

Galatians 6:1-18

Author: Paul

Audience: Churches in Galatia

Location: Galatia which is modern day Turkey

Date of Writing: 50 A.D.

Key theme: Freed and Justified by Faith

v. 1-5

Christian Brotherhood

- Sin is of the most serious consequence. It is an offense to almighty God.
- When one amongst us is caught up in sin we are duty bound to hold them accountable.
- We are called to hold one another accountable for the purpose of the pursuit of holiness.
- When we do this we are not to be combative or mean spirited. The goal is not humiliation but rather restoration.
- Restore: *Katartizo*; to mend
- Like mending a torn net.
- We ourselves are to keep watch over ourselves to guard against sin.

Bear One Another's Burdens

- We are called to bear one another's burdens.
- Burden: *Baros*; weight.
- We are called to bear the weight of the pursuit of holiness with our brothers and sisters in Christ in order to fulfill the law of Christ.

The Law of Christ

- Matthew 5:44, 22:34-40
- The law of Christ is that we love our brothers and sisters as well as our enemies.
- The law of Christ is that we love God more than anything else and we love others as we love ourselves.
- What does this type of love look like?
- This love is self-sacrificing. It seeks the good of the person rather than the pleasing of the person.

Examine Yourselves

- Paul tells the Galatians to examine themselves and the fruit that they are producing instead of comparing themselves to others.
- Paul is not saying that we are to boast in our own strength and merit. He clarifies that later in the passage. He is simply saying that we cannot rely on the righteousness of those around us to be our own.

v. 6-10

Sowing and Reaping

- God will not be made a fool of.
- He will not change the game simply because you want Him to.
- Whatever you plant is what you will harvest.
- If we sow things of the flesh we will reap things of the flesh. (v. 19-21)
- If we sow things of the Spirit we will reap things of the Spirit (v. 22-23)
- Notice the capital "S". He's talking about the Holy Spirit, not just spiritual things.
- We are encouraged to not grow weary in doing good. We will reap a harvest if we do not give up. The shorter our season of labor means the lesser our harvest will be.
- This isn't simply abstaining from what is evil in our personal lives but also resisting evil in our culture as well as holding one another accountable within the church body.
- We are called to do good to everyone but especially to those within the church.
- We have the responsibility to help those outside of the church with anything that they need but even more so to those who are in the household of faith.

v. 11-18

Benediction

- The ending of a letter or message.
- Paul often dictated his letters to a secretary but usually took care to pen the benediction himself.
- Paul confirms his authorship in verse 11.

Final words on circumcision

- Paul reveals to us that those who hold to the circumcision plus faith model of salvation are those who may escape persecution.
- Persecution from whom? The Jews.
- Why would they be persecuted? Because they had forsaken the old law and taken on the new law. This would have been seen as blasphemous to Jews.
- They wish to boast in the flesh rather than the finished work of Christ.
- Circumcision counts for nothing in regard to salvation. Paul could not be any clearer.
- Only those who are new creations or born again will be saved. (John 3:1-21)

Peace and Mercy

- Paul desires peace and mercy from God to all who walk in this way.
- He uses the phrase “The Israel of God”. This can be taken two ways: 1) The Church of Jesus Christ, both believing Jews and Gentiles or 2) Native Jews whom Paul wished to be saved. I tend to lean into the first option because the letter to the Galatians isn’t written only to ethnic Jews but believers of all ethnic backgrounds.

The Marks of Jesus

- *Stigma*; tattoo or brand
- The picture of a cattle brand
- This isn't merely metaphorical. Paul bore the scars from physical beatings that he endured for the sake of Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:23-25)

“The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you spirit brothers...”

- A fitting conclusion of the letter to the Galatians

Small Group Notes

- 1) We are told to hold one another accountable for sin and righteousness. The Greek word used was *Katartizo*. What does the word mean and what is the picture we get from it?
 - It means to mend. We get the picture of a fisherman that is gently mending a hole in his torn fishing line. This is how we are to approach the difficult task of confronting sin.
- 2) What is the law of Christ?
 - The law of Christ is that we love our brothers and sisters as well as our enemies. The law of Christ is that we love God more than anything else and we love others as we love ourselves.
- 3) What does that look like in practice?
 - It means caring for others and meeting their physical needs. It means standing for truth even when it isn't popular. It means confronting sin and warning of judgment even if it means offending the person with the fact that they may be in error.
- 4) Have someone explain the concept of sowing and reaping. Go through the list of things from verses 19-23.
- 5) What are Paul's final words on circumcision and the old law in regard to salvation?
 - It counts for nothing. All that counts is that we are given the righteousness of Christ and therefore justified in the sight of God our Judge.