

Paul's Letters - To the Churches at Galatia (Slide 1)

“Fulfill the Law of Christ”

Reading: Galatians 5:26 - Galatians 6:1-5

Galatians 5:16-26 (Slide 2)

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (Slide 3) 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 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, (Slide 4) and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Slide 5) 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

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.

This last verse speaks volumes about last week's lesson on humility. If we are to have the proper mindset to do what he will advocate in chapter 6, we need to walk in the fruit of the Spirit that is; Humility!

In Galatians 5, Paul expresses to the Galatian brethren that they have freedom in Christ Jesus. However, it isn't a freedom given to them to pursue the desires of the flesh. Rather, it is freedom from the chains of sin. This is the express purpose of the Gospel: To release those who have been held captive by the sins of the flesh.

Paul directs the Galatians and us to walk in the Spirit and not according to the flesh. He outlines those deeds of the flesh as a guide so that Christians may gauge their spiritual walk.

There are many things that are covered under the first category: **Immorality!!** If, before we do something we have to ask ourselves; "Is this wrong?" - then we likely have our answer!!

Paul outlines these categories of fleshly sin and that they represent opposition to walking in the Spirit. Any

temptation that draws us away from walking in the Spirit is at war with what is Spiritual and our relationship with God and Christ Jesus.

Bear in mind that temptation alone is not sin. The Devil tempted Jesus and He did not sin. It is the giving into temptation that causes us to sin.

Paul also outlines the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5 which is our ultimate measuring device to discern the nature of our walk. Are we fully engaged in walking in the Spirit?

Galatians 6:1 (Slide 6)

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.

Walking in the Spirit while still residing in the flesh is a constant battle!! Since we are battling an enemy that doesn't fight fair nor is he a physical being, without the Spirit of God as our protector, we will be overwhelmed.

This day after day pushing and prodding influence of Satan, as he constantly jabs at our fleshly wants is wearing. Furthermore, what tempts me may not be what tempts you. Nevertheless, he knows what our

weaknesses are and he exploits them with a power we cannot resist on our own.

I personally believe Satan is so crafty and powerful that he infiltrates our dreams. He jabs at us constantly and it does not matter where we are!! Even while in worship Satan is trying to pervert our thoughts or to mislead us in one way or another. Again I say, without the Spirit of God, we are helpless.

This is the scenario that Paul describes. Someone falls prey to a temptation and is caught up in it like a spider who has trapped its prey in its web.

In fact, the Greek word for ***“caught”*** in verse 1 is a common word that means *“give”* or at times *“take.”* Some believe that Paul is using a word that means to *“catch ahead of time.”* In other words, to catch that person before they sin. I believe that is contradictory to what he is saying. However, it could be that meaning could apply to intervening before more sin occurs.

Caught is used in the past tense and implies that it has already happened. The idea is that this individual, after such a barrage of temptation, has given into it!

Then he says; (Slide 7) ***“you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness”***

What he doesn't say is that *"you who are perfect or think you're perfect or know in your mind that I would never do such a thing"* restore that person!! Brethren, if that were the case we would all be in trouble!! Perhaps what someone else is tempted by doesn't tempt us, but we all, while in the flesh, have temptations!!

He says, ***"spiritual."*** Using the guide that we have in Galatians 5, one should know whether or not he is walking in the Spirit. These fruits of the Spirit are our measuring device. One should also acknowledge in their mind and be aware of their own shortcomings or vulnerability.

How we look at one another is truly important as to whether or not we have what it takes to restore someone in crisis. If we recognize that one in our number or that is in the Lord's church is in crisis, we are to act! This action signifies the relationship we have with one another.

I remember the premise of an old movie in which several crew members and passengers of a large ship had to *"abandon ship"* because it was sinking.

They climbed aboard a dinghy hanging from the side of the ship and cast it into the sea. There were tremendous perils they faced in the open waters. Fighting off sharks, starvation, surviving powerful storms, and above all, their own panic and fear.

The underlying theme of survival is that they were in the same “boat.” They were in it together. No one had to go it alone and since they worked together they stayed alive and afloat long enough and were rescued!!

This is the message of Galatians 6 and the message of the church. We are in it together. I have your back and you have mine.

(Slide 8)

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.

Jesus said in:

Matthew 7:3-5 (Slide 9)

3 Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? (Slide 10) 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

No one should think of themselves as above temptation or incapable of sin. No one should look down on one who

falters. Our mission is to restore, keeping our own weaknesses in mind.

It is with gentleness that we are to help a brother in need. Not in arrogance or with an "I told you so" attitude. Restoring one's relationship to God the Father **fulfills the Law of Christ!!**

(Slide 11)

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.

Paul is not saying to boast out loud about walking in the Spirit. He is saying that one can have joy in exemplifying the fruits of the Spirit by our actions.

(Slide 12)

5 For each one will bear his own load.

Some would say this is a contradictory statement, simply because we are told in verses 1 and 2 to bear each other's burdens. This is called a *dialectic* by some denominations. In other words, it's open for discussion or varied opinions.

We certainly must be active in helping each other as we strive to please Him **Who** has redeemed us through His only begotten Son.

However, at the end of it all, we will individually be held accountable for our own actions and behaviors. I can't answer for you and you can't answer for me. *"Discipline yourself so someone doesn't have to!!"*

It is called "personal responsibility." This concept is contrary to what we see in today's world whether it be person to person, work, or politics. We have as a culture become quite good at the "blame game."

The fact that we are to take personal responsibility is true even in the Old Testament!

Deuteronomy 24:16 (Slide 13)

"Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin."

2 Corinthians 5:10 (Slide 14)

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

For the church to survive, each member must be their "brother's keeper." Putting others first, tempered with meekness and gentleness so that we all survive the

challenges of this life, which are in reality, merely temporary.

Invitation

Today the challenge is to put on Christ through Baptism. If you have not been Baptized, why wait? Do it today! We can assist you with that soul saving decision.

If you have been immersed into Christ but the challenges of life have gotten you down, can we pray for you and with you as we help bear your burden?

Please let us know how we can help you this day!!

Lesson Text:

Galatians 5:26-6:15

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reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one will bear his own load.

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