

Galatians Ch 6 vs2-18

The letter or the epistle from the apostle Paul to the Galatians is so incredibly rich concerning the grace of God, and the freedom we have in Christ, freedom, from the law, freedom from sin, freedom from the self-life. We've been set free to lead a life that's set apart to God, sanctified and holy unto Him, no longer bound by the flesh and it's dictates over our lives but rather we've been empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

It's all by that beautiful element that we refer to, as the grace of God, there's nothing that we've done nor can do in and of ourselves to initiate or facilitate a life of godliness, it's all given to us and worked out through us freely in the person of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, as we reckon or consider ourselves to be dead to sin, indeed crucified with Christ. Because those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh along with it's passions and desires, and since we've been given new birth by the Spirit of God, it's absolutely essential that we lead each passing moment of each passing day in dependence upon that same Holy Spirit who gave us life in the 1st place.

That's what we refer to as walking in the Spirit, walking in dependence upon the Spirit, not jumping out in front of the Spirit or lagging behind His desires for our lives. But rather stepping in or staying in stride with the Spirit, walking in love rather than pride, provocation or covetousness, you see those are the marks of the carnal man, the carnal Christian that's walking in the flesh. and That's what the majority of the letter to the Galatian believers is all about, discerning and differentiating between walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit, and the marks or the characteristics and attributes of both, and in the beginning of ch 6 Paul is still dealing with that same principle. and He speaks of body life and how the one who is spiritual responds in a circumstance by which and brother or a sister has been apprehended or overtaken in or by sin. The carnal person seeks to somehow take advantage of the situation, or use the circumstance to somehow make themselves seem better, promoting this ora self-righteous condemnation, standing above the fallen brother or sister looking down on them with a critical spirit.

But the one who is spiritual (again a little "spiritual barometer") restores such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering themselves lest they also be tempted. The spiritual man understands the fact that he or she is weak and frail and that apart from the grace of God I could slip at any moment and God forbid, but if that should happen I would sure hope that a brother or a sister would extent mercy and grace to me. Come along side of me and minister to me, pray with me, and pray for me, and since that's what I would desire in my own life, then that's what I'm to extent to others

Jesus said blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. and I don't know about you but I need all the mercy I can get, and so when the opportunity to extend mercy arises, though at times it's difficult, I think it necessary that we seize that opportunity. Because on the other hand Jesus said that to the degree we stand in judgment of an individual is the degree that God will measure that standard back to us, Jesus said, *“For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.”* and Again I'm not speaking about someone who has no desire to repent, who is warped and sinning saying, “hey man who are you to judge me.” That's an entirely different bible study, because I'm not the one judging, God's word takes care of that, I'm just telling you what it says.

But to the one who has stumbled and broken that relationship that they had with God, the spiritual man knows that when he begins to think he's strong, the bible says look out because a fall is just around the corner. and So with humility he ministers to that brother or sister desiring to see them reconciled to God, and since the bible says that we've been given the ministry of reconciliation, that's what we as Christians have been called to do. To lift one another up, to help one another out when times are hard and we're shouldering a burden that's too much for us to bear. Notice vs2 of ch 6.

Vs 2

We're to bear one another's burdens, this is an aspect of body life as well, not only are we to restore the individual who's been ensnared or caught off guard by sin, but in light of that context we're to bear one another's burdens. and This word “burden” speaks of something of abundant weight, something that's really too much for one person to carry alone. We're to bear or carry one another's burdens, ministering to one another. The bible is full of “one another” type ministry. Rom 12:10 Tells us that we're to, *“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.”* Rom 12:16 *“Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble.”* Rom 15:7 *“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.”* We're told in Eph ch 4:1-3 to *“walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”* Eph 4:32 *“be kind to one another,”* Eph 5:21 tells us to submit *“to one another in the fear of God.”*

The Bible also tells us to comfort each other, and edify one another, to be hospitable to one another without grumbling and to pray for one another. and Believe me when I tell you that these are just a few of the positive type “one another” ministries that the Lord would have be in operation in the body. There are just as many negative “one another” applications to our lives as the body that the Lord doesn’t desire us to inflict on one another. We just studied one of them last week, Gal 5:26 (read) Col ch 3 says, “*Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.*” The bible says that we’re not to speak evil of one another, or grumble against one another, so there’s a fascinating study in this “one another” aspect of our text and I’d encourage you some time to search out these 2 words in your bible and see how it is that God would have us to relate to one another, those things He would have us do, and those things that He would have us not do to one another. Here we’re told to bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the “law of Christ.”

This is where we left off last week, with this seeming contradiction in terms, to use the word law in relation to Christ would at 1st seem to be somewhat contradictive. Because this whole epistle seems to me to be anti-legalism, anti-law, and it is, but you don’t have to meditate on this passage too long before the answer seems to jump right off the page. We’re speaking here about two different laws, (what do you mean?) You’ve been set free from the law of Moses, so that you might serve the law of Christ, it’s as if Paul is saying listen, if you’re so eager to fulfill the law, then bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law *not* of Moses, but of Christ. Because to fulfill the law of Christ is to fulfill the Law of Moses to the *nth* degree, because the law of Christ is a higher law than that of Moses. It encompasses the Law of Moses and beyond, it’s the law of love. One day Jesus was talking to His disciples and He said, “*A new commandment (or a new law) I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*”

Again in John 15:12 “*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*” How did Jesus love His disciples? Through service, and sacrifice, He took the place of the lowest ranked servant of a household, girded Himself up and washed their dirty, stinking feet. Listen carefully, you and I have no right to point out the dirt on someone else’s feet, unless we’re willing to get down on our knees, humble ourselves and wash them. That’s what Jesus taught and that’s what Paul is talking about back in vs 1 of Ch 6. Jesus served His disciple’s who were also his friends, they were family, even as we are friends, and we are a family in Christ and He said, as I have loved you, love one another.

Another one of those “one another” ministries, Jesus led by example, He loved through service, and He loved through sacrifice. Jesus said, *“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.”* and That’s exactly what He did, as He laid down His life as a willing sacrifice for the sin of the world on the altar of the cross. and He said you’re My friend if you do what I command you, how does the Lord define friendship, loyalty. So Jesus gave us the example, He set the standard, and He asks nothing of us that He hasn’t already done.

He desires that we serve one-another and that we lay down our lives, our wants, our self centered interests for the sake of others. You can display no greater love to your friends, to your family here in the body, then to lay down your life for them. Sacrifice your desires and in honor give preference to another. Notice vs 13 and 14 of ch 5 (read) the law of Christ equals love, service, and sacrifice, and love will take care of the latter two. If you love someone you’ll serve them, and you’ll sacrifice your wants placing their needs over yours. and If they do the same thing, then a beautiful balance is created and body life occurs; leave the book of Gal and turn with me quickly to the book of Isaiah, ch 58 vs 5-11 we pick it up here with the Lord speaking to the nation of Israel regarding fasting and what it is that He desires from it.

Vs5

In other words is just going with out food for a period of time really profitable in and of itself, does that accomplish anything or please the Lord just to see you afflict yourself?

Vs6-11

What kind of fast is the Lord looking for in His people? Fasting from food is neat and all if you’re seeking the Lord and His will during that time, but God is saying here hey try fasting from yourselves for a while. Try fasting from selfishness, and criticism, back biting and evil speaking and place someone else’s needs above your own, that’s what Paul is saying here, bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ, these are the things that are pleasing to the Lord. The legalist doesn’t bear burdens; he binds burdens and places them on men’s shoulders while he himself doesn’t lift a finger, that’s what Jesus said, but the spiritual man bears burdens and so fulfills the law of Christ.

Vs3

We don’t need to spend a lot of time here, it’s self explanatory; and in the Greek it’s even more obvious. The Greek reads more like “if anyone thinks himself to be something, nothing,” the legalists think that they’ve really got their act together that they’re the spiritually elite. But the only one’s they’ve deceived is themselves; it says here he deceives himself, or to put it another way, you aren’t fooling anyone else.

1 Cor 8:2 says, “*And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.*” The bible is very clear that in us, that is in our flesh no good thing dwells, so to think in your heart that you’re really something, you’ve only deceived yourself.

Vs4

In other words don’t be comparing yourself and your works up against that of another individual and pride yourself on how much more moral or strict you are compared to another person. But rather you just worry about your own walk and how it’s measuring up to the will of God for your personal life, and let that person worry about the will of God for their life. This vs is just keeping in context with vs 26, we’re not to become conceited, comparing ourselves to others, finding people whom we believe we out perform or some absurd thing like that, but rather we’re just to worry about how we’re measuring up to God’s desire for our own personal life, which that in and of itself is a plate full enough for anyone.

I believe we see an example of this in Paul’s life in 2 Cor 1:12 which says, “*For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God.*” You see he examined himself; his own walk to see what was going on in his own life as it pertained to the will of God for him and he was pleased to see what God was working out in his life. He wasn’t comparing himself to Peter or James; he was simply searching out the work of God in his own life and was well pleased at how the grace of God was being worked out in His life. He had rejoicing in himself alone and not in another.

Vs5

Ok, again we need to quickly strike the balance here because if we don’t address this, the skeptic will believe they’ve found a contradiction. Because vs 2 tells us that we’re to bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ, but vs 5 says that each one shall bear his own load, so what’s the deal, do we or don’t we. and The answer is yes, there are certain burdens that we can *share*, and there are certain burdens that we have to *bear* alone. and Again looking into the Greek reveals to us the answer because the word that’s been translated “burden” in vs 2 is a different word that’s been translated “load” or “burden” in vs 5. The word in vs 2 is the word “baros” it speaks of a heavy load, a crushing burden, and we’re to watch out for one another to see if a brother or a sister is being crushed by the troublesome burdens of life, and we’re to be there to help bear that burden in time of need.

But the word “burden” or “load” in vs 5 is the word “phortion” (for-tee’-on) it’s speaks more along the lines of a soldiers backpack. and That backpack is his personal responsibility, it carries in it the things that are necessary for him to perform his duty efficiently. and Every soldier has one, and it carries their equipment so that they might serve with efficiency in that area that they’ve been called upon to serve. So we’re to watch out for one another, bear up one another’s burdens, but at the same time we’re not to look for the opportunity to dump our personal responsibilities upon someone else.

When you’re hiking with a group of people and each person has a big backpack full of supplies and equipment, and you come to this ravine that’s too wide to cross and you find a big log that will span the gap, and it’s too much for one man to carry, everyone pitches in to help shoulder that load. But you don’t take your backpack off and say hey, I’m sort of tired would you carry it for me, I’ll just go ahead and throw it on your back. Because whoever you’re hiking with is going to laugh in your face, that load is your responsibility, it carries your supplies, you need to shoulder it and be responsible for it.

That’s what Paul is saying here, there are some loads that we’re to share and other’s we’re to bear, and we’re not to seek to dump our own personal God given responsibilities off on to someone else so that they’ve got double the load while you’re doing nothing. Now there’s one burden that we can neither bear nor share and it’s the load of sin, David said in Ps 38:3-4 “*There is no soundness in my flesh Because of Your anger, Nor any health in my bones Because of my sin. For my iniquities have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*” and There’s only one way to get rid of that burden and that’s at the cross of Jesus Christ we’re told in Ps 55:22to, “*Cast your burden on the LORD*”, the burden of sin is too much for any individual to bear, and there’s no way that I can help you with that one, so you’re either being crushed under the burden of your sin, or you’ve received Christ as your Savior and that burden has been placed upon Him, it can’t be both places. Your sin is either on you, or it’s on Christ, and Jesus doesn’t share it, because He bore it all.

Vs 6

Now God takes great care of me and I have no desire to manipulate the scriptures, but I’m called to teach them so if you’ll just allow me to speak frankly with you for a moment or 2 we’ll move right on. Paul is saying that another mark of the spiritual man is found not only in the restoration process, not only in the bearing of one another’s burdens while not seeking to pour out your responsibilities on someone else. But also in the investing into the lives of those whom you consider God to be using, and primarily in this particular text the one who teaches you the word of God. and In specifics it’s speaking about all beneficial things or material goods or another understanding could be “riches.” It’s just the way that God has set it up; the scripture says that we’re not to muzzle the ox as it treads out grain.

There should be nothing hindering it from performing up to its utmost capacity, in 1 Tim ch 5 we read, *“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”*

Now we all understand the whole honor thing, we’re to honor the call that God has put on that person’s life, and be supportive and submissive to that fact, but what’s the “double” part of the honor, well Paul explains, it’s the wage, the laborer is worthy of his wage, especially those who labor in the word and in doctrine. In 1 Cor 9:11 Paul said, *“If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?”* and Again 1 Cor 9:14 *“Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.”* Now I realize that there’s been a lot of abuse in this area, and that there are those who have sought to make merchandise of the people of God, and for that I couldn’t be sorrier. But nonetheless the bible says what it says and lest I should be guilty of shunning giving you the whole counsel of the word I have to teach you what it says and now you can do with it what you like. God takes care of me, but Paul is saying here that hey, to the ministry that sows in your life spiritual things you’re to sow into that ministry material things.

Vs7

In other words if you sow wheat you’re not going to reap carrots, if you sow apple orchards, you’re not going to reap peach orchards. You reap exactly what you sow, and Though we can use this text for many applications and all of them being valid, be it sowing into the fertile fields of our minds and hearts each and everyday what we see and hear and reaping the harvest accordingly or whatever.

The context that Paul is in direct reference to here is that of where we invest our resources, and God will not be mocked, He knows exactly what you’re doing. and What Paul is basically teaching is that the barometer, or the evidence of how we value spiritual things, is shown in what we do with, or how we invest our material things. Jesus said for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Do you want your heart to be into the kingdom, concerned for the kingdom, desiring to see the kingdom advance? Then begin to invest into the kingdom.

You say, “Jeff but my hearts not really into that, if it were I would”, but you see your problem is that you’ve got it backwards. Jesus said that your heart follows your treasure; He didn’t say that your treasure follows your heart. If you invest in real estate, you’re constantly checking out the market, if you play the stock market, then you’re continually checking the stocks, you see your heart is into it, why, because that’s where your treasure is.

Jesus is saying that's the way it works with the kingdom, place your treasure there, and your heart will follow it, and I might add that to the degree that you invest, is the degree that you'll get a return, so if you're just sowing a little here and there, don't expect big dividends, God won't be mocked whatever a man sows that will he also reap. 2 Cor 9:6-7 says, "*He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*"

So we reap in proportion to our sowing, (God knowing our hearts) if you only sow the bare necessities, then that's all you're going to reap, you can't sow 4 or 5 seeds and expect a huge harvest, and the same is true in the kingdom. and According to the bible there's only 2 fields in life for you to sow in, the flesh or the Spirit, and anytime you sow to the flesh, it's going to burn, it's going to corrupt. Corrupt your mind, your emotions, or whatever it may be, anything material corrupts and ultimately it's going to burn. and Once those seeds have been planted there's no escaping the harvest, once you've sown to the flesh, that time, that money or whatever can never be reclaimed, it's gone and the harvest is on it's way. But to the one who sows in the Spirit, you're sowing into the eternal and will enjoy the harvest of that throughout eternity.

Vs8

Galatians shows us so much as it pertains to our relationship to the Spirit of God, and His vital role in our lives, we begin our Christian experience in the Spirit, it's in Gal where we learn that it's through the Spirit that we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. We walk in the Spirit, are led by the Spirit, live in the Spirit, and here we learn that we sow to the Spirit. and The vast majority of the harvest of the Spirit is found in the eternal, when we go to be with Jesus and so Paul is reminding us to keep our priorities right, and to stay focused on and be investing in the kingdom and that which is eternal.

Vs9

Why are we exhorted not to grow weary while doing good? Because we can grow so weary while doing good, we lose focus, we lose eternal perspective and we begin to lose heart. I'd encourage you to read Psalm 73 in relationship to that, but Paul says here hey, hang in there, don't lose heart, the harvest is coming. But it's not going to be ready to reap until it's due season, when is that? I don't know, maybe not even on this side of eternity for the most part, that's why we're to maintain that eternal perspective. Well what if I lose heart, then you may lose the harvest, what happens if the hard working farmer just decides that planting that seed is good enough.

Oh, he may've worked the fields for a week or two but then he got frustrated because he didn't see the fruits of his labor. Odds are he'd lose the harvest, those seeds have to be planted and watered and cultivated and nurtured, and then when it's due season, he puts the sickle to it because the harvest is in. The same is true for us as we sow to the Spirit, we have to cultivate it and water it, and nurture it, and God will give it the increase and in due season we'll reap.

Vs10

Jesus would say let your light so shine before men so that when they see your good works they glorify your Father who is in heaven, we're to do good to all, we're not to repay evil for evil, but rather we're to overcome evil with good. Rom 12:17-19 "*Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*" Do good to all, but the priority lies with your brothers and sisters in Christ, especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Vs11

Whether he wrote the whole letter or just tagged on this last little section I'm not sure, but he definitely wanted them to know how critical he perceived this letter to be. Normally the teacher would dictate and a scribe or a secretary type individual would do the actual penning of the letter, but Paul says hey, I'm writing this with my own hand, I'm underlining this. Why the large letters, either due to the eye problems that it's believed Paul had or for emphasis, but Paul nonetheless felt it critical that they receive this as essential and important wanting them to know hey, I'm not using a scribe here, this I'm writing personally.

Vs12

They're avoiding the offense of the cross by submitting to legalism and law and pressuring others to do the same.

Vs13

They want to make you another notch in their belt, something for them to take pride in, it's not that they can keep the law themselves, they're like the Pharisees who say and don't do, but they glory in the number of converts that they have, even though as Jesus would say they make them twice the sons of hell as themselves.

Vs14

Paul the apostle taught nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified and even as he began this letter with his focus on the cross, so he ends it the same way. We're not to boast in who we are, or what we do, or the title or position we hold (read vs 14) in other words the world has no more power over me, nor do I desire the things of the world, because I'm dead to the world, and the world is dead to me.

Vs15

It's just not about a work of the flesh that you do or don't do when it comes to your relationship with God. It's all about the work that He does in you through the person of His Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."*

Vs16

Which is everyone who believes in Jesus Christ, you are the Israel of God by faith.

Vs17

You can read of a little bit of that in 2nd Cor ch 11 beginning with vs 22, many times slave would be branded so that people knew who it was they belonged to. and Paul is saying that he had been branded for Christ, the scars on his body bearing witness that he served Jesus Christ with his whole heart.