

THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

INTRODUCTION:

1. In Galatians 5 Paul draws a contrast between the flesh and the life of the Christian:
 - a. "For ye, brethren were called for freedom, only **use not your freedom** for an **occasion to the flesh, but through love** be servants one to another" (Gal.5:13).
 - b. "But I say, **Walk by the Spirit**, and ye shall **not fulfill the lust of the flesh**. For the **flesh lusteth against the Spirit**, and **the Spirit against the flesh**; for **these are contrary the one to the other**; that ye may not do the things that ye would" (Gal.5:16-17).
 - c. "And they that **are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh** with the passions and the lusts thereof" (Gal. 5:24).
2. One cannot continue to serve the flesh (sin) and at the same time live in Christ. In attitude and action the Christian must consider himself to be "dead unto sin" (Rom. 6:12). The following passages make this fact abundantly clear:
 - a. "For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God . Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:10-11).
 - b. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body..." (Rom. 6:12)
 - c. "Neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. 6:13; cf. Col. 3:5).
 - d. "But if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13).
 - e. "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).
 - f. "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).
 - g. "and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them;" (Eph. 5:11).
 - h. "but fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints (Eph. 5:3).
 - i. "abstain from every form of evil" (I Thess. 5:22; cf. I Pet. 2:11).
 - j. "But flee youthful lusts..." (2 Tim. 2:22).
 - k. "...lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us..." (Heb. 12:1).
 - l. "...keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

3. THE FLESH: THE STATE OF MAN THAT MUST CHANGE.

- a. The term "flesh" occurs about 151 times in the New Testament as a noun (SARX), and about 12 times as an adjective (SARKIKOS - 11 times), (SARKINAIS - 1 time- 2 Cor. 3:3). Though the meaning of the term varies in its emphasis, it consistently represents the human aspect of man, both inwardly and outwardly.
- b. Various meanings of "flesh":
- (1) Emphasis upon one as a human being in contrast to a totally spiritual being (Matt. 16:17; Mk.13:20; Rom. 1:3; Col. 3:22; Eph. 6:12; etc.).
 - (2) Emphasis upon all that pertains to humans in their earthly existence: relationships, desires, joys, sadness, etc. (Matt. 19:5,6; Jn. 1:13; Acts 2:26; Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 7:5; etc.).
 - (3) Emphasis upon the physical body or outward appearance (Acts 2:31; Rom. 2:28; I Cor. 15:39; 2 Cor. 12:7; Heb. 5:7)
 - (4) Emphasis upon the human point of view or worldly standard (1 Cor. 1:26, 2 Cor. 1:17, 5:16).
 - (5) Emphasis in a metaphorical sense on the capability of man to sin, therefore his weakness (Matt. 26:41; Rom.7:18; Gal. 5:13; Eph. 2:3).
 - (6) Emphasis upon the state of the carnal thinking man (Rom. 7:5, 25; 8:5, 6, 7, 8, 9; 2 Cor. 7:1; 10:2; Gal. 5:24).
- c. In this study, we primarily will be interested in the last two meanings of the word "flesh". The fact that man has freewill is implied by the Holy Spirit's use of the words "flesh" and "spirit". They represent the only two spheres of man's various pursuits. His capability to do right is summed up in the word "spirit", while his capability to do wrong is summed upon in the word "flesh". The flesh is the bridge that links the destructive spirit is the capable of that through good, or minded Satan with man's potentially destructible soul. The bridge that links the good minded God with the soul that is righteousness. The mind or heart of man serves as a gate choice either closes itself on the flesh and opens to God and closes itself on the spirit and opens to Satan and evil. It is an

either-or
potential to sin is
Christ and serve
are DEAD TO SIN.

proposition, not a this-and-that possibility. While our
not eliminated from our existence, our choice to be in
God changes our relationship with sin. In Christ we