

BOOK OF GALATIANS

“*Who Practice Such Things*”

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 5:16-21

-) **SLIDES 1-6**. Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDES 7-8**. Read today’s Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 9**. Today we continue in our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #38. I have titled today’s message “*Who Practice Such Things*” (v21).
-) The apostle Paul has taught the theology concerning salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. Now here comes the application of that theology. How does a new creation in Christ think, talk, and act?
-) Last week I spoke about a battle that is raging inside every believer. In this corner we have the Spirit of God which dwells inside every born-again believer, and in the other corner we have the flesh that we inherited as part of our human condition which hasn’t gone away.
-) **SLIDE 10**. GALATIANS 5:17. When the Spirit arrived, that moment we were saved, the flesh did not want to relinquish its mastery over us. And now these two, the Spirit and the flesh, want to dominate and rule our lives.
-) **SLIDE 11**. GALATIANS 5:16. But, even though there may be a battle going on in our minds, the Word of God specifically commands us to walk by the Spirit.
-) But what happens if we don’t walk by the Spirit? Can we walk this journey as a born-again believer and continue as we were before we were saved? Is there such a thing as a “*carnal*” Christian—one who professes the faith but continues to habitually walk in and practice sinful habits?

-) To answer these questions, let's start at the beginning. "*Do we have the Spirit of God dwelling within us?*" And that's where I want to take us here this morning. The apostle Paul addresses this issue in today's text and gives us the answer.
-) **SLIDE 12.** ROMANS 8:9. We covered this last week. Either we do or we do not have the Spirit of God within us. The true born-again believer does. The unbeliever does not.
-) **SLIDE 13.** OK. We say we do. Now what? 2 COR 13:5. This is a good thing for every Christian to do. Let's test ourselves. Are we truly in the faith? And I am convinced by doing this, we will be more bent towards walking by the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells within us.
-) Paul gives us some help in taking this test. I am going to put three verses up here on the screen. I want you to look for the similarities in these three verses.
-) **SLIDE 14.** GALATIANS 5:19-21.
-) **SLIDE 15.** 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10.
-) **SLIDE 16.** EPHESIANS 5:5.
-) **SLIDE 17.** Two similarities we see in these three verses are 1) there is a laundry list of sins, and 2) the people who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
-) What does the Bible mean when it talks about the "*Kingdom of God?*" There are two ways to look at this.
-) Ligonier Ministries says this: "*A kingdom is that territory over which a king reigns. Since we understand that God is the Creator of all things, the extent of His realm must be the whole world. Manifestly, then, the kingdom of God is wherever God reigns, and since He reigns everywhere, the kingdom of God is everywhere.*"
-) This definition would certainly be true in a general sense. The entire universe is the kingdom of God.

-) But in the context of GALATIANS 5, 1 COR 6, and EPH 5, the “*kingdom of God*” means something a little different. It is something we either inherit or do not inherit.
-) The website “*GotQuestions.org*” says this: “*The kingdom of God is a spiritual rule over the hearts and lives of those who willingly submit to God’s authority. Those who defy God’s authority and refuse to submit to Him are not part of the kingdom of God; in contrast, those who acknowledge the lordship of Christ and gladly surrender to God’s rule in their hearts are part of the kingdom of God. In this sense, the kingdom of God is spiritual.*”
-) **SLIDE 18.** In other words, in this sense, it means being saved. JOHN 3:3-5. It’s clear in this passage that Jesus is referring to one being saved.
-) **SLIDE 19.** Let’s get back to GALATIANS 5:19-21. Let’s sum this up. If you practice the deeds of the flesh (there they are), the Word of God says you are not saved.
-) But as I look at this list, I find myself guilty of violating several if not many of these deeds of the flesh. And I know I’m saved. Well, I hope I’m saved. Does this mean I’m not saved?
-) If it were as simple as a violation of any of these sins meant we were not saved, none of us would be saved because we all violate one or more of these deeds of the flesh.
-) **SLIDE 20.** There is a key word in this verse that we must understand. And that is the word “*practice.*” What does it mean to practice something?
-) **SLIDE 21.** Webster definition. In other words, you work at this (whatever this is) because you enjoy this, and you want to get better at this. I enjoy playing golf. If I want to get better at playing the game of golf, I go out often and practice. I practice my drives and my short game and my putts. The more I practice, the better I will become at playing the game.

-) Let's substitute the word "*sin*" in our definition of the word "*practice*" and by asking ourselves a few questions.
-) Do we perform sin often, customarily, or habitually? Do we perform or work at sin repeatedly so as to become proficient? Are we training in sin by repeated exercises?
-) Folks, this is important because how we view our sin will have an outcome on our eternity. Do we want to inherit the kingdom of God?
-) **SLIDE 22.** The apostle Paul is not the only NT writer to use the word "*practice*." 1 JOHN 3:4-10. John is not saying that the born-again believer becomes sinless. That will never happen. But what he is saying is that a person will either practice (to perform often, customarily, or habitually) righteousness which shows we are of God, or a person will practice (to perform often, customarily, or habitually) sin which shows we are of the devil.
-) Who practice such things. Who practice such things. BGCC, we will continue to fail as born-again believers, as God's elect, as those adopted into the family of God. And we know in ROMANS 7:14-25 that even the apostle Paul struggled doing the right thing.
-) But there is a major difference between failing in sin and practicing our sin. Do we justify our sins? "*Well, you know, I wouldn't have to steal from the company if they would just pay me a little bit more.*"
-) Folks, this isn't a thin line. The line is obvious. Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
-) We often bring up the sin of homosexuality when we talk about habitual sin. Does the homosexual offender perform often, customarily, and habitually their sin? Do they love and enjoy what they do? If so, the Word of God says they will not inherit the kingdom of God.

-) How about this. Does the gossip perform often, customarily, and habitually their sin? Do they love and enjoy what they do? If so, the Word of God says they will not inherit the kingdom of God. And we could place any sin into that equation.
-) Mike, I've fallen into habitual sin. What can I do? Two things.
-) **SLIDE 23.** 1 JOHN 1:9-10. Confess your sin. One difference between the true born-again believer and the person who is deceived into thinking they are a believer is that the born-again believer knows what is sinful and they know what they have done is wrong, that it goes against the Word of God, and they confess that sin.
-) The deceived unbeliever does not give their sin a second thought. They say something like, "*It's just who I am*" or "God made me this way." Those are both very dangerous statements to make.
-) Mike, I've fallen into habitual sin. What can I do? Second.
-) **SLIDE 24.** MARK 1:14-15. Here we have those words "*kingdom of God*" again. That is synonymous with your salvation. But we also told to repent and believe the gospel.
-) **SLIDE 25.** What does it mean to repent? Webster definition. We change our mind about how we feel about our sin. We used to love it. Now we hate it. We used to hide it. Now we confess it. We used to justify it. Now we feel regret over it.
-) I will continue to sin. You will continue to sin. How do we feel about our sin? Do we love it, or do we hate it? Remember, there is a battle waging within every born-again believer. If we truly have the Spirit of God dwelling inside us, we will always hate our sin and never practice our sin.

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