century AD, quotes from a speech of Demosthenes,

"We keep mistresses for pleasure, concubines for daily concubinage, but wives we have in order to produce children legitimately and to have a trustworthy guardian of our domestic property."

Uncleanness - This refers to a moral uncleanness either in thought, word, or deed. Notice the words of Barton.

"Perhaps no sexual act has taken place, but the person exhibits a crudeness or insensitivity in sexual matters that offends others and leads them to false conclusions about the other person's character. 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."

Uncleanness can be used for the pus of an unclean wound, or for a tree that has never been pruned, for material which has never been sifted.

Lasciviousness - This speaks of a lack of restraint. It is committing sexual sins with no shame and no concern for what others think. Much like we see in our world today.

Notice Galatians 5:20

Next, we see two religious sins.

Idolatry - This would be extreme admiration for anything other than God. It is the worship of that which is created which is in direct opposition to the worship of God. This is something that all of us need to guard against.

1 John 5:21

²¹ *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

Witchcraft - The Greek word here is the word that we get our word "pharmacy" from.

Witchcraft refers to anyone who prepares or uses magical remedies; from a drug or spell giving potion, but also used of medicinal drugs; primarily signified the use of medicine, drugs, spells, then, poisoning and finally sorcery. It was used to describe the use of magic which often involved the taking of drugs. Sorcery per se describes an occult practice in which the adherents claim to have supernatural powers and knowledge, including the ability to foretell the future and to summon evil spirits through charms and magical spells.

This is something that will be prevalent in the Tribulation.

Revelation 9:20-21

²⁰ *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:*

²¹ *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

Notice Galatians 5:20-21

Now Paul speaks of the societal sins.

Hatred - This is an antagonistic and hostile person.

Variance - This is someone who is contentious and quarrelsome.

Emulations - This is jealousy with zeal. This person would be jealous of what others have and with a fanatical zeal they would pursue the same thing.

Wrath - This is heated anger which is manifest with outbursts of anger.

Strife - This is extreme selfishness. This person is all about themselves. This is their world and we are privileged to be in it.

Seditions - This is the sin of discord that leads to divisions. This person is looking to gain people who agree with their side of the story.

Heresies - Notice the words of Vine on this word.

"An opinion," especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of sects... such erroneous opinions are frequently the outcome of personal preference or the prospect of advantage.

Envyings - This is the next level above jealousy. It means not just wanting what another person has, but also resenting that person for having it. It is an attitude of ill-will that leads to division and strife and even murder. When we envy, we cannot bear to see the prosperity of others, because we ourselves feel continually wretched.

Murders - This is exactly what it says.

Notice Galatians 5:21 again.

Here are the two sins connected with alcohol.

Drunkenness - Intoxication.

Revellings - This refers to feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry.

And such like - This covers anything that Paul missed.

Conclusion:

I want to focus upon Paul's words at the end of this verse. ***"I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."***

This means that people who habitually partake of these sins are not saved. It is impossible to live in these sins as a believer.

Hebrews 12:6-8

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, **ye that work iniquity.**