

TB – My Brother’s Keeper  
11/21/21  
Galatians 6:1-10  
Sunday AM

Today, as we finish our series in Galatians entitled, **Truth Bombs**. I want to share a few thought-provoking quotes about truth I found this week on the internet.

If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember anything. *Mark Twain*

Stupid is knowing the truth, seeing the truth, but still believing the lies. *Morgan Freeman*

If you tell the truth, it becomes a part of your past; but if you tell a lie, it becomes a part of your future.

The truth doesn’t cost anything, but a lie could cost you everything.

The truth is more important than the facts. *Wright*

There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what is not true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true.  
*Soren Kierkegaard*

Possibly the most disappointing lesson in life is realizing you cannot make people believe the truth, nor can you prevent others from telling lies. *Rodgers*

The trouble w/ quotes on the internet is knowing whether or not they are true. *Abraham Lincoln*

Several weeks ago, we began a series entitled, Truth Bombs – looking at the (5) major truths in Galatians that when exploded, can change your earthly life and eternal destiny. Truths like – *Jesus is the one/only way to God; the Gospel is for everyone, everywhere and it changes everything; legalism is for losers, and everything in life hinges on God’s grace.*

Today, I want to close out our series by looking at the truth bomb – ***you are your brother’s keeper.***

On the heels of explaining the necessity/benefits of grace, Paul offers a wonderful encouragement to every believer to not only *walk in the Spirit*, but b/c of what is at stake, to help one another to walk in the Spirit.

*If a fellow believer is caught in a sin, that is, they choose to live in their flesh, then you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch out, or you too may be tempted to operate in your flesh. Instead, carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ – which is to love your neighbor as yourself. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, w/out comparing themselves to someone else, for each one should carry their own load. Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the Word should share all good things w/ their instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked – everyone will reap what he sows! Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; and whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:1-10*

In this text, Paul is calling us to help one another in life by lovingly/gently confronting each other when we wander off into flesh instead of walking in the Spirit.

**IOW** – we all have a responsibility to spur one another along in the faith so we never lose heart and so we always walk in the Spirit in accordance w/ God’s will.

Remember, Biblical Christianity isn’t just being **found** – it’s living in alignment and under the influence of the H.S. thru the abiding life in surrender to God. Anything less is less than God’s plan for His disciples.

**Reality is** – until Christ returns, and the mortal takes on the immortality, we’re all going to struggle to walk in the Spirit b/c our carnal, still-to-be-redeemed flesh is waging war w/ the H.S. living w/in us. This is a challenge every believer struggles w/ – and this is why we need God’s Word and God’s People to help.

Here in **Galatians 6** – we discover that to thrive, we need accountability/assistance from other believers.

I        You are Your Brother’s **KEEPER**

*You may not know this... You may not like this... you might not even want this for yourself... but biblically, **God has called us to be fully engaged/involved in each other’s lives for the sake of spurring one another along towards intimacy and service to God.***

**Meaning** – it’s my job to help you to know God and to walk in the Spirit – and it’s your job to help me. YET – there are a few provisos in this shared accountability.

**Let’s be honest**... this is no small feat. B/c not only are we all imperfect, but few of us enjoy confronting or be confronted by others – yet it’s necessary!

*If a fellow believer is caught in a sin, that is, they choose to live in their flesh, then you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch out, or you too may be tempted to operate in your flesh. Instead, carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ – which is to love your neighbor as yourself. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, w/out comparing themselves to someone else, for each one should carry their own load.*

**First**, to help a fellow believer who’s turned to their flesh requires that we must be *walking in the Spirit*. This is necessary, otherwise, we too might turn to our flesh and turn to a way that seems right to ourselves!

Notice also, we’re to try to restore our brother **gently**! That is, w/ kind tenderness, we’re to urge our brother back to God’s way while never compromising God’s truth or character. **IOW** – *we’re to lovingly challenge people to God w/out dumbing down His expectation.*

Paul explains the way we do this is by *carrying each other’s load – the idea is we’re to lift up the person and then we’re to keep holding them up*. Such a posture requires that we not only confront our brother when he’s gone astray, but we must also be willing to walk alongside of them as they return to the Lord by providing helpful encouragement/accountability until they’re able to and walk intimately under the H.S.

The question is **WHY?** Why is this so essential to the faith – it’s b/c what is at stake! (look at **vs. 6:7-8**)

II        We All **REAP** What We **SOW**

*Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked – everyone will reap what he sows! Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; and whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

**SIMPLE** – the reason we need each other is b/c of the extreme consequences to the law of sowing/reaping.

**So, Paul begins** – *do not be deceived* – b/c apparently, some people seem to think if you plant corn you can reap apples, or if you plant evil you can reap good, or if you deny/defy God somehow you can still harvest His grace/favor – but that's not how it works.

**SEE** – God wants us to understand that while people everywhere might think they can lie, cheat, steal, or kill w/out consequence, **they really can't!** B/c ultimately, they'll have to deal w/ God. It's as if Paul is saying – ***there will always be a payday someday.***

**mocked** – (only here in NT) from a root meaning *nose* – it literally means ***to thumb your nose at someone.*** In this instance, it means to think you can ignore God.

**Yet Paul is saying** – you may think you can fool ***all*** of the people ***some*** of the time, or ***some*** of the people ***all*** of the time, but you'll never fool God at any time.

**Why?** B/c God has put a law into the universe that's as certain as gravity – ***you will reap what you sow.***

**Meaning** – for every action there's an equal or greater reaction. And this truth applies as much to one's moral and spiritual life as it does to any other aspect of life.

So, if you sow to gratify your flesh, you will reap the consequences of this decision – whereas, if you sow to walk in the Spirit, you will reap the favor of God.

But there's more b/c we don't just reap what we sow – ***we also reap later than we sow.***

**SEE** – the costs of our actions are *seldom immediate*. Yet, too many people ignore the reality of the law of sowing/reaping b/c they think if they got away w/ it today, then they'll get away w/ it tomorrow too.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived spoke to this reality – *When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, people's hearts are filled w/ schemes to do wrong.* Ecclesiastes 8:11

**LBH** – there are people everywhere, living all kinds of lifestyles who are wicked, immoral, and ungodly, and yet they seem to be getting along fine this side of heaven – even thriving. **Listen.** Paul doesn't tell us WHEN we will reap, only that we will reap what we sow b/c the wages of sin is always DEATH!

Let me show you a similar idea from **Romans 7**. Paul is speaking about his struggle w/ his flesh – writes...

*I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there w/ me. For in my inner being, I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work w/in me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me thru Jesus Christ our Lord!*

This is one of those times in the Bible that knowing the depth of the statement magnifies the truth. And here, there is a very specific reference to Paul's statement – *this body that is subject to death...*

**As you're likely aware,** the Romans were known for their brutality towards a condemned criminal. Often, those who'd committed crimes against the empire were crucified, naked on a cross to be humiliated and mocked. ***Yet, there was actually a worse punishment reserved for the worst of the worst*** – it was the unimaginable penalty of having to carry around the *dead weight* of a dead body. Yes! You heard me!

In this punishment, the Romans would take a dead, maggot-infested corpse and strap it to the bare back of a criminal and then force the criminal to ferry this decomposing carcass around until they succumbed to the toxins in a very slow, painful, stench-filled death.

**Now – why would I refer to such a disgusting thing?** For the same reason Paul did in Romans 7:24 – b/c when we choose to operate in the flesh instead of in the Spirit, we're choosing to strap death to ourselves.

**Personally,** I know people who are carrying around bitterness, resentment, or a number of other rotting attitudes – and b/c of an inability to forgive, they've strapped death to themselves and the poison has leaked into their soul and is killing them slowly.

**But there's more.** Not only will we reap what we have sown – and reap later than we have sown – *but we will also reap more than we have sown.*

In the story of Cain/Abel, where one brother killed the other for no good reason – resulting in consequences that haunted him the rest of his life, there's a famous exchange b/w God and Cain in which God asked Cain about Abel's whereabouts. And Cain responded – *how should I know, Am I my brother's keeper?*

*The results of Cain's story reminds me of the saying? If you sow a fault you reap an act. If you sow an act you reap a habit. If you sow a habit you reap a character – and if you sow a character you reap a destiny. **SEE** – in choosing not to be his brother's keeper, it'd cost Cain everything – leading him to a meaningless life.*

This is why every decision in life is so important – and why God calls us to give each other **accountability** – and to be our brother's keeper – it's b/c *every decision is a seed.* If we sow seeds to the Spirit, we will reap good results; but if we sow seeds to our flesh, we'll reap destructive results for ourselves/others.

**When I think of planting good seeds,** I think of the famous story of the poor Scottish farmer – Fleming. One day, while at work, Fleming heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. Dropping his tools to respond, he found a terrified boy struggling to free himself from the black mire – and farmer Fleming saved the boy from what may've been a slow, terrifying death. The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Fleming's farm, and elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Fleming had saved. Indebted to Fleming, the man wanted to repay him for his good deed, but Fleming refused to accept his generosity. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family home – and the nobleman asked, "Is that your son?" After Fleming acknowledged his son to the nobleman, the man said, "I want to make you a deal. If you let me take your son w/ me, I will care for him and give him best education money can buy. B/c if the boy is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of." Knowing this was a gift beyond what he could ever provide for his son, Fleming agreed. In time, Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London and went on to become known thru-out the world as the noted *Sir Alexander Fleming* – the doctor who discovered Penicillin.

*What kind of seeds are you sowing today?* And who's out there spurring you along to help you to sow to the spirit? Even more, who are you helping to thrive w/ God. **Don't be deceived** – b/c it matters. We need others to be a part of our lives so that we too can reap blessings/life. Truth is – *we are our brother's keeper!*

## **TAKEAWAYS**

Every believer needs the church and other believers to help encourage us in the faith – there is no such thing as *Lone Ranger* Christianity.

To be my brother's keeper requires that I walk in the Spirit and that I lovingly and gently strive to encourage other believers in their faith journey.

The reason we need one another to offer accountability is because the consequences of walking in the flesh are so extreme.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Spend time this week in your quiet time or with another person discussing these GROW questions.

**G** – What does it mean to be my brother's keeper? Why are we so reluctant to hold others accountable?

**R** – Read **Genesis 4:1-16**. What do we learn about being our brother's keeper from Cain?

**O** – Read **Galatians 6:7-8**. What is the law of sowing and reaping and why does it matter?

**W** – Who can you ask to be an accountability partner in your life to help you more fervently walk with God?