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**A1032 – August 8, 2010 – Galatians 5:16-23 – How God Convicts
Us Of Sin**

Please open your Bible to Gal 5. We've been working with the practical section of Galatians. Paul always starts with the doctrine and moves us to practice. We can't get the practice before the doctrine, that's putting the cart before the horse. Paul is telling us the practical outworking of the doctrines of justification and sanctification. So if we have defective doctrines of justification and sanctification we have defective practice. The practical outworking or connection between these two truths is that if your justification depends upon God then your sanctification depends upon God. We can't justify ourselves and we can't sanctify ourselves. All we can do is walk by the Spirit which means walk in dependence upon Him, walk so as to do God's will and not our will. As we depend upon Him His fruit is produced in our lives and we enjoy victory over the flesh.

In Gal 5:16-26 the emphasis is inheriting the kingdom. If we walk by the flesh we will not inherit the kingdom but if we walk by the Spirit we will inherit the kingdom. We clarified that inheriting the kingdom has to do with rewards in the kingdom, not salvation. All believers inherit salvation and enter the kingdom but only believers that learn to walk by the Spirit inherit the reward of the kingdom which refers to reigning in the kingdom under the King of kings. That's been our focus and that is the focus of this warning passage.

Some of you may want a more extensive analysis of what these fruits are and I won't deprive you of that desire. I, for one, also want to complete the exegesis of the text. And it can't hurt to consider the content of the various nouns used to describe the deeds of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit and see some principles at work. To set up for this let's place this within the five

aspects of the doctrine of sanctification: the phases, the aim, the dimensions, the means and the enemies. All of these are involved in Galatians 5 but today I want to key in on the dimensions. When we think about the second phase of our sanctification, which is our experience stemming from the day we believed in Christ and were justified until the day we physically die or are removed from the earth at the rapture, that period is the experiential phase of our sanctification. Everything we say today is inside the Christian life; it is not about how to become a Christian, it is about how to grow as a Christian. There are two dimensions of sanctification in the experiential phase. These dimensions are very much like the stock market. The stock market has volatility to it but it also has a stability to it. It depends on what charts you're looking at. If you're a day trader and you're constantly looking at day charts then it's volatile, the price is up-down-up-down-up-down and this can make you crazy; this can lead you to make bad decisions. If you look at a longer period chart, say 10-15 years then there are still up-downs but you usually see a gradual upward trend. What these kinds of chart do is bring a calmness over you, it leads to confidence, it leads to a relaxed mental attitude despite the up-down-up-downs of the day to day market. Now I'm not saying what's going to happen tomorrow or the next 10 years in the stock market. I'd be real surprised if it keeps going up, especially when you figure in inflation, but I'm just building an illustration with the Christian life. We can look at our day by day, that's one way to live, always focusing on the present; we call that the existential present dimension. And that's an important dimension to look at but if you overemphasize that dimension what happens is you're life is volatile and erratic because you're just like the day trader who gets emotional and you can't make good decisions when you're emotional. So you want to balance that by looking at the long-term, looking back at your life reflectively, remembering the past and where you were ten, twenty years ago in the Christian life - we call that the long-term dimension. This is also an important dimension to look at because it shows you how far you've come in the Christian life. Maybe today is a wreck but over the last 10 years you've come a long way, you've grown significantly and what that does is it brings a calmness over your soul so you can relax even when life is volatile. So we have these two dimensions, the long-term and the existential present.

Paul is teaching us about both these dimensions in Gal 5:16-26. It may not be perfectly clear to you on the surface but both are taught. We want to spend most of our attention on the existential dimension, the day to day Christian

life which is up-down-up-down. That's the description of verse 16 - you can walk either by the Spirit or by the flesh. It's the same kind of talk in Eph 5 where Paul says "be filled with the Spirit." You can either be filled by the Spirit or not. And it's just like John when he says, "Abide in Christ." You can either abide or not abide. These are absolute categories. We're in one or the other all the time as Christians. So they use different terminology, but the same concept.

And when we walk by the flesh or we fail to be filled by the Spirit or we are not abiding in Him we lose fellowship with God; not our relationship, but our fellowship, our intimacy, our closeness with him is lost. We have a Father-son relationship that can never be severed, but our fellowship with our Father can be severed, it's just like human relationships. You can never sever the earthly father-son relationship, it's biological, but the earthly father-son fellowship can be severed by disobedience until there is restoration. So in the same way we Christians have an eternal Father-son relationship with God through Jesus Christ, but our fellowship with Him is severed by disobedience. We have to be restored to fellowship, we have to come to grips with our sin and confess it. That's why we have 1 John 1:9. If we do confess it must be genuine confession, it can't be a thing where you're just going through motions, saying words. It can't be half-hearted and I say that because there is such a thing as faking it and going through the religious motion and it all sounds good on the outside but it's phony, God can see right through you, God is the heart reader and you are no more in fellowship now than before you went through your religious activity. In fact, you are worse off because you're playing games.

So we want to sort through the mechanics for being restored to fellowship. There are three in the basic doctrine; we add a fourth element in the advanced form of the doctrine. But let's just deal with the basics form of the doctrine, three elements; conviction, confession and restoration.

Let's look at the first word, Conviction. This, by the way, is how you recover from a massive failure or a little failure; it doesn't make a particle of difference. The first thing is we have to be convinced that in fact we have sinned. This sounds a little funny because you say people don't know they sinned? Right, people don't always know. Why not? Because when we sin there is a negative consequence in our mind. Don't think that when you sin

you're the same as you were before you sinned. You're not. Something happens in your mind, a distortion occurs and what that means is you begin to see the world in a twisted fashion, you are no longer seeing as well as you were five minutes before. This is like losing your physical eyesight. If you have bad eyes you know what it's like for your eyesight to get worse and worse, that's the kind of analog we have to our mental and spiritual perception. We get blinded to reality. And the more we sin without confessing it the worse our blindness becomes until we are thoroughly deceived. And when we're deceived we can sin and not be convicted at all that we've sinned. We have our defenses up, we are suppressing the guilt, maybe we play the blame shifting game, maybe we play the I deserve it game. I work hard around here and I deserve to blow off some steam. The point is that we use these rationalizations to suppress our own guilt. So just because we're in close proximity to our sin does not guarantee we're viewing it correctly from God's point of view. The point is I have to be convinced of my personal sin before I can deal with it. If I'm not then I'm faking it. So the first thing is Conviction.

Now we come to what Confession is.¹ Confession is us acknowledging that we have sinned, and at that very moment it's almost like first believing. When we confess, what are we doing? We're not going through 16½ hours of psychotherapy at \$150 an hour or something. What we're doing is at this very point we are acknowledging that we can't do anything about it. We have offended a holy righteous Creator, we can't take a sponge and wash our sins away, and we can't pull a deal with Him and say, "Well God, I'll never do that again." He doesn't make deals with us, He's already made His deal at the cross, and we know anyway those are hollow promises if we are honest with ourselves. Confession is a very precious moment, and it's a moment that can only happen when we're ready for it spiritually, you can't force people into this. When we get to the point of confession what is always the temptation? Just before we can really confess that we've sinned against God there's a temptation to try to avoid all the responsibility. But God, you do have to admit some of that blame falls on so and so who set up the situation. Oh really!

Who is it that sovereignly set up the situation? God's not interested in your excuses. So first we have to be convicted, and then we confess.

The third thing is God's response - Restoration, but this is tricky so follow me here. God's response is not necessarily to remove the consequences. That he does not necessarily remove the consequences causes tension in our lives because the tendency is since He doesn't remove the consequences, Satan can pull one on you that will knock you out for a long time if you let him do it. He'll get you looking at the consequences and then he'll say, "See, God hasn't forgiven you, look at those consequences, see, He's still disciplining you, it's still there, He hasn't responded to you." Well yes, He has responded to you; He has perfectly cleansed the record, but Satan uses this. Do you know why? Because he's not forgiven. Satan has rebelled and he has never known grace, and it must infuriate him every time he sees a person become a child of God, every time he sees a child of God come to the point of confession and God responds with forgiveness. Satan doesn't want you to know that, he wants you to get your eyes on what you did, the mess you made because that elicits emotion and it sucks the life out of you. Can I ever get rest, do I really have acceptance with God? And now you're harboring doubt, and if you're harboring doubt what can't you walk by? Faith. He's stalled you.

So you see what an important thing this recovery principle is, to become convicted of our sin, to deal with it at a point of confession, and then to trust God with His response, that even if the response doesn't remove the consequences, I am not going to let that throw me.

Step one is crucial, we have got to be convicted and so we want to look at a couple of tools that God uses to help a believer get convicted of his sin. Because when a believer is deceived he's not consciously aware of his sin. He's walled himself off.ⁱⁱ So God has given us fellow believers who can see our sin and Gal 6:1 is discussing this - the spiritual one is to help restore a sinning brother. We're already inching ahead in the text. But the first technique we want to look at is not in today's text, it's in an OT text. This we call setting a trap for the sinning believer to fall into. To illustrate this let's go to David. David in the OT is categorically the model believer. He's the greatest believer of the entire OT. No one is given the praise that King David is given and every king that comes after David in his line is compared to David and not one of them measures up to David. David is described by God to be "a man after God's own heart" and to have "fully followed the Lord." And you say what? David was an adulterer and a murderer. How could God say David fully followed after the Lord? Are we talking about the same David

here? Yes, we are. So something about David led the Lord to make this conclusion about David's life. David the adulterer and murderer is the number one believer in the entire OT. Now, the first thing that should do for you is bring some relief. Obviously God is not looking for total perfection. He already found total perfection in the Lord Jesus Christ and that's the only place He's ever going to find it in a total way. So whatever it means to follow fully after the Lord it does not mean total sinless perfection.

David screwed up royally in 2 Sam 11 with Bathsheba and we want to see what happened to David. What did we say happens when you sin? It screws up your mind, to the point you are deceived and you can't confess your sin because you're not convicted of your sin and you're not convicted of your sin because your view of God is screwed up. Sin is a terrible thing. In 2 Sam 11 the King of Israel has made a strategic error with a woman named Bathsheba. Bathsheba was the wife of one of David's top soldiers named Uriah who was out fighting in battle which is where David, the leader of the army, should have been. But he's not, he's back home, laying off on the job and so we have an environment where David is not very with it spiritually. It's in that environment that David takes Uriah's most precious possession and sleeps with her. When it was found out she was pregnant with David's baby what did David do? He called Uriah back from the front lines hoping he would do what? Sleep with his wife. But Uriah was a great soldier and there was no way that he was going to enjoy the pleasures of sexual intercourse with his wife while his fellow soldiers were out having to fight the enemy. So, he slept on the King's doorstep to protect the King. This was the kind of quality of man we're dealing with. Of course, David didn't like this because his plan wasn't working. The plan being:, I'm going to hide my sin. His flesh, like ours, goes into operation cover-up. So he tries again, the flesh doesn't give up easily, this time he invites Uriah in for a big banquet, they feast, they have musical entertainment, they drink wine and he's trying to get Uriah drunk so he'll go home and sleep with his wife. It fails a second time. David puts together a third plan, in his flesh. He sends a letter back with Uriah to Joab, who was commanding the armies, and in the letter he instructs Joab to put Uriah right in the front lines where all the heavy fighting was going on and then to pull everyone back except Uriah. So, they do this and Uriah is killed. David gets his way. Now he can take Bathsheba and live happily ever after, or so David thinks. Think what has just happened here. David is the greatest believer the world has ever known and for the past several months

David's spiritual life has been going down the tubes; to the point that a genuine believer committed adultery and murder. That shows you what the greatest believer is capable of doing. David stole a guy's wife and David murdered the image of God. Yet that's not the most stunning thing about the whole story.

The stunning thing is that David was not convicted of his sin. So David is in that position where he's piled sin upon sin, his mind has been darkened, his view of God is distorted and in that condition you're deceived and you aren't easily convicted of your sin. Everything you're doing at this point is putting up a barrier, trying to shield yourself, trying to protect yourself. In that situation God sends a solution in 2 Sam 12:1. Here comes a technique we need to learn to help a fellow believer get restored to fellowship. God sends Nathan to Set a Trap for David. Watch it; this is done under the inspiration of the Spirit. Nathan "...came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. ²"The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. ³"But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him. ⁴"Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." ⁵Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. ⁶"He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." Now what is this teaching, what's the point? David is the rich man, David is the King of Israel; he had everything; money, power, wives. And Uriah is the poor man; Uriah didn't have anything but Bathsheba. And yet David wasn't satisfied with all that he had, David had to have the one thing that wasn't his, Bathsheba, so he took her and eventually murdered the husband. Now notice something. David has committed two very open sins yet has he lost his logical faculties? Is he unable to reason clearly? No, in verse 5 David has come to the proper logical conclusion, he's used the law to enact the judgment and require a four-fold restitution. David is using the word of God accurately to judge the rich man. But what has the sin done to Him? He can't see himself as the rich man. Somehow, what sin does is it walls off our logical faculties from ourselves; we don't apply the same logic to ourselves as we do

others. So in verse 7, David has walked right into the trap, “Nathan then said to David, “You are the man!” And that’s what it took to awaken David to his sin so he would be genuinely convicted of his sin so he could confess his sin, which we know he did. Ps 51 records the confession and he was instantly restored to fellowship. Did that remove the consequences? No, there were consequences that stayed with David till the end of his life. But the issue after he sinned wasn’t the consequences; the issue was how did David handle the consequences? Did he handle them by grace and get back in fellowship and walk with God? Yes, he did. That’s the issue and that’s why David is called a man after God’s own heart. That’s why David is said to have followed the Lord fully.ⁱⁱⁱ

So that’s one technique of jolting people out of their self-deception and God brings fellow believers into your life to do this service for you. The second technique is to Use Contrasts. What you do here is you put two lists of things side by side in contrast and then people can see the difference more clearly. Contrasts help because sin distorts and that means your thinking is fuzzy. You can’t tell the difference between things because your sin is smudging the image. It’s like camera resolution when you take a picture. The picture is all fuzzy because you don’t have high enough resolution but you don’t know that till someone takes a higher resolution picture and puts it next to yours. Then you can see the difference, clarity comes. That’s what lists of contrast do to our thinking. So the contrasts clarify our thinking, get us to realize, hey, I’m way over here but I need to be way over there. God uses these kinds of lists to wake us up.

The technique of Contrasts is what Paul uses in Gal 5:16-26. He contrasts the deeds of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. You’ll notice there’s no third position, there’s no neutral position between the flesh and the Spirit. That’s deliberate because neutrality is fuzzy thinking. The whole point of the Christian worldview is there no neutrality. You’re either walking one way or the other all the time. It’s our flesh that likes to convince us that there really is this third position of neutrality - I’m just here, I’m neither sinning nor doing righteousness. That’s a pretend position. Once you’re in a position of pretended neutrality you’re actually in a position of the flesh. True neutrality as a position does not exist and the Scriptures work hard to keep us from slipping into that fleshly thought. You walk by the flesh or by the Spirit,

that's it, end of story, there are no other ways to walk. No human being has ever walked any other way or will walk any other way.

So we want to go through Paul's contrasts. We look first at the deeds of the flesh, verse 19. The first one is **immorality** and it's the Greek word *porneia* from which we get pornography. Here it refers to sexual misconduct. What it means is any sexual activity outside of biblical marriage. What's biblical marriage? It's a contractual agreement between one man and one woman for life. Any sexual activity outside of a contract is illicit *porneia*. It can be sexual touching for arousal, it can be kissing, and it's simply any sexual activity outside of a contract. Marriage is a contract! It is first and foremost a contract with terms; that's the marriage vows and it's not you will do this for me, it's I will do this for you. Both parties in the contract agree to what they are going to do and are responsible to do what they say in the vows. That's a very serious contract you're entering into. Once you're inside that contract you can do whatever you want to with each other sexually as long as both parties agree. What is sexual immorality outside of the contract is sexual fulfillment within the contract. God has given us that for enjoyment and it is not ever to be partaken of outside of that contract. Why not? Just because God said so? No, because you weren't designed for that. We're not made for any sexual activity outside of a contractual agreement. We are made for it inside a contractual agreement. Every other form of sexual entertainment is of the flesh and its sin.

Second, **impurity**, *akatharsia*. This is not sexual impurity, this is moral corruption. This is a general word for someone who is a filthy individual, they engage in all kinds of moral corruption. It's difficult to say much more about this word.

Third, **sensuality**, is the word *aselgeia*, and it means self-abandonment. This is the person who runs off and tries anything; they're the free love people of the 60's who abandon all self control and rush head long into destruction. They have no self-constraint and so their lives are characterized by no respect for what is socially acceptable, they're rebellious.

Fourth, in verse 20 we have **idolatry**, the Greek word *eidololatria*. This is not totem poles - if you're idea of idolatry is someone worshipping a totem pole you haven't scratched the surface of idolatry. Idolatry is "image

worship". It's things in your mind that take on gargantuan proportions. What happens in our mind is we have desires and in our mind's eye we magnify this desire and we attach all this glory to it, this greatness. And anytime we think about this thing its like there's an aurora around it, a halo, it's not really there but our minds have so blown this thing out of proportion that we think it's there. And if we can just get this one thing then all will be well and we will be satisfied. Maybe its money and you have this thing about money and if you could just have so much money, well, by golly, all my problems would be solved. Sometimes God says, alright, I'll let you have money and the day comes when you get money and five days later you're still just as miserable. Or maybe it's some person and you think, if I just get to be with this person I'll be fulfilled in life and all you can do is think about this person and you build them up and the day comes when this person responds to you and you find out they're a dud. The reason they're such a dud is because they never were all the things you imagined them to be in the first place. It was all in your mind and that's the nature of idolatry. It's imagery in the mind that builds up a false glory around it and it will never work and we trot around going from one thing to the next never finding satisfaction. The answer to this scripturally is that nothing in all creation can satisfy, only God can satisfy.

Then after idolatry in verse 20 we come to **sorcery** and this is the word *pharmakeia*, and this one is a problem. It's obviously related to our word pharmacy, which in many cases is just handing out drugs legally. We are a drug dependent culture. We've got a pill for anything and everything. The rule of thumb if you are a Christian is always to ask the question, "Is my need a physical need or is my need a spiritual need? Do I have physical damage to some part of my body that can be treated by this chemical or do I have spiritual damage that I need to correct by positive volition to the word of God?" They give drugs for what they call psychological needs, which is the secular term for spiritual, but if there's no physical damage then you don't take a drug for it. All drugs do for so-called psychological needs is mask spiritual problems. And the drug will cause an even calm or stability to come over the person that will appear to solve the problem but if they get off they find they can't because they're brain has created a chemical dependence. And so you can't function in dependence upon God because you're dependence is on drugs. And then you can't grow spiritually because spiritual growth requires you depending upon God. So this is going on *en masse* in our culture

and the Christians are eating it up with a spoon. The problem is not just the illegal drug scene; the problem is also the legal drug scene. Just because something can be acquired in a perfectly legal fashion does not make it profitable for the Christian. And I'm sure someone here will jump me about this. It never ceases to fail that people don't like hearing this. But I'm here to tell you it's a coping mechanism of the flesh. And another thing it's related to: drug use is closely associated with the occult, demonism and witchcraft, that's why the translators use the term "sorcery," it has historically been associated with demonic practices and demonic infiltration. Drug abuse is an open invitation to demons to infiltrate.

Then we come to the fifth word, **enmities**, the word *ekthra*. These people build up hatred toward God and others because basically they won't solve problems. Everyone has problems but some people have this tendency to never solve them and what happens when you don't solve problems is an environment of hatred is set up and the enmity just grows and grows.

Sixth we have **strife**, *eris*, and this is a contentious person. With these people everything is a fight. If you were standing over their grave they'd argue with you whether they were dead or not. They'll take impossible positions and try to defend them because they're so arrogant they could never possibly be wrong. These people really are annoying and I know because I used to be one of them and I had to live with myself. Occasionally I still struggle with it but typically now, those of you who know me know I just come to you and say I was wrong, you were right, that doesn't bug me anymore. But it sure bugs some people and they bug everybody else.

Seventh, we have **jealousy**, *zelos*, and this one's interesting. We get our word "zeal" from this. It's interesting because people who look at other people's success and envy them, they want the achievements. It may be in business, it may be in marriage, it may be the parent who while simply driving down the road sees a bumper sticker "my kid is an honor roll student at Fredericksburg High School" and that parent may have intensely negative feelings because their kid isn't an honor roll student. It's just people who can't stand anyone else achieving anything, they always have to have the success someone else has had and they are never content, they can never rest and these people will drive you nuts, too.

Then we have eighth on the list and that's **outbursts of anger**, the Greek word *thumos*, and that's translated very well. That's exactly what it is. People just explode right out of the box. If these people were in war they'd be the bombs; they can come into a situation and if something happens that chaps their hide you're going to know about it because they blow up and debris is all over and that only makes them madder because now they've got all this other stuff to clean up. This one feeds on itself. They all do really; if you get into any one of these the more you do it the more you want to do it and the harder it is to get out of it.

Then we have number nine, **disputes**, *epitheia* and this is a disputed word but the meaning here, as far as I can tell, is actually "selfish-ambition." These are people that are out for themselves. You think you're important to them but you discover with these people you're expendable, you're just a means to an end and they could care less about you. You're their best friend until you've done all you can do for them and then they drop you like a bad habit.

Then we have number ten and this not an exhaustive list, but boy, Paul sure does cover some territory. This one is **dissensions**, *dichostasia* and this is somebody that has his pet doctrine and goes over and forms a little club, a little gang and then sits on their side and throws rocks at the other side. They are real problem makers in churches and if these people aren't watched then it can get out of hand real quick, they don't have to be necessarily really rude people or overt, they can be covert about it but they create division and then blame it on the other side. This is what Peter did in chapter 2 when he wouldn't even eat with the Gentiles and Paul said, what are you trying to do here, cause a church split?

The last word in verse 20 is **factious** and that's the word *airesis* from which we get "heresies," and probably that's what it's referring to here. People who have chosen a course of thought which is contrary to the word of God. And they're going to believe it and they're not going to drop it no matter how much of the word of God you show them and part of the problem here is they may not see. They really may not have enough doctrine to be able to see that their little heresy is in fact a heresy.

Verse 21, the last three, **envying**, we won't cover that because it is similar to jealousy which we saw earlier, probably just the general word for envy.

Then we come to **drunkenness**, *methe*, and here's one we do want to comment on. It's obvious what it means. The Scriptures do not, I repeat, do not say you can't drink alcohol; they say, don't get drunk. Now some people can't drink because if they do drink they can't stop until they are drunk. And for them they shouldn't drink. But most people can drink a couple of drinks for enjoyment. There's nothing wrong with it. Jesus drank wine, He had some at the last supper and he said he's not going to taste of the vine again until the Millennial Kingdom and so when I get there I hope to enjoy a glass of wine with My Savior. There's nothing wrong with that, nothing wrong in the world with that. But there is everything wrong with getting drunk. So if you can't control yourself and keep from getting drunk then stay away from it. Now there are also special provisions for a woman who's pregnant. She shouldn't drink because of the fantastic thing God is weaving together in her womb that is to be protected and cared for and that means no alcohol for the duration of the pregnancy because that interferes with the development of the child. A third thing is that while it's not wrong to drink there are situations in which it is wrong to drink. You don't drink if it offends another believer. If another believer is offended then the believer who wants to drink should always defer his right to drink, that's 1 Cor 8, Rom 14. You don't push one on them and say, oh brother so and so, it won't hurt to take just one drink. Just respect them, there's nothing wrong with not drinking. But there is everything wrong with drunkenness.

And lastly, we've mentioned this one, **carousing** and this is a colorful word. This is *komos* and in ancient culture it referred to Bacchus the God of wine and people would go to his temple and drink wine all night until the whole thing turned into a big orgy. In our culture this is Mardi Gras and Spring Break in South Padre where you go to party all night and have a lot of sex.

Now the Scriptures never just tell us "don't do this, don't do that," but they also tell us why you shouldn't do it and then what to do instead. So the "don't do" is the negative and that's walk by the flesh; you should not do that because then the flesh is given free reign to do the deeds we just went through. Everyone has their flavor, everyone has a tendency to two or three or four of these. So after telling us don't walk by the flesh he tells us in verse 21 why you shouldn't: you will not inherit the kingdom and we've already trotted out that refers to the reward of inheritance in the kingdom of being a

co-ruler with Christ administering justice to the nations. Then in verses 22-23 he tells us what to do instead. We can't do it so what we can do is verse 16, walk by the Spirit and the fruit there is what flows through us as we walk by the Spirit. So this is the contrastive set of qualities over and against the deeds of the flesh. Let's look at them.

And by seeing this contrast with the prior list it helps us see very clearly where we're screwed up so we can get convicted and become undeceived. The first one here is **love**. Now **love** has three words in the Greek but only two are used in the NT. *Eros* is not used in the Greek NT but it was used in classical Greek literature and it referred to lust, a selfish desire for something. That's not the kind of love here. Then you have *philia* love and this is friendship love, loving as a friend, being friendly; that's not the word either. The word here is *agape*, and *agape* love is not a feeling. You may feel like crap Monday morning, that's not an excuse. Let me make two points about this. First, it's unconditional. What this means is it is not based on the other person and how they're behaving. It is based on you, your character. And you're saying I love you not because of who you are but because of who I am. This is the greatest kind of love and this is the kind of love that God exercises toward us. He didn't love us for who we were, we were unlovely, He loved us because of who He is. Second, *agape* love has its highest concern for the other person. You have their best interest in mind. And the thing that is best for the other person is not what you or the other person think but what God says. So this love is not always perceived as love by the other person but as long as you have God's best interest in mind for them, that's *agape* love.

Second we have **joy**, *chara*, and this is the general word for gladness, a joyful mental attitude, not because every situation is joyful; discipline is not joyful but the results of the discipline are fruitful and so there is joy. Trials are not joyful but we should consider it all joy when we enter trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. We can have a joyful mental attitude when we reflect upon the fact that God has a plan for our lives and He's working in us a good result.

Third one here is **peace**, *eiriene*, and it does not mean peace at all costs; some kind of compromising attitude. It means with God and with men. With God it means I'm confident that I'm in good standing with Him, I'm confident in approaching the throne of grace, there are no barriers between me and Him.

With man it means I have a clear conscience, I have nothing between me and other people that is causing antagonism.

The fourth one is **patience** and this is *makrothumia*, one of my favorite Greek words, it means “to have a long fuse,” they do not blow up in anger, they are able to be long suffering with people and give people space to grow. God is this way with us. He puts up with our idiotic behavior and He does this with the world; He just lets it go on and on and on, but don’t think that this word means there is no time when the fuse runs out and the bomb goes off. We are to have a long fuse but not an infinite fuse. Even God’s fuse comes to an end and finally there is a separation between good and evil and God brings that about by judgment. But we should have patience, that’s a fruit of the Spirit.

The fifth one is **kindness** and this is the word *chrestotes*, and the idea of this word is usefulness, helpfulness, beneficial. You’re actually a contributing individual, around the church you serve some beneficial purpose and you’re not just a mooch. People who are mooches are not much use, but people who are manifesting this fruit are helpful to others and serving some beneficial purpose.

The sixth one is **goodness**, *agathosune*, and this means generous, you are generous to others and so you’re not all about yourself, you can, for five seconds, get out of your own shoes and put yourself in someone else’s shoes and think about their needs and give generously to them.

The seventh one is **faithfulness**, the noun *pistis*, and in this context it means you’re a reliable person. When you say you’re going to do something you do it. You’re not this person that puts their name on a list: oh, I’m going to do this and then the day comes and you cop out at the last minute and everyone has to shuffle their lives because of you. If you say you’ll do it everyone else can go to sleep, it’s as good as done.

The eighth one is **gentleness**, this is *prautes* and this means you basically are not overly impressed with yourself. What happens when you are overly impressed with yourself? You tend to deprecate everybody else and you are a rough and abrasive personality. You have very little difficulty running everyone else down and so you can’t be considerate of other people. They

don't deserve it in your opinion. You're very self-serving. So the gentle person has a proper assessment of themselves and is therefore humble and considerate of other people.

Finally, the ninth one is **self-control**, *egkrateia* and this one is self explanatory, you can restrain your emotions. Inside you may want to blow up but you can restrain it, you can hold back from acting on your emotions, you can hold back from acting on your impulses.

Now putting those two lists side by side we can see the contrast and that clarifies where we are. That's one of Paul's points; he wants the Galatians to evaluate where they are in the middle of their little church fight and realize the implications. And you and I can do the same thing by comparing these lists and say, alright, which words in the list are most manifest in my life and that will give us a little insight on which way we're spending most of our time walking, by the flesh or by the Spirit and that will also tell us which way we're headed, either to inheriting the reward of the kingdom or not. We want to be like David and in the existential dimension of our sanctification we want to be convicted of our sin, confess our sin and be restored to fellowship and keep living a life that is genuinely responsive to God.

ⁱ The problem is that many of us run our lives based on peer pressure. Peer pressure is acknowledged in Scripture because it's exhortation in the role of other believers, that's valid. But ultimately it's not what your peers want you to do. If I operate on the basis of what my peers want me to do I am not at that point walking by faith, I am walking by social pressure, someone else's opinion is driving me, and ultimately that leads to a violated conscience, because now you've allowed somebody else to usurp the place of conscience before God, and conscience never even gets a chance to grow. This is why as children grow, and as a parent you sit there and watch things go on, and you bite your tongue because you know that the more you say the less it's going to be heard, and what you have to trust is that conscience will be developed. They may go out and get hit by a car before they develop the conscience, but sooner or later God is going to deal with that, and as a parent it becomes a real problem because we want to step in and protect. And it's natural, we don't want somebody to get hurt, but the problem with that is that they have to learn to take their own knocks, if they don't, they never grow up.

ⁱⁱ Sin distorts our vision and so mentally we re-construct in our mind's eye reality, we project an image of who we are, what reality is, how we should live, everything and that new projected image which we've constructed is designed to shield us from God. We don't want to come into a

confrontation with Him so we erect this worldview, which is really an idol, it's how we want the world to be, it's not what the world actually is. We project the way we want the world to be so that we justify ourselves, say we're not in the wrong here, we haven't done anything wrong, and this is what we call rationalizing. It's one of the terrible things of the flesh; it has the ability to use logic and reason to justify us. There are always inconsistencies, but nonetheless it uses the tools of logic and reason to justify itself.

ⁱⁱⁱ You can see with David that these people haven't lost their faculty of reason; they can follow the illustration, it's simply that they've somehow walled themselves off from applying logic to their own case. This is why the Lord Jesus said in Matt 7:3, "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" The principal the Lord Jesus Christ was giving there was that when we sin we don't lose the logical faculty, but what we do is somehow walled ourselves off from applying it to ourselves, you're really good at seeing every other persons flaws, but your own, not so good. You're deceived. So technique one takes some creativity when you see a brother trapped in sin but you can see the strategy; mirror the situation by way of a clever story or illustration and then spring the trap. They may not like you for it, but if they have enough background training, like David, and they're not too far gone, they'll respond and get back in fellowship.

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