

Galatians 5:15-21

15-18. But if you **BITE and DEVOUR one another**, BEWARE lest you be consumed by one another! I say then: "**Walk in the Spirit, and you shall NOT fulfill the LUST of the FLESH.** For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary (against, opposite) to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

- **James 3:14-16** "But if you have bitter _____ and _____-seeking in your _____, do not boast and _____ against the _____. This wisdom does _____ descend from above, but is earthly, _____, demonic. For where _____ and _____-seeking exist, confusion and every _____ thing will be there."

Definition: "If you BITE and DEVOUR one another" - Paul is getting ready to go into a great teaching on **the DIFFERENCE between "walking in the Spirit" or "being LED by the Spirit" and "walking after the lusts of our flesh."** The "biting and devouring one another" is part of the "lusts of the flesh" - typical behavior for people who are living according to their old sin nature and "flesh" rather than living according to God's Holy Spirit. If you've been a Christian for any length of time, and been to one or more churches, **you KNOW that NOT all of the people in those churches are walking according to the Holy Spirit!** Some of them may be true Christians, but **they are still letting the "LUSTS of their FLESH" rule and direct their lives, instead of allowing the Holy Spirit to RULE and DIRECT their lives.** Many churches have been torn apart and ruined (biting, devouring and consuming one another") by so-called Christians and members of their church who are being ruled and governed by their FLESH. It is the opposite of being "filled with the Spirit" and letting the Holy Spirit guide and direct them.

- **James 4:1-2** "Where do _____ and _____ come from among you? Do they not come from your _____ for _____ that _____ in your members? You _____ and do not have. You _____ and _____ and cannot obtain. You _____ and _____. Yet you do not have because you do not ask."
- **Romans 7:23** "But I see another law in my _____, **WARRING (lusting)** _____ the law of my mind, and bringing me into _____ to the law of _____ which is in my _____."
- **Romans 6:13** "And do not _____ your _____ as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but _____ yourselves to _____ as being alive from the dead, and your _____ as _____ of righteousness to God."

Definition: "Your DESIRES for PLEASURE that WAR" - We are too quick to blame the devil for our problems many times, **rather than examining ourselves to see what EVIL still LURKS in our own SOULS and in our FLESH - the physical body.** When James speaks about the "**DESIRES for PLEASURE that WAR in your members**" he is speaking about leftovers and hangovers from our old sin nature that still reside in our fleshly body, and in our minds, if we do not renew our minds with the word of God. Here in Galatians, Paul calls it "the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" - It is a **constant BATTLE or WAR to keep the flesh from being in control.** Yes, the devil certainly does know our weak points and what "buttons to push" in order to tempt us, and sometimes these temptations are the "fiery darts of the evil one" (Eph. 6:16), and we must extinguish them by putting up the "shield of faith." Other times, it is just that **we are ALLOWING our CARNAL MIND and FLESHLY emotions to carry us away** (see Isaiah 64:6 - "our iniquities,

like the wind, CARRY US AWAY"). Iniquity means DOING OUR OWN WILL, or GOING OUR OWN WAY (see Isaiah 53:6). **The way to fight this is to SUBMIT your mind, will and emotions to God, and present your BODY to Him** as a living sacrifice. **The TRANSFORMATION in your life** will come as your mind is renewed with the word of God, and your body is surrendered to the Lord completely.

- **I Peter 2:11** "Beloved, I _____ you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from _____ which _____ against the _____."
- **II Corinthians 10:3-5** "For though we walk in the _____, we do not _____ according to the flesh. For the weapons of our _____ are not carnal (merely human), but _____ in _____ for pulling down of strongholds; casting down arguments (imagination), and every high thing that exalts itself _____ the knowledge of God, bringing every _____ into captivity (taking control of) to the _____ of _____."
- **Romans 12:1-2** "I beseech you (beg you) therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you _____ your _____ as a _____ sacrifice, _____ and acceptable to _____, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be _____ by the _____ of your _____ that you may prove what is that _____ and acceptable and _____ will of God."

Definition: "If you have BITTER ENVY and SELF-SEEKING in your hearts " - A carnal, fleshly, sensual person (one being controlled by the flesh rather than the Spirit of God), will exhibit these evil qualities, which can even be, at times, demonic. These are hindrances to the filling of the Holy Spirit and producing His fruit in your life. If your heart and mind are filled with **ENVY and SELF-SEEKING**, anxiety, anger, fear, doubt, bitterness, pride, or any other "works" or "lusts of the flesh" (Galatians 5:14-21), those attitudes will control you. If you allow your heart and mind to be controlled and filled with God's Spirit, the evidence ("fruit") will be seen in your life, and you will be filled with his love, joy, peace, and all the fruit of the Spirit. Your life will exhibit **the fruits of the Spirit which are in essence the character qualities of Jesus Christ**. God's primary desire and plan for our lives is for us to be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29).

- **Romans 8:29** "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be _____ to the _____ of His _____, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Definition: "As SOJOURNERS and PILGRIMS, abstain from FLESHLY LUSTS" - A sojourner is one who is only here for a temporary visit. Pilgrim is a person who travels about; a wanderer. By calling us "sojourners and pilgrims" it means we are not going to be on this earth forever in our fleshly bodies, but are just passing through, on our way to God's eternal kingdom. To **"abstain from FLESHLY LUSTS" means to STAY AWAY (abstain) from the sins of the flesh, and the things our old nature liked to do before we were born again**. Is it possible for a Christian to fall back into those old fleshly lusts? Of course it is possible, but **it should NOT be where we LIVE and STAY**, because we are only passing through temporarily, and God has better things for us. If you find you have fallen back into some old sins of the flesh, repent, confess it to God (I John 1:9), and He will cleanse and restore you.

- **I Thessalonians 4:3-7** "For this is the _____ of _____, your sanctification: that you should _____ from _____; that each of you should know how to possess (keep) his own vessel (body) in _____ and _____, not in _____ of _____, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take

advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter..... For God did not call us to _____ (impurity), but in _____."

Definition: "MEMBERS" - Individual parts of the BODY, such as HANDS, FEET, TONGUE, EYES, etc. We have the POWER to CHOOSE to let our body parts be used for the glory of God, as **His INSTRUMENTS or TOOLS** of righteousness, or as INSTRUMENTS or TOOLS for sin.

- **Romans 6:19** "I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your _____. For just as you presented your _____ as _____ of _____, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your _____ as slaves of righteousness for _____."

Definition: "You MURDER and COVET" - Jesus makes it clear that **the underlying ATTITUDE of the HEART carries the same guilt as actual murder**, and we know from facts throughout all of history that anger, jealousy, coveting and envy are all prime motives for murder. The very first murder of all human history, that of **Cain killing his brother Abel, was motivated by PRIDE, selfishness and ENVY (coveting), which later turned into full-blown anger and murder**. God gave him a chance to repent, but Cain refused to come to God in humility by bringing an animal for a blood sacrifice, and instead wanted to "show off" the crops he had grown. Cain was the original one to mirror the words of the song, "**I Did It My Way**"! God refused Cain's sacrifice, but instead of "ruling over" the wrong emotions and passions of his flesh, Cain turned on his brother Abel in ENVY and ANGER, because his brother was obeying God and bringing the correct kind of sacrifice, and murdered him. To covet is to have an unhealthy desire for something that is not yours; either that belongs to someone else, or you are just not content with what you have (see Hebrews 13:5).

- **I Timothy 6:6-11** "But godliness with _____ is great _____. For we brought _____ into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be _____."
- **Colossians 3:5** "Therefore put to death your _____ which are on the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and _____ which is _____."
- **Genesis 4:3-8** "And in the process of time it came to pass that _____ brought an offering of the _____ of the _____ to the Lord. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected _____ and his offering, but He did _____ respect _____ and his offering. And _____ was very _____, and his countenance fell (the expression on his face). So the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you _____? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, _____ lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should _____ over it.' Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up _____ Abel his brother and _____ him."
- **Matthew 5:21-22** "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not _____,' and whoever _____ will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you that whoever is _____ with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment....."

19-21. Now **the WORKS of the FLESH** are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions (arguments), jealousies, outbursts of wrath (anger), selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries (partying, sexual orgies), and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

of God" (John 3:3). Since God says **He has WASHED us**, and **He has SANCTIFIED us** (made us holy), and **He has JUSTIFIED us** (removed our sins from us) through the working of His Holy Spirit, HOW foolish can we be to go back into sinful behavior as if it didn't mean anything?