

Galatians 5:19-21

The works of the flesh—5:19-21a ¹⁹ *Now the works [ἔργον] of the flesh are obvious [φανερός], which are:* (17 are listed, but there more like these)

- 1) Physical perversions (contrary to purity)
 - a) *adultery*,—μοιχεία—unfaithfulness to one's spouse
 - b) *sexual immorality*,—πορνεία—any sexual activity outside of marriage, generally the unmarried are in view
 - i) Scarcely recognized as a sin by unbelievers
 - c) *impurity*,—ἀκαθαρσία—sexual behavior that makes a person unclean, including homosexuality
 - i) It is inappropriate for Christians to be doing this (Ephesians 5:3)
 - ii) It must be put to death (Colossians 3:5)
 - iii) The opposite of holiness (1st Thessalonians 4:7)
 - d) *debauchery*,—ἀσέλγεια—sexual shamelessness, living without any moral restraint
- 2) Religious perversions (contrary to worship)
 - a) ²⁰ *idolatry*,—εἰδολολατρία—worship of false gods and images
 - i) Christians are to flee from it (1st Corinthians 10:14)
 - ii) It must be put to death (Colossians 3:5)
 - iii) Our unsaved days were enough time to spend in this sin (1st Peter 4:3)
 - b) *sorcery*,—φαρμακεία—witchcraft, magic, drugs, casting spells upon people, magic potions or medicines used to bring harm to others (cf. abortion, euthanasia)
- 3) Social or relational perversions (contrary to love)
 - a) *hostilities*,—ἔχθρα—enmity, opposition, personal animosity, the opposite of friendship
 - b) *quarrels*,—ἔρις—arguments, bickering
 - i) This should not be part of a Christian's life (Romans 13:13)
 - ii) The Corinthian congregation struggled with this sin (1st Corinthians 1:11; 3:3; 2nd Corinthians 12:20)
 - iii) Christians are to avoid this (Titus 3:9)
 - c) *jealousies*,—ζήλος—resentment toward others, contentious rivalry, to be as well off as the other person
 - i) This should not be part of a Christian's life (Romans 13:13)
 - ii) The Corinthian congregation struggled with this sin (1st Corinthians 3:3; 2nd Corinthians 12:20)
 - iii) Contrary to the truth (James 3:14)
 - iv) Leads to confusion and every evil practice (James 3:16)
 - d) *outbursts of anger*,—θυμός—losing your temper, flashes of anger
 - i) The Corinthian congregation struggled with this sin (2nd Corinthians 12:20)
 - ii) It must be put away (Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:8)

- e) *self-interests*,—ἐριθεία—self-seeking intrigue and ambition, campaigning for one’s own advantage, a “what’s in it for me?” attitude, selfishness, willing to sacrifice peace and truth to achieve its goal, it is the opposite of unity
 - i) The Corinthian congregation struggled with this sin (2nd Corinthians 12:20)
 - ii) Nothing should be done with this attitude (Philippians 2:3)
 - iii) Contrary to the truth (James 3:14)
 - iv) Leads to confusion and every evil practice (James 3:16)
 - f) *dissensions*,—διχοστασία—causing disunity, taking sides with an unyielding attitude, any conduct or language used to incite rebellion against authority
 - i) People who do this are to be marked and avoided because they are self-serving (Romans 16:17-18)
 - ii) The Corinthian congregation struggled with this sin (1st Corinthians 3:3)
 - g) *factious*,—ἀίρεσις—opinions that cause division, the result of the previous
 - i) Brought in by false teachers (2nd Peter 2:1)
 - h) ²¹ *envies*,—φθόνος—ill will toward the real or assumed advantage of others, sadness occasioned by the thought of another experiencing good, to want the other person deprived of what they have
 - i) Characteristic of our unsaved days (Titus 3:3)
 - ii) We must get rid of this from our lives in order to respond properly to the Word of God (1st Peter 2:1)
 - i) *murders*,—φόνος—including suicide
- 4) Intemperate excesses (contrary to self-control)
- a) *intoxications*,—μέθη—gluttonous drunkenness
 - i) This should not be part of a Christian’s life (Romans 13:13)
 - b) *carousals*,—κῶμος—extended periods of drinking, drinking bouts
 - i) This should not be part of a Christian’s life (Romans 13:13)
 - ii) Our unsaved days were enough time to spend in this sin (1st Peter 4:3)
 - c) *and things like these*; (showing that this list of 17 sins is not exhaustive)

The warning concerning the terrible consequences of these habits—5:21b

- 1) *of which I forewarn* [pres. act. ind. προλέγω] *you^{pl}, just as also I warned* [aor. act. ind. προλέγω] *you^{pl} before, that* [ὅτι] *those who are characterized by practicing* [pres. act. ptc. πράσσω] *such things will not inherit* [fut. act. ind. κληρονομέω] *the kingdom of God.* (cf. 1st Corinthians 6:9-10; Ephesians 5:5)
- a) To be characterized by these traits is to demonstrate that one has never truly been born again by the Spirit of God. They prove they are not being led by the Spirit (cf. Galatians 5:18; Romans 8:14)
 - b) The heirs of the kingdom must be brought into conformity to the goals and joys of the King. Why would someone who loves to break God’s rules want to go to the place where God’s rules are always obeyed?

Take-home truth: Good works will not get you into heaven, but a lifestyle of sinful works will certainly keep you out.