

Galatians 5:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these;
Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Analysis

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Paul lists flesh's ugly fruit. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest" (phanera de estin ta erga tēs sarkos, φανερά δέ ἐστιν τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός)—the flesh's works are obvious, evident, visible. "Works" (erga, ἔργα) are plural: multiple ugly productions. The list isn't exhaustive but representative. First category: sexual sins. "Adultery" (not in best manuscripts, later addition). "Fornication" (porneia, πορνεία)—sexual immorality of all kinds, including premarital sex, adultery, prostitution.

"Uncleanness" (akatharsia, ἀκαθαρσία)—moral impurity, shameful conduct, perverted sexuality. "Lasciviousness" (aselgeia, ἀσέλγεια)—sensuality, debauchery, shameless excess, outrageous conduct shocking public decency. These sexual sins characterized pagan Greco-Roman culture: temple prostitution, pederasty, promiscuity, sexual slavery. The flesh, unchecked by the Spirit, produces sexual chaos. Modern sexual revolution demonstrates flesh's unchanged nature: apart from the Spirit, humanity descends into sexual degradation.

Historical Context

Greco-Roman sexual ethics were radically different from Christian morality. Prostitution was legal and common; pederasty was accepted in Greek culture; adultery was condemned for women but tolerated for men; sexual slavery was normal. Early Christianity's sexual ethics—monogamous heterosexual marriage,

chastity outside marriage, fidelity within marriage, equal standards for men and women—was countercultural and revolutionary. Paul warns: Christian freedom isn't license to adopt pagan sexual morality. Spirit-walking produces biblical sexual purity.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does contemporary culture's sexual ethic resemble ancient paganism's 'works of the flesh'?
2. What role does the Spirit play in producing sexual purity in a sex-saturated culture?
3. How do you guard against the flesh's sexual desires through Spirit-walking rather than mere rule-keeping?

Interlinear Text

φανερὰ	δέ	ἐστιν	τὰ	ἔργα	τῆς	σαρκός	ἧτινά	ἐστιν
manifest	Now	are	G3588	the works	G3588	of the flesh	which	are
G5318	G1161	G2076		G2041		G4561	G3748	G2076
μοιχεία,	πορνεία	ἀκαθαρσία	ἀσέλγεια					
these Adultery	fornication	uncleanness	lasciviousness					
G3430	G4202	G167	G766					

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 21:8 (Parallel theme): But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and

all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Galatians 6:8 (Parallel theme): For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

1 Corinthians 3:3 (Parallel theme): For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Titus 3:3 (Parallel theme): For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Romans 8:13 (Parallel theme): For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Romans 8:5 (Parallel theme): For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Revelation 22:15 (Parallel theme): For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

1 Corinthians 6:18 (Parallel theme): Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

Galatians 5:17 (Parallel theme): For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Psalms 17:4 (Parallel theme): Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.