

CITY OF THE LIVING GOD

THINGS LIKE THESE

49

SERIES

In dedication to all the soul-winners that need a Bible study on the sanctification of the whole man: Spirit, Soul, and Body.

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City of ^{the} Living God



“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21, ESV).

The Apostle Paul lists some behaviors as examples of the work of the flesh. He gives a long list, yet it is not exhaustive. In other letters of his, he adds to that list. He understood that there was no way to list absolutely every evil work of the flesh because the devil schemes many plans for new inventions so as to trap humans. Notice that he says, “who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” The apostle considers other sinful behaviors that are similar to the list that he gave as equally able to prevent those that practice this behavior from entering heaven. We would call these lists where he details the evil practices and names them as being explicit. Explicit means something that is clearly expressed. When he ends his explicit list of the works of the flesh, he ends the list with a phrase, “and things like these.” That is what we call implicit sinful behaviors. Implicit means something that is implied or understood without being directly or plainly stated in words.

EXPLICIT WORKS OF THE FLESH

This list of evil behaviors in Galatians 5 was never meant to be complete. Jesus and the New Testament writers spoke very direct about what was sin and what was not. Usually, they listed things that were commonly practiced in their days. They did not beat around the bush; they named those sins that were keeping people from entering heaven. Because these lists are not trying to be exhaustive, each list is a little different. They are all works of the flesh and are sinful behavior. Both Jesus and Paul say that those that practice behaviors like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Jesus' List

Jesus provided explicit lists with many of the same behaviors.

Mark 7:20-23

“And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person” (ESV).

Matthew 15:18-20

“But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.”

Apostle Paul's List

We already started off with Paul's list from Galatians, but he also gives a list in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor

adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.”

IMPLICIT WORKS OF THE FLESH

How often do we have people that are naïve state that unless they see a chapter and verse against a specific behavior that it is not sin? These are people that are simple and do not use common sense. For example, when Jesus and the writers designate drunkenness as a sin, it does not only include intoxication from alcohol, but drugs would be included in that even though it does not literally say drugs. Intoxication is the outcome whether of alcohol or drugs. If they would have had drugs in those days in that area of the world, they would have specified. That is why the Apostle Paul’s statement, and those that practice “things like these” will not inherit the kingdom of God. No matter what new way of intoxication is made, it is still sin. So implicit works of the flesh are just as bad as explicit works of the flesh. Just because we do not find the exact 21st century behavior in the Bible does not mean it is exempt from sin. It’s sin –no matter what form it comes in.

When Jesus stated that evil things “come from within man,” he was explaining that evil actions, thoughts, and corruptions originate from within humanity, meaning new technological or cultural tools can be used for age-old wickedness. No matter what invention is created that is used for wickedness, it is still sin.

There are many modern-day behaviors that did not exist in the times of the apostles and it is just as evil as was those that they listed.

1. Drugs
2. Smoking
3. Pornography (Magazine, digital, internet, etc).
4. Plagiarism
5. Cyberbullying
6. Scamming

7. Excessive social media scrolling – why? It impedes the development of the children. It's known for creating low self-esteem. It prevents children from forming true relationships. Social skills are affected.

When the Bible designates certain behaviors as unrighteous, it is referring to behaviors that are unholy. In fact after the Apostle Paul describes this list of sinful behaviors, he says that many of the members within the church participated in them, but now they are washed, sanctified, and justified. In other words, those that were unrighteous are now righteous. They are not righteous from themselves. But since they are baptized both in water and Spirit, they have been made righteous. Notice the following Scriptural reference follows Paul's list of evil behaviors of vv 9-10.

1 Corinthians 6:11

“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.”

This is what happens to anyone that comes to the Lord. Their lives are completely changed. They no longer participate in the sin of the past. God made a change in them.

2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

This inside cleansing is how God begins the sanctification in man and woman. It's what the Bible calls holiness. Holiness begins within a new believer. As the new believer in Christ grows, his and her behavior is dramatically changed. They no longer do the sinful things of the past. There is a radical change in their lives. If they used to be known for partying, they no longer do this. If they were drunkards, or into drugs, they stop those behaviors. We call this holiness from within. God always first cleanses us from within first. That's why the Apostle Paul states that we must be sanctified (made holy) first by the spirit and soul (within) and then also the body (outside). He states that to be holy completely,

all of our being needs to be cleansed which includes spirit, soul, and body. If only our inside is cleansed it is not enough. The outside must be made holy also.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

*“Now may the God of peace Himself **sanctify** you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Notice that Paul lists “spirit and soul” first and then the “body.” That is the process always. God always cleanses us first from within and then the outside will be made holy also. Whatever is on the inside will be reflected on the outside. Take note that when Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for their hypocrisy for being only clean on the outside and filthy on the inside. He does not say the outside is not important. He states to first cleanse the inside and then the outside will reflect the inside.

Matthew 23:25-26

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.”

This is God’s natural means of sanctification. He first cleanses the inside of a person and then as time goes on that person will start to reflect the glory of God on the outside.

Name two things did you give up when you became a born-again Christian.

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