

THE WORKS OF THE FLESH "ENMITIES" AND "STRIFE"

INTRODUCTION:

A hostile and quarrelsome spirit has no place in the life of a Christian. Such enmity manifests a heart not governed by the spirit of love and peace (Gal. 5:22). Many an outsider has turned from the presence of truth by pointing an accusing finger at the people of God whom he saw striving against one another instead of striving together to know and live by the truth of God's Word. Such a stumbling block leads to condemnation for the deceived outsider and the professing children of God.

In Proverbs 10:12, the Wisdom of God informs all that "Hatred stirreth up strifes...". As we shall see later, other sinful attitudes may lead to strife, but hatred if not quenched by the waters of love, will always lead to strife. This illustrates to us how one sin leads to another.

I. WHAT THE WORD "ENMITY" MEANS

- A. ECHTHRA - Noun; Occurs 6 times in the N.T. and denotes a hostile attitude towards another. Translated "enmity" "hatred" and "quarrels" (Lk.23:12, Gal. 5:20)
- B. EXHTHROS - Adjective; Occurs 32 times in the N.T. and translated "foe", or "enemy" (Matt. 10:36; 5:43-44).
- C. "Enmity" or "hatred" emphasizes an inner hostile disposition, and results in open conflict or opposition between individuals or nations.

II. HOW "ENMITY" IS USED IN THE N.T.

- A. Man's hatred toward God
 - 1. the state of one who acts contrary to God's Will.
 - a) By being friends with the world (James 4:4).
 - b) by minding the flesh and not submitting to the law of God (Rom. 8:7).
 - c) By living in sin (Eph. 2:16, Col. 1:21)
- B. Man's hatred toward Man (Gal. 5:20, Lk.23:12).
 - 1. The result of adhering to a law designed for one group of people (Eph. 2:15).
 - a) Attitude of Jews toward Gentiles (Acts 10:28).
 - b) Attitude of Gentiles toward Jews (Esther 3:8).
 - 2. Such peculiarity concerning one race of people abolished in Christ's death. (2 Cor. 5: 15-17).

III. WHAT THE WORD "STRIFE" MEANS

- A. ERIS - Noun; Occurs 9 times in the N.T. and denotes a contentious temper that causes strife between individuals or groups. Translated "variance", "debate", and "strife".

IV. HOW THE WORD "STRIFE" IS USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. Paired with two forms of jealousy:
 - 1. the begrudging spirit that sees in another what one wishes to have, but does not possess for himself (cf. ROM. 13:13 - ZELOS).
 - 2. The begrudging spirit that does not necessarily want to possess for himself what he sees in another, but wants to prevent the other person from having it (Phil. 1:15 - PHTHONOS).
 - 3. Note: Both forms of jealousy are condemned as works of the flesh:
 - a) Gal.5:20 -
 - b) "jealousies" "emulations" (ZELOS)
 - c) "envyings" (PHTHONOS)
- B. The effect of man assuming preeminence over God's way (I Cor. 1:11-12, 3:3, 4:6).
- C. The result of unsound thinking and teaching.
 - 1. Foolish questions (I Tim. 6:4, Titus 3:9, cf. I Tim. 1:5-7, 2 Tim. 2:23).
- D. Must be repented of, or one will lose their soul in eternity (2 Cor. 12:20, Gal. 5:19-21).

QUESTIONS:

- 1. When hatred arises between Christians, what should be brought out to them to remedy such hostility?
- 2. What must one do to avoid enmity with God?
- 3. What does the word, "strife" mean?
- 4. From this lesson, list and explain FIVE causes of strife: