

Galatians 6

Theme of Galatians: **Freedom in Christ.** Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia has shown us the importance of being set free from the laws demands. A works-based religion is opposed to the cross of Christ and nurtures Pharisees and self-righteous hypocrites instead. We've also seen how the cross frees us from the grip of sin – when we trust in Jesus and receive His new resurrection life. We are now free to walk in the Spirit who keeps us from fulfilling the desires of the flesh.

Only the cross of Jesus can free us from the burden of the law and the power of sin at the same time.

- I. We need to keep a right attitude toward others and a right attitude toward ourselves. 6:1-5
- II. Make the principle that we reap what we sow work to your advantage. 6:6-10
- III. Paul's Final Words: Christ is Our Only Hope 6:11-15
- IV. A Final Blessing 6:16-18

- I. We need to keep a right attitude toward others and a right attitude toward ourselves. 6:1-5

6:1 The picture here is as if the believer was running away from sin, but the sin caught up to him and grabbed him, tackled him and is now holding him. When that happens, we don't start in with the next edition of the Salem Witch Trials. We restore the brother overtaken in the trespass. We help him out with an eye to ourselves, because we might be next.

- A right attitude toward others: **Love. See 5:14.** Come alongside in a time of need. **(6:2)**
- A right attitude toward ourselves: **Caution.** We're likely to think we are stronger and more spiritual than we really are. Self-deception is the most common type of deception.

Rom 15:1-3 NKJV ¹We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ²Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. ³For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."

- II. Make the principle that we reap what we sow work to your advantage. 6:6-10

6:6 We pastors love this verse! I don't need to emphasize this with you, because you do it already.

6:7-9 Here is actually a fine motivation for doing the right thing: It will pay off in eternity. We will reap what we sow – eventually. The Bible doesn't give us an exact formula for how or when. Verse 9 indicates we may have to wait longer than we want. So, don't grow weary while doing good and don't lose heart!

6:10 We should especially make it a point to do good for our fellow Christians, but not only them. "Let us do good to all." That means to fellow believers and to those who are not. Sometimes we have to even love our enemies and do good to those who hate us, as Jesus said. (Luke 6:27)

III. Paul's Final Words: Christ is Our Only Hope 6:11-15

6:15 The false teachers in Galatia just wanted gain followers who would be circumcised like they were. But to require circumcision – or to adopt any kind of ritualistic, law-keeping mindset – is to deny the cross of Christ. Outward religious symbols don't make any difference to God.

- Christ did not die in order to sprinkle holy water on all the good works I can do in my flesh and somehow make them a blessing to God. He died so that I might become a new creation – because my flesh and all of its good works are going to die and rot away anyway. When we receive eternal life In Christ we also die to the world and the world dies to us. Since we are creatures in Him, we need to begin living with this new outlook.
- **The law provides information, the cross produces transformation.** The law helps me to understand God's moral and ethical standards, the difference between right and wrong but does not empower me to do right. The cross helps me to understand that my old sinful self is dead. The world no longer has any right to exert its power over me. "The world has been crucified to me and I to the world."

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IV. A Final Blessing 6:16-18

6:16 Paul asks God's blessing on all those who live according to the principles that he has outlined here – especially upon those Jews, like himself and the other apostles, who truly worship God.

Some have characterized Paul and other New Testament writers as being anti-Semitic – as if they were some kind of traitors, denying their Jewish heritage and turning against the Jews. This is totally not true. He said it well in Romans.

Rom 9:6 NKJV *But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel.*

In other words, Paul draws a definite line between those Jews who love the Lord and those Jews who don't. The blessing is on all followers of Jesus whether Jewish or non-Jewish.

6:17 Paul considered his scars, endured as a result of his ministry, to be the marks that really showed he was an authentic servant of Christ. Self-inflicted marks like circumcision didn't prove anything as far as he was concerned.

6:18 The letter to the Galatians ends with God's grace.

Galatians: A Quick Review

Chapters 1 & 2: Paul began with a warning. Teachers had moved into the area who were not teaching a gospel of faith in Christ alone. They were adding observances of Old Testament ritual, which were practiced by the Jews, and saying that these things were required by the non-Jews in order to please God. This is legalism. We do not gain points with God by performing ritualistic acts – or any works-based system for that matter. Christ has already done it all. We receive every imaginable blessing from God through faith in Him. In fact, even our spiritual growth happens because we rely upon Him.

Chapter 3 & 4: Paul points to Abraham as our example. Before the Law was ever given, Abraham was put right with God by his faith. The law can't save anyone and Abraham never had it; it only reveals our sin. We are put right with God, not through the Law, but because of God's grace. God frees us from sin and saves us through faith in Jesus Christ.

Chapters 5 & 6: Here Paul warns the Galatians not to fall back into the bondage of a works-based system. True goodness is not achieved by self-effort, but by submitting to the Holy Spirit, who will then produce His fruit in our lives. A flourishing Christian life is not something we can brag about or be proud of; it is all the result of Christ's cross. Jesus has saved us by His blood and made it possible for us to spiritually thrive as a result of God's grace.

Galatians: Important Life Lessons:

- God saves us from sin, death and judgment by His grace. He expresses His great love for us through the cross of Jesus Christ – the greatest of all expressions of His grace.
- There is nothing that we can “do” to gain God's favor. There is no system of rituals, works or good deeds through which we can gain favor with God.
- We cannot produce a life that pleases God on our own. We are spiritually too weak and our hearts are too wicked. God produces a righteous life through us as we yield to the Holy Spirit.
- As we submit to the Holy Spirit, He produces spiritual fruit – character traits that reveal God's power at work within us. These new character traits are the evidence of our new life in Him.
- Who we are in Christ is made possible through Christ alone.

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Galatians Key Verses: Galatians 6:6 Just kidding!

Galatians 1:8 NKJV *But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*

Galatians 2:20 NKJV *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

Galatians 3:23-25 NKJV ²³*But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

Galatians 4:4-6 NKJV ⁴*But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

Galatians 5:16 NKJV *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

Galatians 5:22-25 NKJV ²²*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

Galatians 6:7-10 NKJV ⁷*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*