

A Gospel Perspective on the Works of the Flesh

August 9, 2020

Pastor Mark Turner

Galatians 5:16-25

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

A Contrast:

- We are to walk by the Spirit¹⁶ and be led by the Spirit¹⁸ in contrast to gratify the desires of the flesh¹⁶ and being under the law¹⁸.
- Danger: using lists like Paul gives in 19-23 to fuel our flesh
- Gospel: trusting God's provision rather than our own self-salvation
- OT echo: the coming promised life in the Spirit Jer 31:31-34; Heb 8:8-12 because of God's provision, not our works.
- Because we are free in Christ, we are now called to walk in freedom Gal 5:13.

Gospel Thinking about Virtue:

- Judaizers – trying to convince that keeping the law kept you acceptable
- Paul – shows us how to walk in the Spirit rather than works of the flesh
- Basis of our ability: our flesh died with Christ: Gal 5:24; 2:20-21
- We don't do this by our own strength but by power of the Spirit Gal 5:25
- We can't take the lists and use them as ground for boasting - Gal 6:14
- Remember our sinful nature wants to be our own savior & lord
- Walk by the Spirit – humbly submits to power of Gospel, not self Gal 2:16-20

The Works of the Flesh 19-21

- Not all items are actions, some are attitudes
- Sexual immorality; impurity; sensuality – actions and attitudes that reject God's design for sexuality as given by God from Creation: Gen 2:24-25. Note self-centered pleasure seeking focus rather than other centered ethic for sex 1 Cor 7:1-4
- Idolatry; sorcery – worship of false gods, potions & drugs to fool away from true God
- 4 Attitudes: enmity; envy; jealousy; rivalries - attitudes that destroy relationships
- 4 Actions: strife; fits of anger; dissensions; divisions - actions or results of sinful actions that destroy relationships
- Drunkennes; orgies – actions of substance abuse that distract from serving God. We are to be sober-minded 1 Tim 3:2; Tit 2:2; 1 Pet 1:13
- Warning of habitual practice implies no regeneration of the Spirit – Gospel Hope
- We are to 'put-off' these and 'put-on' Christlikeness - Eph 4:21-24

Gospel Truths

- old sinful nature craves self-generated power & praise of men. Flesh expresses most typically via:
 - Legalism – keeping of rules to earn merit by performance
 - License – throwing off of authority free to act as I chooseBOTH are nothing but proud & unsubmitive attitudes of the human heart which exalts itself through proud self-reliant morality or self-assertive authority despising immorality. BOTH appeal to self, not God.
- Hope of the Gospel: Christ has redeemed us (paid for our sins) so we can now live by the power of the Spirit for the Glory of God in all things!

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