



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

GALATIANS LESSON 6

In our lesson last week, we contrasted the works of the flesh with the works of the Spirit. Paul gave us practical examples of what should be happening in our life when we walk in the Spirit. Paul continues that same thought, giving us more examples of what should be happening in a Spirit-filled church. If the fruit of the Spirit is being manifested in our lives, we will practice the principles Paul outlines here in Galatians chapter 6.

As you read this final chapter, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how Paul's final thoughts tie in with the previous chapters. Also, look for as many practical applications as possible. Begin with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to open your "spiritual" eyes and ears to His truth.

First Day

1. Let's begin by reading Galatians chapter 6. Observe the facts. What do you see?
2. What is Paul's tone in this chapter?
3. Name some of the main thoughts or principles taught in this chapter.
4. What do you think is the key verse?

Paul is still comparing the legalist with the Spirit-filled believer. He shows us the correct way to handle certain delicate situations that come against the principles of the Judaizers. Warren Wiersbe writes, "Nothing reveals the wickedness of legalism better than the way the legalist treats those who have sinned."

5. How do you think a legalist would handle someone who has been overtaken with sin? How would it differ from what Paul tells us to do in 6:1?
6. Name the specific fruit of the Spirit that would be evident in each particular situation if they did as Paul told them.
7. Compare Paul's salutation (1:3) with his conclusion (6:18)? Why is his conclusion so significant?
8. Can you explain the "sowing and reaping" principle?
9. What specific thought or point ministered to your heart from this chapter? Are there any changes you need to make because of it?

We'll end here for today. I pray that as we read Paul's final thoughts to his Galatian friends, we will allow the Holy Spirit to search our own hearts. Are we too legalistic? Too liberal? Is our life characterized by the works of the flesh or the Spirit? He'll show you, if you really want to know.

Memory Verse of the Week: "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Galatians 6:9

Second Day

Practice your memory verse. Are you growing weary? Don't lose heart.

1. Read Galatians 6:1-5. What does Paul say to do if someone is "overtaken" in any sin?

The word "overtaken" suggests that the brother slipped and fell into sin, but has now been overtaken and is controlled by his sin. We need to help him up.

2. Paul says it's the job of "he who is spiritual." Who does that refer to? (Does Paul say it's the job of the pastor or elder?) Is Paul giving them a "suggestion"?

The Greek word for "restore" is used for setting bones, mending nets, or putting things in order. Paul tells the Spirit-filled believer that it is his responsibility to come alongside and help those who are struggling.

G. Walter Hansen explains that "the verb restore calls for spiritual therapy so that a broken member of the body can once again work properly and perform its vital functions for the benefit of the whole body." We must gently confront a sinning brother in the spirit of gentleness, with the purpose of restoration. This will begin their healing process. We must have compassion and love in our hearts, no matter how difficult it is to come to them.

3. Outline the Biblical principles of confrontation found in the following verses. List the steps that should be taken. (Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Timothy 5:19-21) Remember, our motives should always be for restoration.

4. What happens when the brother doesn't receive the admonition? Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15.

5. Why is it so difficult to confront a believer who is in sin? (Isn't it easier just to look the other way?) Why do we have to?

6. When do you think it's time to confront sin? Is it ever right to overlook it?

Obviously, Paul isn't saying that we must be sinless to restore someone. 1 John 1:8-10 tells us that if we say we have no sin, we are liars. (Pretty clear, huh?) He is speaking of those who are choosing to walk in the Spirit and not be led by their flesh.

7. Galatians 6:1 warns us to "watch" ourselves lest we be tempted and fall into the same sin. How can we practically "watch" ourselves?

8. What do you typically do when you see a friend falling off course? Are you willing to step up to the plate, surrender your fears, and offer the truth in love? (Do you have a friend that needs you right now?)

9. Why is gentleness so important when confronting someone?

10. How does "bearing one another's burdens" fulfill the law of Christ?

Read John 13:34, 15:12; Galatians 5:13-15, and Romans 13:8.

By telling the Galatians to bear one another's burdens, Paul again is showing the opposite of legalism. Legalism adds burdens to others, not bears them (Matthew 23:4). Verse 3 reminds us that none of us are "too spiritual" to need help, or to offer help. The body of Christ needs each other.

11. How can we practically "bear one another's burdens"? Have you been doing any "bearing" lately, or are you "too busy for bearing"?

At first, verses 3-4 seem a little out of place, but because Paul is talking about restoring others in gentleness, this warning is very applicable. It's wrong for believers to think they are "above" the sinning brother, and that they are more "spiritual." Instead of trying to help, often they rather judge or condemn them. We all need to face our own sin and take the log out of our own eye (Matthew 7:5) before we can help others. We always must first examine ourselves, and only then can we "boast" or "rejoice" in what God is doing in us and through us.

12. Do you think verse 5 contradicts verse 2? Why or why not? How do the two relate to each other?

It's important to note that two types of burdens are mentioned in these verses. Irving Jensen writes: "The first translates the Greek 'baros,' meaning a heavy weight, used here to represent cares, sorrows, and

tribulations of life. Christians are to help carry the load of these burdens that weigh down fellow Christians. The second burden translates the Greek 'phortion,' which was something to be borne, not necessarily a heavy object. One example of the use of this word in the first century was for a bill, or invoice for a property tax. If Paul was using the word in this sense, he may have been thinking of that which a Christian must bear at the judgment seat of Christ for unacceptable deeds done in the flesh as a Christian." Others think that verse 5 refers to work given to us by the Lord, before Whom we will all give an account. We all have our "own burdens" to bear.

13. Are you carrying any burdens right now? Be encouraged! Read Matthew 11:29-30 and 1 Peter 5:7.

We're done for today. Take some time and meditate on Matthew 11:29-30. May Jesus bring you rest, my friend!

Third Day

Study your memory verse. Are you applying it?

Paul continues to tell the Galatians how they should live out their Christianity. Charles Swindoll said, "Contrary to what our individualistic society promotes, the spiritual life is more than an individual experience. It's lived out in the community." Paul exhorts them practically about financial matters, holy living, and the importance of doing good.

1. Read Galatians 6:6-10. What two categories of people is Paul referring to?

The word "share" contains the same root as "koinonia," or "fellowship." Paul is presenting God's "Law of Harvest," which turns seeds sown in the soil into crops to be reaped. Many believe that verse 6 is saying that those who teach should be supported by those who are being taught. In other words, pastors have every right to be supported by their congregation. Paul shares

this principle in 1 Corinthians 9:9-14. Although Paul himself worked as a tentmaker, he believed pastors should be supported. The pastor and his flock should work as a team, or as partners in the work of the kingdom, sharing wealth with each other. Pastors should be studying and preparing diligently to share the wealth of God's Word with his church, and the church should come alongside and share their material wealth with him.

Although it's hard for me to write this section of the lesson because my husband is a pastor, this principle is very important. A preacher should be diligent in rightly dividing the Word of truth, without twisting or abusing it. How does Galatians 6:7 apply to this principle? Charles Swindoll says it best: "The pastor sows the Word of God among the congregation, and he reaps not only the blessing of seeing many of them grow in Christ but also the blessing of seeing them commit their resources to the spread of the Gospel. Likewise, the congregation sows financial support for the pastor and continues to reap the blessings of the clear and disciplined teaching of the Scriptures. When both the pastor and congregation see their relationship in this manner, the way is clear for the Gospel to take root and grow in the hearts of God's people."

- 2. Are you sharing your "good things" with the one who is teaching you?**
Are you partners with your leadership in ministry? Are you investing in the kingdom by supporting your pastor as he spreads the Gospel?

Now Paul moves from showing us how the "reap-what-you-sow" principle works in the financial support of your pastor, to how it effects holy living. To grow well, you must sow well. We all have two fields we can grow seeds in; the field of the flesh, or the field of the Spirit.

- 3. How do we "sow to the flesh"? What is the result?**
- 4. What are ways we can "sow to the Spirit"?**

Fred Allen, in Peter's Quotations, wrote this; "Most of us spend the first six days of each week sowing wild oats, then we go to church on Sunday and pray for crop failure."

5. In your own words, explain the quote above.

6. To get healthy crops you must take care of your field. You need to plant seeds, pull weeds, chase away birds and insects, and water abundantly. To have healthy crops, you must take care of your soil. Search your field. **Are you tending your field?** Are you sowing in the Spirit and reaping accordingly? Are you doing the necessary weeding, or have they taken over?

7. What are you planting in your life? What are you doing with your money? Your time? Your resources? Are you sowing in the Spirit? Ask the Lord to show you ways that you can better sow your seeds.

- Paul now tells us that if we sow in the Spirit, we will do good. It's all part of the sowing/reaping rule of thumb.

8. When and to whom are we called to "do good"?

9. What are some examples of "doing good"? Can you say your life is characterized by "doing good"?

10. Why does Paul say "especially to those of the household of faith"?

11. Do we always see a harvest right away? What does verse 9 tell us?

12. What are some reasons we get weary as we do the Lord's work?

13. Are you growing weary as you do the Lord's work? What encouragement do you find in this section?

Be encouraged. Fruit will flourish in due time, but don't fret! God sees every seed that is planted, and he is blessed!

Fourth Day

Work on your verse. I pray it encourages you.

1. Read Galatians 6:11-13. Contrast Paul's motives in verses 14-18 with the motives of the Judaizers in verses 11-13.
2. In verse 13, how did the Judaizers want to "glory in their flesh"? Why is this so wrong?

3. How can we be guilty of religious boasting? (Are you?) How can we protect ourselves from this?

4. What verse in this section shows us the emphasis of Paul's ministry?

5. Which rule is Paul referring to in verse 16?

Paul mentions the "Israel of God" in verse 16. John MacArthur offers this explanation: "The Israel of God refers to Jewish believers in Jesus Christ, to those who are spiritual as well as physical descendants of Abraham (Galatians 3:7) and are heirs of promise rather than of Law (vs. 18). They are the real Jews, the true Israel of faith, like those referred to in Romans 2:28-29 and 9:6-7."

6. How were the Galatians causing trouble for Paul? (vs. 17) Was he just being a whiner or a boaster? What was his point?

The marks Paul is referring to in verse 17 are defined as "signs of ownership such as were branded on slaves and cattle." Paul accused the Judaizers of being scared of persecution (vs. 12), but he was not.

7. How did Paul "bear the marks" of the Lord Jesus? Read 2 Corinthians 11:24-28, 2 Corinthians 4:10, and Colossians 1:24.

8. How can you and I "bear the marks" of the Lord Jesus? (Is His brand of ownership on you?) Is it evident that you are a slave of Christ?

9. Is it possible for us today, in the year 2012, to still suffer persecution for making a stand for Christ? How?

10. Are you afraid of persecution? Do you seek it out? Explain the balance between the two extremes.

Verse 11 tells us that Paul wrote this in his own hand. Some believe that Paul dictated this letter up to this point, and then added his own personal touch to make them know it was authentic, like in many of his other letters (2 Thessalonians 3:17). Others believe this statement proves that Paul wrote the entire letter himself. Either way, Paul is emphasizing the Gospel of Christ. He wanted to make sure they understood his message!

This ends our lesson for today. Tomorrow we will spend some time reviewing what we've learned from the book of Galatians. I pray that as you studied this freeing letter, you found many "Reasons to Rejoice"!

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory.

Let's take a moment and recap some valuable lessons we learned.

1. Name 5-10 spiritual and practical lessons you learned from the book of Galatians.
2. In 6:14, Paul says he is "crucified to the world." What does he mean? How can you live as someone who is "crucified to the world"?
3. In Galatians 6:10, Paul says to use every "opportunity." Our life is short and every moment is an opportunity to serve others in the name of Christ. How can you make better use of the "opportunities" in your life?
4. Why can't the Law save us? What (or whom) is the only thing that can?
5. Jesus Christ set us free. What are we freed from? What did the Gospel free us for?
6. Freedom is not a license to sin or abuse our liberties. How does exercising love keep us from doing that?