

Sunday, November 17 – Galatians Pt. 6

Paul's Parting Words

Today we continue with our series in the Book of Galatians. Galatians is a call for freedom from the dependence on the Law for salvation and a call to live by grace through faith in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Today we investigate Paul's Parting Words to the Galatians. Often the parting or final words of someone show the writer's key thoughts they want to leave with their readers. In Chapter 6 of the Letter to the Galatians, Paul gives them (and us today) **Three Key Aspects of a Life that is Spirit-Led, Christ Honoring, and Cross Focused.**

GENTLE COMPASSIONATE RESTORATION, GENEROSITY & MUTUAL CARE, AND A LIFE FOCUSED ON THE CROSS.

Galatians 5:25,26...²⁵ *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.* ²⁶ *Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.*

Galatians 6:1-18...¹ *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.* ² *Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.* ³ *For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.* ⁴ *But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.* ⁵ *For each one will bear his*

own load. ⁶ *The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him.* ⁷ *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.* ⁸ *For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.* ⁹ *Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.* ¹⁰ *So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.* ¹¹ *See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.* ¹² *Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.* ¹³ *For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh.* ¹⁴ *But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.* ¹⁵ *For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.* ¹⁶ *And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.* ¹⁷ *From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.* ¹⁸ *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.*

Key Aspect Parting Word No. 1:

➤ Gentle Compassionate Restoration:

Galatians 5:25,26...²⁵ *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.* ²⁶ *Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.*

Galatians 6:1,2...¹ *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.* ² *Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

“Paul recognized that there may be those among the Christians in Galatia who had been overtaken in a trespass. <3900> παράπτωμα *paraptoma*. a false step, a trespass. Transgression. It is one of several words used to describe a sin or error. This one seems to carry a little less sense of severity or intention. It seems to indicate a more careless, lack of wisdom incident

Paul shows his compassionate, caring side as he indicates that when one of the fellow believers falls, or trespasses, they are not to be excluded from the fellowship, yet there is a responsibility to not stay in the transgression. Those who are *spiritual* mature (<4152> πνευματικός *pneumatikos*. Spiritual. **Usage:** spiritual(23), spiritual men(1), spiritual things(2)) they are to compassionately address the issue with the one or ones who have trespassed. They are not to be *ignored*. They are not to be *excused*. They are not to be *put down*. The goal is always *restoration*.

“The verb is instructive. *Καταρτίζω* means to ‘put in order’ and so to ‘restore to its former condition’...<2675> *καταρτίζω* *katartizo*. to complete, prepare. **Origin:** from

2596 and ἀρτίζω *artizo* (to get ready, prepare) **Usage:** complete(1), equip(1), fully trained(1), made complete(2), mending(2), perfect(1), prepared(4), restore(1).

“It was used in secular Greek as a medical term for setting a fractured or dislocated bone. It is applied in **Mark 1:19** to the apostles who were ‘*mending*’ their nets.”

This job of restoration is often neglected in the church.

We have a tendency to either pretend the sin never happened, or we tend to react too harshly towards the one who has sinned. The balance between these two extremes can only be negotiated by the **spiritual**. It should be normal to do what God says here, but it isn’t”. (BLB)

It is all too easy to respond to someone’s sin with gossip, harsh judgment, or undiscerning approval.

- **Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness:** <4240> *πραΰτης* *praftes*. Gentleness. **Usage:** consideration(1), gentleness(8), humility(1), meekness(1). Note: Same word as used in Chapter 5:23 of the Fruit of the Spirit – Gentleness. Adapted from https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/galatians/galatians-6.cfm

- **Bear one another’s burdens:** “When Paul brought up the idea of the one *overtaken in any trespass*, it painted the picture of a person sagging under a heavy load. Here he expanded the idea to encourage every Christian to **bear one another’s burdens**. This is a *simple, yet challenging* command to obey. Look for a brother or a sister with a burden and help them with it. It isn’t complicated, and it doesn’t take a huge program or infrastructure to do it. Just look for a burden to bear and bear it. “*Notice the assumption which lies behind this command, namely that we all have burdens, and that God does not mean us to carry them alone.*” (Stott)

Pauls' Warning To 'The Spiritual'

³ For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. ⁵ For each one will bear his own load.

Even those of us who are “*spiritual*”, can find ourselves tempted to be a little prideful (*boasting*, vs. 4) when we help others through their struggles. Pride is not to be a part of a ‘spiritual’ person’s life. “

Instead of deceiving ourselves, we must take a careful and a sober examination of our works before God.

We must be careful to examine our attitudes about ourselves and our works. It is easy to get subconsciously prideful about our spiritual knowledge, works and abilities. We must not let that happen. We owe everything to God, that means the very breath in our lungs, the brains that we fill with knowledge, the bodies that we use to make products or money.

Don't let spiritual pride well up within you in any way.

Recall these verses:

Micah 6:8...*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

&

James 4:6...*But God gives more grace. Therefore, it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*

Paul closes this section with a verse that gives a balancing note of instruction. It also leads into Paul’s 2nd Set of Parting Words. Basically, Paul is saying we need to be gracious in helping restore others, while at the same time not falling into trespass ourselves or getting a prideful spirit and reminds us that we have a responsibility to ‘*bear our own loads*’. Which seems to be Paul’s way of saying that we all are accountable for our actions and attitudes. We can’t expect others to always ‘fix’ our problems if we are not walking in the Spirit. Yet, we still need to exhibit this next trait.

2. **GENEROSITY & MUTUAL CARE** (vs. 6-10)

⁶ The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. ¹⁰ So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Verse 6 can be one of several verses in the Bible that can sound a little self-serving for Pastors/Teachers. But it needs to be stated that God clearly states in the Bible here and in several other passages, that the those who are being served and taught by Pastors/Teachers are to be graciously thankful and financially generous to them.

The next verse is a challenging one and I am not sure if we can know whether Paul is extending his thoughts from verse 6 into vs. 7, but it is clear that God is not going to be mocked. <3456> μυκτηρίζω *mukterizo*- to turn up the nose or *sneer at*.

We need to be clear that we cannot just do what we want with our lives. Well, I guess you ‘CAN’ do what you want, but there ‘WILL’ be consequences. If verse 6 & 7 have a common thread it could be that it is that believers should put their thankfulness into practice by being generous to one another and that includes their Pastor/Teacher/Leaders. If we do not honor God’s call on Leader’s life, are we really being thankful to God for ‘*All things*’

But, even if it doesn’t specifically apply to the Church’s attitude of thankfulness for their appointed leaders, the bottom line is that God gives us everything that we have, we are to be thankful to God for what He gives us, and on a lesser level thankful and generous to His servant Pastor/Teachers.

Verse 7 in a wider application reminds us that God knows all things; we cannot hide anything from Him. He is all-powerful and will bring all things to judgment. That means the things we say, how we treat one another, how we spend our time, talents and treasures (money). We have a responsibility to live lives of generosity, thankfulness and obedience.

That leads us to the final verses of this section ...

Mutual Care:

⁹ Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. ¹⁰ So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Paul is saying ‘Don’t Quit’ being faithful, good, generous, serving and obedient. It may seem to you, as it did, I am sure to the readers of Paul’s letter; that the Christian Life can be hard sometimes, but don’t give up. Keep the Faith, Stay Obedient, God will be glorified, others will be blessed, and we will be rewarded. **DON’T GIVE UP!**

The last parting words of Paul are vitally essential...
We must have...

3. **A LIFE FOCUSED ON THE CROSS** (vs. 11-18)

*¹¹ See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. ¹² Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. ¹⁴ **BUT MAY IT NEVER BE THAT I WOULD BOAST, EXCEPT IN THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THROUGH WHICH THE WORLD HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED TO ME, AND I TO THE WORLD.** ¹⁵ For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. ¹⁶ And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. ¹⁷ From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.*

According to many historians, it was typical for a person to have his letters dictated to a secretary. This seems to be Paul's custom to have his letters dictated but often he would write a short portion of the letter to authenticate the letter, to add personal touch, and to emphasize the parting words that he thought was vital for the readers to remember. Paul, as he closes, takes a parting jab at the legalists who had brought about all the trouble among the Galatians. Paul is not deceived or '*bewitched*' by these false teachers. He saw through their motives and understood that they were not genuinely interested in the people but were just wanting to bring more people into their 'legalistic camp' and be able to brag about them as their trophies. It was a pride thing for them.

Paul then resoundingly clarifies his motive and goal that is in direct opposition to the self-serving, flesh-oriented legalistic works motives of the legalist troublemakers...

¹⁴ But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Paul is stating, unapologetically, to the 1st Century Church in Galatia, and it applies to us as the 21st Century Church as well... Our faith and life is dependent on Jesus and His sacrificial act of love and redemption on the cross. **We must never forget the Cross of Christ and what it symbolizes to us...LIFE, FORGIVENESS, HOPE, REDEMPTION, FAMILY, PURPOSE, & JOY.**

For this to take place we must apply the admonition of Paul from an earlier portion of this letter to the Galatians.

Gal. 2: 20...***I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.***

As we come to a close of this passionate appeal of Paul to the Church let's review the **Three closing descriptions of a Spirit Led, Christ Empowered, Cross Focused life:**

**GENTLE COMPASSIONATE RESTORATION,
GENEROSITY & MUTUAL CARE &
A LIFE FOCUSED ON THE CROSS.**

When we seek to follow these principles as:

Our calling, Our privilege, Our joy!

(Adapted from Davis)

We Then can Fulfill Our Task

To Be Powerful Witnesses of Gods' Good News Story,
Motivated by Love and Empowered by the Holy Spirit.

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