

As we read,

Gal 5:19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

We might call these the big things.

A question from a new member.

What are the little things that will keep us out of heaven? Are things that we do repetitively that are viewed as ungodly going to keep us out of heaven?

In other words, I haven't slept with the neighbor's wife, no sex with animals, no striptease dancing, no visiting in the Hindu temple, no hallucinogenic drugs with the Shaman, haven't started a war with the neighbors, I have my relations under control, haven't had a bad case of road rage in a week, I got over the raise my co-worker got – even though he didn't deserve it – haven't been drunk or partying in a long time.

I'm just doing OK with the sins of the flesh – is anything else going to get me?

The question we have to answer
is who views the things that we
might be doing as ungodly.

It is God's view that counts and
not man's.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear
before the judgment seat of
Christ, that each one may be
recompensed for his deeds in the
body, according to what he has
done, whether good or bad.

II Jn 1:9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; 11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.

The Corinthian brethren make a good example of folks doing things God wanted them do and still falling short!

In 1Cor 1, they had “preacheritis”.

1Co 1:12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."

(13) Has Christ been divided?

Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

We have to be careful that we are following God and not man.

Act 20:29 "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; (30) and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Paul gets to another “little thing” in 1Co 5.

Although they were not committing the immorality, they didn't care if others did!

1Co 5:11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler--not even to eat with such a one.

Is God's will and his people going to be a part of
our lives?

1Co 6:5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there
is not among you one wise man who will be able to
decide between his brethren, (6) but brother goes
to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?

How can a man face God when he goes to court
with a brother – the answer is he can't and he won't
stand justified in the day of Judgment.

We are going to have to learn
God's will and then do it! Not a
part of it, but all of it. This is the
place where we will dwell – in
His church.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord that
which I also delivered to you, that the Lord
Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed
took bread; (24) and when He had given
thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My
body, which is for you; do this in
remembrance of Me." 25 In the same way He
took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This
cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this,
as often as you drink it, in remembrance of
Me."

When you look at Matthew's or Luke's account, do you for a moment believe that the Lord told Paul it would be alright to have the emblems simultaneously?

Or should the church, regardless of its size, spend the time in proclamation required to do it as "the Lord delivered" unto Paul?

In 1Cor 15, the brethren were teaching error about the resurrection.

1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." (34)

Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

Paul warns the elders about
leaving a part of God's word out
in their teaching.

Acts 20:18 And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we know that we can't keep
his word perfectly.

I Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no
sin, we are deceiving ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.

How do we reconcile our inability to live sinlessly after we have had our sins removed by baptism with the fact that we told not to continue in sin.

I Jn 2:4 The one who says, "I
have come to know Him," and
does not keep His
commandments, is a liar, and the
truth is not in him;

I Jn 3:6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

The translation of “abides in Him” in the KJV is “abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.”

The NIV is clearer still.
No one who lives in him keeps
on sinning. No one who
continues to sin has either seen
him or known him.

Although we sin from time to time, we do not practice sinning. That is, we do not continue doing sinful things.

You may ask how many sins do I get before I cross over the line. I can't answer that. I am not able to read your heart but God is.

The important factor is that God
is willing to forgive.

I Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

How many times?

Matt 18:21 Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

This knowledge about God's
mercy should not prevent us from
striving for perfection.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

As we think about our baptism, we realize that our past sins have been forgiven. There is a continuing need to change our lives. There may be habits that need to be broken. It may take time to break these habits and we may slip, but if our heart is a good one, we are going to make that effort.

And God knows our hearts (Ps 44.21)

Eph 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The question is, how are you
walking today?

Are you doing your best to walk
in a manner worthy of the gospel
call you received or are you
walking selfishly, serving self and
not God?