



Lesson Thirteen

TEXT

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.

One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 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. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith

5 Word Summary of 6:1-10

(ESV): _____

See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

5 Word Summary of 6:11-16 (ESV):

From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen

5 Word Summary of 6:17-18 (ESV):

STUFF WE SHOULD KNOW: CHAPTER 6

A Quick Review

After giving an extended biographical introduction which was intended to remind the Galatians that the Gospel comes straight from God who entrusted to him as an apostle (1:1-2:14), Paul then lays out the Gospel: justification (complete forgiveness/complete “rightness”) is by faith and not by obeying the law (2:15-3:9). Following this he then explains that the true purpose of the Law was always to drive us to Christ, and never to be the means by which we tried to relate to God or pursue salvation (3:10-29). In Chapter 4 Paul then draws out the implications of justification by faith: namely that we are God’s own children, set free from our guardian the Law, and loved as Sons and Daughters (4:1-8). He continues in Chapter 4 to point out that now that they have been set free from the Law, it makes no sense for them to become enslaved by it again by trying to obey it as a means of pleasing God, and the Paul is the only one honest enough to tell them this (4:9-20). He concludes with the example of Hagar and Sarah (4:21-31). Paul begins a transition in Chapter 5 by again pointing out that relying on the Law will make their faith in Christ meaningless, and not therefore not to listen the false teachers (5:1-15). Rather they should realize that their newfound freedom is intended to make them more able to serve one another by denying their flesh and living in active dependence on the H.S. in order to receive all of the good that the Spirit has for them (5:16-26)

The Essence of the Argument

“This is how it should work: God’s love produces in you tangible actions. It has in me.”

- *signed, Paul*

SUBTEXT

Fruit of the Spirit in Action

[If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.] (Galatians 5:25-26)

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. (Galatians 6:1-5)

Fruit of the Spirit in Actions Means That We Should Not...

Paul gives us **three** things which should not happen if we are following the Spirit: (1) becoming conceited and as a result either (2) challenging someone in an effort to prove our higher position, or (3) being jealous of someone else gifts and abilities. Often we relate to others from a position of selfishness, which is really self elevation, that causes us to see others as either someone who we are better than, or someone who threatens us. The first fruit of the spirit, love, does not permit this. Notice again that the “litmus test” for our maturity is our **relationships** with others, not mystical experiences or how we feel about our relationship with God.

Fruit of the Spirit in Actions Means That We Should...

The basic instruction here is to ***Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*** As fellow believers we are charged with both helping others and being helped by them. It is impossible to bear someone else's burden without to some degree afflicting ourselves, thus modeling Christ's love for us.

A Practical Example

A good practical test case for not being conceited (and thereby acting superior or with disregard) and bearing someone else's burden comes with the instructions... ***Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.*** The Greek word for **restore** (καταρτιζετε) is a medical term referring to the setting of a bone or joint, “putting in order, or restoring to its former condition.” And so in a situation where harshness and judgment come so naturally, Paul points out that to do what Christ would have us to do is to remember that we too are sinful and fallen, and then following his example, we are to serve the other person by bearing their burden in such a way that they can be restored back to good spiritual health. Luther applies the command with these words, “[We are to]

run unto him, and reaching out your hand, raise him up again, comfort him with sweet words, and embrace him with motherly arms.”

But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. (Galatians 6:4-5)

These verses seem to have some problems in light of Paul’s previous instructions to bear one another’s burdens. Paul is certainly encouraging us to pay more attention to our own relationship with God than to be comparing our spirituality with others. Stott wisely summarizes, “In other words, instead of scrutinizing our neighbour and comparing ourselves with him, we are to test our ‘own work’ for we will have to ‘bear our own load.’ That is, we are to be responsible to God for our work and must give an account of it to Him one day (Stott, p. 159).”

REAPING AND SOWING

One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 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. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:6-10)

Paul now finishes up his instructions with a series of loosely related commands. The unifying general principle which unites these final instructions is the principle of reaping what we sow. The principle in sum is that if we want a particular “crop” we need to: 1) sow the correct seed (corn seed doesn’t produce watermelon); 2) sow good seed (diseased seed won’t grow to maturity); sow plentifully (one can’t reap more corn than the amount of corn seed originally sown).

Paul makes three sets of instructions based on this basic principle: with regard to those who sow the word of God, with regard to how individuals sow in the field of the flesh or the Spirit, with regard to the good works sown into the lives of others.

Reaping and Sowing With Regard to *Ministers* (“soul caretakers”)

One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. (Galatians 6:6)

Ministers are to be set free from secular wage-earning in order to devote himself to the study and ministry of the word, and to care for the flock entrusted to them. Ministers who “sow” the word diligently should expect to “reap” a material living.

Elsewhere Paul give some guidelines for how much a teaching elder (or pastor) should expect to reap materially. 1 Tim 5:17ff states: “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor (or double stipend—NEB), especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”

The word τιμη (honor, with reference to the physician's honorarium; hence, the NEB's use of the word stipend) refers to more than just pay, although certainly it includes this. One can see how much our culture has conditioned our view of the clergy—most people would be appalled at the idea of paying their pastor(s) twice the average income of a member of the congregation.

Reaping and Sowing With Regard to the Spirit and the Flesh (“soul care”)

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. (Galatians 6:8)

An often forgotten part of the Christian journey is that holiness is not merely learning to “keep the rules better” but to grow in our likeness to Christ, thus learning to enjoy what he enjoys and be concerned with what he is concerned. Paul makes it clear that we have a choice as to whether or not we “sow” (or invest our thoughts and actions) in the field of our fallen nature (our flesh) or the field of the Spirit. We **sow to the flesh** when we pander to our sinful nature, cosset, cuddle and stroke it instead of crucifying it. Likewise we **sow to the Spirit** when our thoughts and deeds on the “things above” in the books we read, shows we watch, company we keep and habits we form. Paul is providing the basic principle for spiritual disciplines: they will not make you a Son or Daughter (or even more loved, or a better Son or Daughter), but training can help us easily do what trying alone will never allow us to do. Our sowing doesn't change God's affection or joy for us, but it changes ours for him.

Reaping and Sowing With Regard to Christian Action (“caring souls”)

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:9-10)

Paul also uses the principle of sowing and reaping as an encouragement for continuing in Christian service. To paraphrase John Brown, far too often we act like children who instead of being patient and steadfast want to sow and reap in the same day.

PAULINE LETTERS

See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. (Galatians 6:11)

Paul now picks up the pen to finish the letter in his own hand. Evidently Paul used the common convention of dictating his thoughts to a professional scribe. Lightfoot makes a good argument that **the large letters** did not have so much to do with physical infirmity as they did with Paul's writing in such a **way to produce emphasis**. Phillips paraphrase indicates a similar point, “Note how heavily I have pressed the pen in writing this,” i.e. how bold/large the letters were made for emphasis.

A DIFFERENT GOSPEL? IT'S NO GOSPEL AT ALL!

It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. Galatians 6:12-13)

Paul concludes with a summary of his basic points, the first of which touches on the essential internal nature of Christianity rather than mere external conformity of our actions. Contrary to the Judiazers, who focused on the outward act of circumcision (as symbol for all outward religious acts—keeping the Law), Paul notes (in v. 15) the central importance of the inner state of being born again, of being a new creation. Paul points out that even the Judiazers don't really keep the Law themselves, they are disingenuous. They were only trying to lead the Galatians astray in order to use the Galatians as a "trophy" for their own teaching.

This thought also may prefigure what Paul later says in Ephesians: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." The emphasis is on the absence of any reason for self-justification in our salvation and, in contrast, the recognition of God's claim to us and his right to boast over his people (God loves to say, "Have you considered my servant ... [Job]").

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. (Galatians 6:14-16)

Paul on the other hand finds nothing to consider a "trophy" except the cross. In this second summary point, Paul points out that Christianity is essentially about what God has done and not what we as humans have done. The Judiazers presented a religion of human works which were to be held out to God. Paul has presented a religion of divine works in which our only place is to acknowledge our sinfulness and cling to the cross. The Judiazers presented the opportunity for us to show that we deserved God's blessing and love. Paul presented the opportunity for us to admit that we can never deserve God's love because we are broken, rebellious, dead sinners. God's love is unmerited, just as our salvation is impossible to earn. This message, that we are sinful, rebellious people who cannot save themselves will sooner or later lead to persecution.

From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. (Galatians 6:17)

Paul now concludes with his desire to be free from the false teachers, pointing to the fact that he believes in his message that he is willing to pay the price for preaching it, namely personal injury in the form of beatings and being stoned.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen. (Galatians 6:18)

Paul now concludes with his desire to be free from the false teachers, pointing to the fact that he believes in his message that he is willing to pay the price for preaching it, namely personal injury in the form of beatings and being stoned.

TELL ME AGAIN — WHY DO I CARE ABOUT THIS?

A Chart, A Chart, My Kingdom for a Chart

Purpose:

The purpose of a synthetic outline is to produce a concise structural summary for a book of the Bible. Such outlines are helpful for locating the context of specific verses, identifying the way the author has structured the book and recalling the basic content of the book.

Premise:

The primary strength of this method of outlining is that by starting at the paragraph level and then working into larger units, the major sections of the outline will naturally follow the structure of the book more closely. The chart form of the outline can easily be converted into a standard outline by applying the divisions of “1.” (to the left column), “A.” (to the center column) and “I.” (to the right hand column).

Procedure:

- ▶ Each paragraph (left column) is to receive a 5 word summation which accurately reflects all of the content of the verses in that paragraph. You *may not* use more than 5 words; being concise is part of the discipline of the project.
- ▶ As the paragraph column (left) begins to be filled in, the various paragraphs should be grouped into sections based on similarity of content. These intermediate groupings (marked in the center column) should also be given a 5 word summation which accurately reflects all of the content of the paragraph summations.
- ▶ Some paragraphs may not fit into any easy grouping with surrounding paragraphs. If this is the case, simply extend the paragraph summation from the left column into the center column. You should allow the paragraph to stand as its own intermediate grouping.
- ▶ When all of the paragraphs have been summarized (left column is full), and grouped (center column is full), the intermediate groupings should then be organized into a few key divisions (right column) and each division given a 5 word summary which accurately reflects all of the intermediate groupings it includes.
- ▶ When the key divisions have been made (right hand column is full, the words of its summations should be formed into 1 sentence which accurately summarized the key divisions of the book.
- ▶ Some intermediate groupings may not fit into any key division with the intermediate groupings. If this is the case, simply extend the intermediate grouping summation from the center column into the right column. You should allow the intermediate grouping to stand as its own key division.