

Galatians 5:25-6:18

Love To Us Love Through Us

Image Church // Galatians: Week 8

Introduction

Image Family! I hope you're doing well!

*Celebrate VBS this past week! Phillip and the volunteers!!!

If you have your Bibles turn to Galatians 6, we're wrapping up our series this week!

As you're turning there:

Build the tension...

- James K.A. Smith, **You are what you Love**: *that who and what we worship fundamentally shapes our hearts.*

Galatians 5:25-6:5

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Remember, you receive the Spirit through faith in the finished work of Jesus...

- The Spirit is essential to Christian existence, it's what makes you a Christian...
- How you receive the Work of Jesus...
- What gives you transformational power, it's what produces Christ-like Characteristics in you!

Here's Paul's premise: We have been **set free** from the power of sin, we have been **set free** from being bound to a law...

- We're not compelled by the law, we're compelled **by love!**

- We have been freed from the power of sin to be able to walk in that love through the power of the **Spirit**...
- This happens when we **fix our eyes fixed on Jesus**...

Last week, he began to unpack the implications of having our eyes fixed on Jesus holding up the fruit that the Spirit produces in us...

Paul is after a Spirit-filled life, where we're living in a way that's consistent with the things of Christ...

- He's going to continue fleshing out what that should look like...

And he's going to show us how **the love of Christ to us should flow through us**...

Verse 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

His point here, is that when the love of Christ is not at the center of our lives we can be out of step with the Spirit not living in a way that's consistent with the gospel, leading to what he lays out here...

- Don't miss the fact here that Paul's showing us that it's completely possible to be **out of step with the Spirit**...
- This is evidence of that war between **flesh** vs. **Spirit** that he's talked about...

It's why Paul calls us to **stand firm** in Gal. 5:1...

- When we're not standing firm on the gospel, it will lead to conceit, provoking, and envy...

Let's talk about these words he holds up so we understand what that looks like...

The word **Conceited** literally means **empty praise**...

- **IOW**: you're proud, you think too highly of yourself, you think you have a right to be praised...

Illustration: *Me bowling ... Have my own ball got good and got cocky... Got beat bad!*

When we look to our ability as a means of our identity, we become conceited...

Here's what we do, instead of looking to Jesus and seeing His love and affirmation for us, and rooting our identity in that, we try to manufacture our own identity by **elevating ourselves...**

- And we do that by comparing ourselves to people around us...
- Our efforts to theirs... Looking to our ability to give us identity...

And here's what that leads to, **provoking or challenging** people in order to make ourselves look better...

- Holding up your way as the best way...
- Passively saying that you do things better than someone else...

When you're conceited, it leads to envy...

- **Envy** is: to resent the success of others. You're jealous of anything other people accomplish... You don't like it when others succeed, which is why you challenge them because you want to be viewed as superior.

When we don't have our eyes on Jesus, we will put our eyes on other people... And instead of seeing what we have through Christ, we will start comparing ourselves to others...

Now what Paul's going to do is reorient them back to the gospel and what gospel-centered community should look like...

Chapter 6:1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken [caught] in any wrongdoing [sin], you who are spiritual [you who are Christians], restore such a person with a gentle spirit, [gentleness- having a humble heart- which comes as a fruit of the Spirit] **watching out for yourselves so that you also won't be tempted.**

Paul's saying guys listen, you're not rivals competing to see who can be the most devout—which **BTW** is what legalism breeds—but brothers and sisters... They're not segregated by culture; they're unified by the gospel...

His point is that they should be supporting each other, and one of the ways that they live this out is by pursuing those who have fallen into sinful patterns...¹

- And he reminds them that as you do that, be careful that you don't fall to the very things you're confronting in someone else...

Now we need to talk about what Paul's holding up here because we live in a **non-call-out culture**...

- Where everyone runs to the "*only God can Judge me*" line... Which is really most of the time just a sad justification that people use to do what they want to do...

We are so quick to *throw up hands* the minute someone wants to address something in our life...

- *Hey man can I talk to you about something- defcon 3 choppers start rolling in...*

Ultimately, the reason why we do that is because we're conceited...

- We don't want to be confronted because we want to view ourselves more highly than we should, and then we really are...

Paul's showing us that, as Christians should be opened and ready to be confronted...²

¹ Adapted from Moo, D. J. (2013). *Galatians* (pp. 373–374). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

² Tom Schreiner, "Bearing Burdens and Examining Your Work," from *Galatians* series, preached at Clifton Baptist Church on Sep 16, 2007.

Why?!? ***Because we all have blind spots...***

Illustration: I have a 2007 Chevy Truck... Best Truck in the world...

- But it doesn't have a back up camera or blind spot detectors...
- All y'all out there have these newer cars that have blind spot detectors...
- I may not have them on my truck, but you know what i do have... **A wife...**

This is exactly why the church exists... To help you see your blind spots... God never intended for you do Christianity alone...

This is why community is so important, this is why life on life relationships are so important...

The question is do you have that???

- We create space and time for this in our **Community Groups, DNA group, etc...**

And listen, when it comes to the confronting, I know it can be uncomfortable, but it is necessary ... But the method is so important... We have to do it in ***truth and love...***

Da'Truth says (*I had to counter my DMX quote last week*): If I am not gentle, it is because I think of myself in an unhealthy way. The only reason we deal with people in the wrong way is because of how we measure them against ourselves. How we restore people is just as important as the restoration itself. Correction loses its impact when it is condescending.

- *That'll preach right there!*

Verse 2 *Paul's going to continue in what gospel-centered community looks like...*

2 Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Carrying one another's burdens means entering into the lives of those who are struggling in sin and taking on the struggle with them and helping them walk through the consequences that have resulted from their sin struggle...

Which connects with what Paul ties this to, when we bear the burdens of others we are ***fulfilling the law of Christ...***

Paul says the ***law of Christ here*** to drive home the reality that we are no longer bound to the law laid out in the OT through Moses...

- Remember the false teacher were saying Jesus + Law...

Jesus came as the fulfillment of the law to free us from the law...

Meaning, the law is no longer what defines us or defines how we live. The law no longer shapes us. **Jesus does!**

This is what it means to be under the law of Christ...

- Paul summarized it for us in **Galatians 5:14** when he says: The entire law is summed up in a single command: *love your neighbor as yourself...*
- **IOW:** be to others a Christ has been to you!

Now, there's another aspect to carrying each other's burdens that can be applied more broadly in the sense that we take on ***any burdens that our brothers and sisters are bearing...***

This is a tough one because it inevitably means that ***it will cost us something...*** And we don't like that. We like to find ways to help others without costing us anything...

- But that's not what gospel-centered living looks like... that's not ***putting your theology to work***, it's sitting on your hands...

It may even reveal that we have a wrong theology because we don't understand the implications of the gospel...

Our desire to do for others will only be as great as our understanding of what Christ has done for us...

- Christ bore your burdens, our call is to respond by being will to carry the burdens of others...

So, let me ask you this: Of the burdens that you're carrying, how many of them are other people's?

There's also a flip side of this: For some of you, you need to ask the question, are you allowing others the privilege of bearing your burdens... ***This is a tough one for me...***

- Not being willing to be open about your burdens is ultimately being conceited...

Real quick, what does it look like to bear others burdens:

- Helping someone financially
- **Emotionally:** Being present, walking through a difficult season with someone
- **Spiritually:** Walking through a sin struggle like we talked about earlier...
- Or walking through the consequences of sin of sin with someone...
- **Physically:** helping around the house, in their yard, moving...
- Helping with other people's kids when things are crazy or hard
- Getting a meal to someone
- Praying for someone...

Here's the goal: Bear other's burdens, and by doing this following the footsteps of Christ, who bore yours.³

What we come back to the importance of being in **Biblical community**...

- It's going to be awfully hard to know the burdens of people you're not doing life with...
- Not plugged in, not, consistent...

Paul keeps going in Verse 3 For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

We can never assume because we help restore someone or carry someone's burdens that we got it together...

- It just isn't true. The same gospel that's necessary for the person you're restoring is the same gospel necessary for you...

So Paul wants us to understand that it's not about bragging rights...

Verse 4... **4** Let each person examine his own work, and then he can take pride in himself alone, and not compare himself with someone else. **5** For each person will have to carry his own load.

Paul's saying we have to examine our own **hearts** and the **genuineness** in which we do things...

And this **boasting** that he's talking about, is **in the future tense**, which means the boasting **doesn't** happen now... The boasting will happen later when you stand before God...

And you won't be boasting in what you have accomplished on your own, you'll be boasting in the work that God has done in you and through you by the power of the Holy Spirit!

- Paul says in **Romans 15:17** that *[there is] reason to boast in Christ Jesus regarding what pertains to God.*

And then in **verse 5** Paul's making a point... *(He's not contradicting what he said in verse 2)*... He uses another word here- he uses **load**, not **burden**...

- This is also in the **future tense**, Paul's making another argument against *comparison*, he's saying that at the end of the day, God doesn't judge you in comparison to others... You will stand alone before Him...

Verse 6:

³ Tim Keller, *Galatians for you*, Chapter 12.

6 Let the one who is taught the word share all his good things with the teacher.

What's Paul talking about here?

The first thing that's implied here is that the teaching of the Word is essential element of the church...

Which leads to Paul's main point here, specifically, that you should participate in financial generosity toward the church that preached the Word...

- Listen spend your money on things that are most important, if you think sound teaching is important, then you should support it financially...

But I also think that there's a broader application here... Paul uses the phrase **share all good things**...

What he's not saying that you come on the weekends and pay for a **service** and then leave...

- **Example:** go out to eat and pay for the food and tip the server.

It's not that you're giving so that the pastors and staff- **who are the professionals can do the work of the ministry.**

What I think he's pointing to is **not** just that you give financially **but that you partner in the ministry of the church**...

You **share all good things** with the purpose of partnering in the mission and ministry of the church.

***That the church isn't just an organization that you fund, it's a mission that you're part of...**

And here's the thing, when you share in the mission of the church **financially** as you give, and **physically** as you join in ...

Practically: that you're serving, that you're part of a community group, that you're engaging in missional endeavors with the church...

Watch this, when you do that, you're taking part in bearing the burdens of the church and the mission of the church... Which ties in with Paul's emphasis just a few verses earlier...

- **And again, all of this is rooted in love...**

And then Paul says this...

7 Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap,

Now, I know that it's easy to read this and think that Paul's contradicting the very message that he's been teaching for most of the book of **Galatians** that **Jesus + nothing = everything**... That faith alone, by grace alone, in Christ alone is all that's necessary for salvation...

And you read this and you're like, this sounds a lot like **Karma**...

- Let me show you why that's not true...
- **Karma** is the belief that *the sum of your actions equals your fate and your future existence*...

The **gospel** is actually the opposite of that...The gospel is your future existence through Christ determines the sum of your actions...

Paul is saying, **don't' be deceived**... *Make no mistake*, God will not be mocked...

- **Mocked:** means to turn your nose up to God... Disregarding Him as if He's beneath consideration... Specifically here, disregarding God as it relates to how you live...

Paul's **not** introducing a new idea here... he's holding up an existing principal (*66 other places in the Bible*) that he's using to **emphasizing the implications of the gospel** that he's spent most of the book pointing to...

And then he fleshes it out how this works in **verse 8**: because the one who sows **to his flesh** will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows **to the Spirit** will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

If you sow to your flesh, if you indulge your flesh, if you walk in your flesh... pleasing and satisfying the sinful desires of your heart you will reap destruction...

- A **lifestyle**, where you're **living in sin** with no conviction and repentance... Where the Fruit of the Spirit isn't present...

Paul **contrasts** sowing in your flesh and sowing in the Spirit... Which he showed us earlier is walking in the Spirit...

- You do that by fixing your eyes on Jesus!

But here's what's interesting about this **sowing and reaping principal** that Paul brings up here... Some people refer to it as the **Law of the Harvest**...

- **Example:** You work out, you get more fit... You invest money, you get a return... Ect.

Paul's taking this principle and specifically applying it to generosity...

- *Awkward... y'all didn't know that was coming did ya??*

You're like, *how do you know???* Just look at the context, what did we just talk about a little while ago...

Sharing in the mission of the church **financially** as you give, and **physically** as you join in... And then in just a little bit in verse 10 Paul's going to talk about generosity again...

Now, this principal can be applied more broadly, we'll get to that later, but I want to hold up what Paul's getting at here...

New life in Christ means that we have a new perspective of our stuff... We realize that **we're stewards not owners**...

Illustration: Adalyn and **her** money and her stuff... It's not here's is Ashley and I's!

- **We're stewards not owners**...

We are to steward our money with a gospel perspective...

Is how you spend your money influenced the most by the **gospel** or by **selfish gain, satisfaction and comfort**?

See, what we have to understand that our money follows our heart... We spend it on the things we love and value the most... So, what does how you spend your money say about your heart?

Generosity isn't something you do for salvation, generosity is how we respond to our salvation!

- Generosity is a practical application of love... you see how all of this is tied to love!

And that leads us into **verse 9**...

[In light of the reality of the sowing and reaping principal] **9** Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up. **10** Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith. Paul's just continuing to challenge us in the area of generosity in a broader sense...

Here's what you have to see, in order to do good for others it means that you have to be **generous** with your **time** and your **money** in some capacity...

- It is impossible to do good toward others if you're **not** willing to be generous with your time and your money...

There's something else we need to see as Paul continues to apply this... He refers to 2 different groups of people...

- All people...
- And especially the household of faith...

Doing good for those in the community around us and doing good to the community that we're part of...

- Mathew 5:16!
- Sowing into the community so they see Jesus!
- ***Being part of the local ministries that we have here...***
- Being intentional to practice doing good to the people around you.

Sowing into one another in here so that we can see and experience Jesus!

- ***Becoming a Christian isn't affiliating with a religion, it is assimilating to a family!***
- As a family we want to be meeting needs within the life of our church...
 - **Serving/Partnering with the local church in ministry on the weekend is a way to do good...**
 - Being invested in the lives of others and being attentive to their needs and meeting them is doing good!

We want to be a people looking to do good in the church and in our community!

This is hard, but your motivation... JESUS!

- He offered you the greatest good through His life and death in your place!
- The goodness of Christ to you, the goodness of Christ through you! **THIS IS WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE in action!**

Verse 11:

11 Look at what large letters I use as I write to you in my own handwriting. Paul goes all CAPS on them...

Verse 12: 12 Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh are the ones who would compel you to be circumcised—but only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. **13** For even the circumcised don't keep the law themselves, and yet they want you to be circumcised in order to boast about your flesh.

Remember you've got this group of **false teachers** called the **Judaizers** who had come to the region of Galatia teaching a distorted gospel...

Paul's says listen... The reason why these guys are holding up circumcision is because it gives them something to **boast** in...

They're teaching a distorted, watered-down, palatable version of it that worked for everyone...

They were saying that you have the ability to **contribute** to your salvation based on what you do...

- That you have the ability to do good things that aid in the salvation process... If you conform to certain religious practices and believe in Jesus then you can be saved...

It was this works-based mentality that people wanted to hear... The Judaizers were saying that you are good enough to contribute some to your salvation through your works (ie. getting circumcised)

That's not a message that went away... Our society loves this message...

- That you're not that bad and that you need to do your best to lean into your goodness, do the right thing, and everything will work out just fine... You just keep doing the best you can... Our culture loves a *try-and-follow-the-rules* mindset...

People don't want to be told that there is only one way to God, and that it's completely outside of your ability to be able to get there...

People don't want to be told about their **inability**, they want to be told about their **ability**, and what they are capable of... And how they can **use** religion to overcome things in life so that they can live *their best life now...*

The false teachers were holding up circumcision: *they wanted to show off their goodness so that others would think highly of them...*

Illustration: My wife's car keys trying to get in the house... she has keys from the house she babysat for in high school... Can never find the right one...

- But there is only one key that can get me access into the place I need to be...

Some of you are trying to access the place where you need to be, and the place where you want to be, with all of the *wrong keys*...

- And it's time that you stopped fumbling through the *keys of life* and turn to the King of life... You need to embrace the work of Christ... Realizing what he offers you!

CS Lewis in his book *Weight of Glory*, drives this home when he talks about how when you become a Christian- God doesn't see you for who you are in your sin, he sees you through Christ and he applauds...

- Not at because of your works, but because of Christ work in your place!

There's a big difference Paul wants us to see between loving ourselves and loving Christ and allowing that love to shape our lives!

Look at verse 14...

[Paul says] **14** But as for me, I will never **boast** [remember the false teachers were **boasting** in their circumcision and their ability to convince other to do the same- Paul draws a direct contrast and says:] as for me, I will never **boast** about **anything** except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. [Then Paul says an incredible statement] **The world has been crucified to me through the cross, and I to the world.**

IOW: You were subdued in the sin of this world, in Christ you have been freed to be a son or daughter!

And then Paul says:

15 For both circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing; [it doesn't matter if you do or don't do either of these things- they account for nothing when it comes to salvation] **what matters instead**

is a **new creation**. **16** May peace come to all those who follow this standard, and mercy even to the Israel of God! **17** From now on, let no one cause me trouble, because I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. [so, get off me- I have cuts on my back from boasting in the cross] **18** Brothers and sisters, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Paul says *far* be it from him to **boast** in anything except for the cross of Jesus Christ...

Why does he say that? Because he recognizes there's nothing that he has to offer when it comes to salvation... He understands that his only hope is Christ...

- There's no way that he could boast in anything else- it just wouldn't make sense because it would nullify the very reason why Christ came and died...
- And so, Paul boasts in the blood of Jesus...

See, it's through the finished work of Jesus that God offers you the opportunity to have **new life** to become a **new creation** -

- **2 Corinthians 5:17**

And as a new creation you have a new found freedom from the penalty of sin and the power of sin...

- You have a new perspective and a new power to be who God's designed us to be, worshipers of Him!

The question for you today is what are you boasting in??? Can you say with Paul that your boast is in the cross of Jesus???

When you boast in Christ, then it will change the way that you live...

- ***The love of Christ to us means that the love of Christ should flow through us...***

Listen, no matter where you are today the one thing that we all have in common is that we're all boasting in something...

A boast shows where your confidence, strength and validation come from... ***What is that for you??***

Conclusion [VAMP]

Some of you are boasting in all of the wrongs things and today you need to boast in Christ...

- The reason why you're not walking in the ways Paul's held up is because your confidence isn't in Christ...
- You don't fully trust Him, you haven't fully surrendered to Him...
- Maybe there's areas of your life that aren't surrendered to Him...

Ultimately, you're not walking in the freedom that Christ has purchased for you, you are enslaved to your desires and those desires are keeping you from being who God called you to be!!

God has given us a radical freedom, and that radical freedom demands a radical response that Paul's laid out...

There is a gospel response for all of us today!