

10/18/2020

## ***Paul's View on Love Regarding Sins***

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**Galatians 5:13-26** <sup>13</sup>For you, brothers, were called to freedom; but do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh. Rather, serve one another in love. <sup>14</sup>The entire law is fulfilled in a single decree: "Love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>15</sup>But if you keep on biting and devouring one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another. <sup>16</sup>So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For the flesh craves what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are opposed to each other, so that you do not do what you want. <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup>The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; <sup>20</sup>idolatry and sorcery; hatred, discord, jealousy, and rage; rivalries, divisions, factions, <sup>21</sup>and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup>Since we live by the Spirit, let us walk in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying one another. (BSB)

Today's sermon will be a little different from our usual format. We will look at the list of sins in this passage and see why they are violations of loving God, loving our neighbor, and loving our self.

### **I. Here are the details of this text.**

- A.** Our eternal **destiny** is not determined by what we do or what we don't do. This is what is meant by freedom. V.13
- B.** After we are born again into God's family and receive a new spiritual nature, we still have our **flesh** that is prone to sin. V.13
- C.** Loving our neighbor as our self means to **choose** to walk according to our spiritual nature and not to our flesh nature. V.14-21
  - 1.** Here is a partial sampling from the list of sins and why they indicate that we are **not walking** according to our spiritual nature when we commit them.
    - a.** Sexual immorality starts with an **unwillingness** to acknowledge that our creator has the right to tell us how to conduct our sexual activities. It is a violation of loving God. It is also a sin against our own body. We begin to awake appetites that are destructive to our self and to others.
    - b.** Idolatry and sorcery attempt to **control** things around us that we are not intended to control.
    - c.** Factions and envy are attempts to put our self and those that we deem worthy ahead of others who are also **created** in the image of God.
  - 2.** Here is a partial sampling of behaviors that indicate that we are being **controlled** by our new spiritual nature.
    - a.** Joy and peace are shown even in hard times because God is on the **throne** of our heart and not our fleshly nature.
    - b.** Patience and kindness carry us through conflicts with others because we are not responsible for the outcome, just our **obedience**.

- c. Goodness and faithfulness are the result of allowing God to work through us. God is the ultimate of goodness and faithfulness. Our flesh can imitate these only as far as there is personal benefit to us. God shows this fruit as a permanent trait of who He is.

II. Why are these truths so important?

- A. We need to stop judging people as saints and sinners. We as believers have dual natures that we must choose to walk according to. Non-believers only have the one nature.
- B. We must stop using doctrine and religious preferences as masks to hide our fleshly behavior.
- C. May our focus be on allowing God to be our God in our life.