

## Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,

<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

<sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that *those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God.*



Some preachers use this passage to threaten Christians that, if they habitually practice the works of the flesh described in the text, they can lose their salvation at any time without knowing. First, as we demonstrated in the previous section, inheriting the Kingdom is tantamount to being saved. Second, Paul doesn't say that those people who practice fleshly works will be disinherited from a state of heirs, but that they will not inherit anything in the first place. Third, he doesn't specify a clear timeline or a number of times after which those who practice the works of the

flesh will lose their salvation.

Fourth, if we look carefully at the context (a few verses before and a few verses after our passage), we can quickly discover that the apostle Paul is portraying a stark contrast between the flesh and the Spirit and between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit: "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are *contrary* to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish" (Galatians 5:16-17). He merely puts

them side by side for comparison and godly instruction to believers. After enumerating all the works of the flesh, he begins Verse 22 with the preposition “BUT,” which commences the enumeration of the fruits of the Spirit. He concludes in Verse 24 that those who are Christ’s (who are different from those who practice the works of the flesh and will not inherit the Kingdom) have already crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. So, he encourages believers to live according to the truth about their already changed nature. In fact, in Verse 25, he says this: if you are in the Spirit, live in Him, and belong to God, then also walk, and behave in the Spirit or according to Him. The theme is clearly the renewal of the minds of believers in Christ and not their loss of salvation.

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