

Galatians 5:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Analysis

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul concludes the vice list with stern warning. "Envyings" (phthonoi, φθόνοι)—envy, spite, jealousy. "Murders" (phonoi, φόνοι)—killing. "Drunkenness" (methai, μέθαι)—intoxication, habitual drunkenness. "Revellings" (kōmoi, κῶμοι)—carousing, wild parties, orgies. "And such like" (kai ta homoia toutoι)—and things similar to these. The list is representative, not exhaustive.

"Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past" (ha prolegō hymin kathōs proeipon)—which I forewarn you, as I previously warned. Paul taught this during his initial ministry. "That they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (hoti hoi ta toiauta prassontes basileian theou ou klēronomēsousin). Present participle "do" (prassontes) suggests habitual practice, lifestyle. Not sinless perfection required but directional life. Habitually practicing these works evidences unregenerate heart. True believers struggle with remaining sin but don't contentedly practice these works as lifestyle. This warns against false assurance.

Historical Context

Paul's warning echoes Jesus (Matthew 7:21-23), James (James 2:14-26), and John (1 John 3:4-10): profession without transformation indicates false faith. This challenged easy-beliefism and cheap grace then and now. Justification by faith alone doesn't mean faith that remains alone—true faith produces Spirit-fruit, not flesh-works. Those habitually practicing vice-list behaviors without repentance give evidence of unregenerate hearts, regardless of profession. Pastoral application: comfort the afflicted (struggling believers burdened by remaining sin), afflict the comfortable (professing Christians contentedly living in sin).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between struggling with remaining sin versus habitually practicing works of the flesh as a lifestyle?
2. What does it mean that those who 'do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God'—is this losing salvation or never having it?
3. How should this warning affect both your assurance of salvation and your pursuit of holiness?

Interlinear Text

φθόνοι	φόνοι,	μέθαι	κῶμοι	καὶ	τὰ	ὅμοια	τούτοις		
Envyings	murders	drunkenness	revellings	also	G3588	like	such		
G5355	G5408	G3178	G2970	G2532		G3664		G5125	
α	προλέγω	ὑμῖν	καθὼς	καὶ	προεῖπον	ὅτι	οἱ	τὰ	
of the which	I tell	you	as	also	I have	that	G3588	G3588	
G3739	G4302	G5213	G2531	G2532	G4277	G3754			
τοιαῦτα	πράσσοντες	βασιλείαν	θεοῦ	οὐ	κληρονομήσουσιν				
such things	they which do	the kingdom	of God	not		inherit			
G5108	G4238	G932	G2316	G3756		G2816			

Additional Cross-References

Romans 13:13 (Parallel theme): Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

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.

Ephesians 5:18 (Parallel theme): And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

1 Corinthians 5:11 (Parallel theme): But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

Colossians 3:6 (References God): For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

1 Peter 4:3 (Parallel theme): For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

Revelation 21:27 (Parallel theme): And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1 Thessalonians 5:7 (Parallel theme): For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

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 15:50 (Kingdom): Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

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