

THREE DIFFICULT PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE (#3)
Second Passage: (Gal.5:19-21)

We are currently studying three similar Difficult Passages: (1 Cor.6:9-11); (Gal.5:19-21); and (Eph.5:3-5). Their similarity is in the phrase, “Shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Last week we learned the importance of the context to the text and of a good study Bible.

The context of the second Difficult Passage is Gal.5:16-26. The theme of Galatians Ch.5 is “Spiritual Freedom” (eleutheria) (Gal.5:1, 13).

Our text sets up our context with a key Greek word for flesh (sarx)

(Gal.5:13-15) “For you were **called to freedom**, brethren, only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the **flesh** but through love serve one another.”

The Greek word for opportunity is (aphorme). Aphorme refers to a base of operation from which an attack can be launched. It refers to the flesh (OSN) as a base of operation for warfare against the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal.5:16-17).

This lesson will study five aspects of Difficult Passage #2 (Gal.5:19-21).

1. We will begin by outlining the context of (Gal.5:16-26) with the following three transitional conjunctions (de) [now].

- (Gal.5:16-18) “**Now** I say walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the **flesh**.”
- (Gal.5:19-23) “**Now** the deeds of the **flesh**.”
- (Gal.5:24-26) “**Now** those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the **flesh**.”

You can see that the key word in our context is **sarx (flesh)** just as we were instructed in (Gal.5:13-15).

2. One meaning of flesh (sarx) is old sin nature (OSN).

It is obvious that this is its meaning in (Gal.5:13-26). The NIV translates it as “sin nature” six times in our context.

It is called flesh because it is given at birth and remains until death. It is the only nature of unregenerate old man (Eph.2:3; 1 John 2:16; 1 Cor.2:14; Jude 19).

3. Regeneration establishes a spiritual nature in opposition to the OSN

(Rom.5:8; Titus 3:5-7; John 8:34-36; 2 Cor.3:17-18; 2 Cor.5:17; Gal.3:2-3). The Indwelling Holy Spirit (HIS) is the opposing base of operation.

The OSN and the Indwelling Holy Spirit are diametrically opposed in every Church Age Believer (CAB) (Gal.5:16-17; 1 Cor.6:19-20; Eph.1:13-14).

When the OSN is in control, it results in **carnality** (sarkikos) [fleshly].

When the Spirit is in control, it results in **spirituality** (pneumatikos) (1 Cor.3:1-3).

The believer is never neutral in this warfare (Gal.5:17).

4. Both carnal believer and spiritual believer are known by what they produce.

- **Carnality** produces works of the flesh (Gal.5:15, 19-21, 26).
- **Spirituality** produces fruit of Spirit (Gal.5:22-23; 1 Cor.13:4-8).

The believer is free to choose which one will control
(Gal.5:13, 26)

Therefore, Paul commands us to walk (peripateo / p.a.impv.2pl) by means of the Spirit
(Gal.5:16; 1 Thess.4:3-8).

However, the believer is **not free** to choose the consequences of carnality
(Heb.12:5-11; 1 John 1:9; 2 Cor.5:8-10).

5. If the CAB lives in habitual carnality, he will be disciplined by Lord God (Heb.12:5-11).

If he fails to respond to Divine Discipline by confession of his sin (1 John 1:9), he is in a state known as back-sliding or reversionism (Prov.14:14; Eph.4:17-24).

He will receive scourging divine discipline even unto the sin unto death (Heb.12:6; 1 Pet.2:11-12; 1 John 5:16).

Reversionism leads to the sin unto death which shortens their time on earth (Acts 5) [Ananias and Sapphira].

This doctrinal principle is captured by the Greek articulate participle (hoi prasso / p.a.ptc) [habitual practice]. **Prasso** is the subject of “those who practice **such things** shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal.5:21)

There is no definite article with “kingdom of God”. Therefore, the emphasis is on the characteristics or on the fruit of the kingdom of God (Gal.5:22-26; Rom.14:17).

Paul reminds the Galatian believers that they have been FOREWARN **once again** regarding this doctrine.

- (1 Tim.4:16) “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”