

Seven Steps to Schism: Galatians 5:20 by [John T Polk II](#) For [The Fellowship Room](#)

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Introduction:

1. These "works of the flesh" are listed in an ascending order of damage.
2. Every unscriptural division in the church of Christ follows this pattern.
3. Developing divisions can be dealt with by recognizing the current "step" and proceeding to scripturally deal with the false teachers of it ([Matthew 7:15-20](#); [Matthew 18:15-18](#); [Romans 16:17](#))
4. God promptly dealt with the first willful sinners in the church ([Acts 5:1-11](#)).

Discussion:

- a) **Hatred – Greek ekthrai** - hostile, hating and opposing another
 - 1) Sinners' general attitude toward God ([Romans 5:10](#); [Galatians 4:16](#))
 - 2) Satan's position and work against God ([Matthew 13:28, 39](#))
 - 3) Saviour's general attitude toward the sinful ([I Corinthians 15:25-26](#); [James 4:4](#))
- b) **Contentions – Greek ereis** - contention, strife, wrangling
 - 1) Evidence of carnality among brethren ([I Corinthians 1:11-13](#); [3:3](#); [I Timothy 6:3-5](#); [Titus 3:9](#))
 - 2) Excused for "soundness" ([Philippians 1:15](#))
- c) **Jealousies – Greek dzaloi** – fervor, excitement in defending anything
 - 1) Approved when for the right thing ([John 2:13-17](#); [Colossians 4:12-13](#); [2 Corinthians 7:9-11](#))
 - 2) Awful when aimed at the church ([Philippians 3:6](#); [Acts 13:45](#))
 - 3) Arrogant when aimed away from one's self ([James 3:14-16](#))
- d) **Outbursts of Wrath – Greek thumoi** – explosive anger, quickly subsiding, breathe violently
 - 1) Aggressive, even against Jesus! ([Luke 4:22-30](#); [Acts 19:26-28](#))
 - 2) Apparently only God can properly control its expression ([Romans 2:8](#))
 - 3) Adverse effect on Christians ([Ephesians 4:31](#); [Colossians 3:8](#); [2 Corinthians 12:20](#))

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- e) **Selfish Ambitions – Greek eritheiai** – electioneering, courting distinction, partisanship
 - 1) Personal interests must be kept aside in preaching ([Philippians 1:15-18](#))
 - 2) Personalities must be kept down in “membering” ([Philippians 2:3](#))
 - 3) Promotion of ANY GOOD WORK must not “lapse” into this.

- f) **Dissensions – Greek dikostasiai** – to stand apart, create two-parties
 - 1) There are NOT two sides to truthful obedience ([Romans 16:17-19](#))
 - 2) There is NO spirituality in doctrinal splits ([I Corinthians 3:3](#))
 - 3) The church becomes worldly when it divides ([Galatians 5:20](#))

- g) **Heresies – Greek haireseis** – capturing or choosing a particular tenet
 - 1) Choosing the lesser of evils is still evil ([2 Peter 2:1-2](#))
 - 2) Combining with “the faithful” IS “SECTARIANISM”! ([Acts 5:17; 15:5; Acts 26:5; 24:5,15; 28:22](#))
 - 3) Crucifixion occurs all over, again ([I Corinthians 11:19-20](#) cf [Hebrews 6:4-6](#))

Conclusion:

1. NO ONE inherits the kingdom of God that practices these ([Galatians 5:19-21](#)).
2. No church (or religion) based upon these attitudes is acceptable to God.
3. All divisions between Christians must cease ([1 Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:1-4](#)).
4. Only Jesus Christ can save ([Acts 4:12; Mark 16:15-16](#)).

--- John T Polk II