

Galatians 6

Overview:

5:24 – Crucify the sinful nature’s passions and desires

5:25 – Keep in step with the Spirit

5:26 – Conceit will cause you to provoke some (‘lesser’ than you) and envy others (‘greater’ than you)

6:1 – Spiritually mature gently restore the fallen. But, watch yourself!

6:2 – Carry each other’s burdens

6:3 – Mislabeled spirituality, fake fruit or imitation maturity is still nothing

6:4 – Test your own fruit, but do it without using other people as the measuring stick

6:5 – Carry your own load

6:6 – Support your source of spiritual growth

6:7 – You get what you sow; you reap where you plant; your heart is where your treasure is

6:9 – It is going to take time to grow and produce; to hear and understand; to learn and apply. Do not get weary and look for an easier way to mature 6:10 – As you grow and have opportunities start doing good things.

6:12 – The Fakers are wanting you to practice faking. Posers feel uncomfortable around the genuine.

6:13 – The Fakers want numbers (converts; disciples) to prove their method and justify their emptiness.

6:14 – Boast only in what Jesus has done because the only thing that counts is the production of the new creation

6:15 – Don’t mess with Paul his body is not marked with religious hypocrisy but with scars of faithfulness and commitment to his message.

Notes:

5:24

“**Have crucified**” – refers to the point of conversion. It is aorist tense means this was done in the past and is finished. The voice is active which means the believer did this (contrast with Gal. 2:20, “I have been crucified” is passive voice)

“**Passion**” – (*pathemata*, Rm. 7:5) is a neutral word and refers to the outward expressions of inner desires

“**Desires**” (*epithymiai*, Gal.5:16) is also neutral in itself as a word, but here refers to the inner force.

5:25

“**Since**” is the first class condition of “**If**” meaning “if, and it is assumed to be true.” So, “Since we live by the Spirit,” not “If you can live by the Spirit.” This refers to being born again.

“**live by the Spirit**” refers to your new nature, the born again life

“**keep in step with the Spirit**” refers to your daily life of walking in the Word. The phrase “keep in step” (or, “walking”) is *stoichein* (Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16) is an image of row or a series. The believer is walking in a row, following a course or is marching in a line.

5:26

“**become conceited**” – the Galatians are not conceited, but legalism is heading them in that direction. “**provoking**” – means “to challenge” or “to call forth a challenge.” This refers to one conceited Christian caught in legalism challenging other “lesser” believers to rise to the challenge and be legalistic like they are.

“**envying**” – means to wish the “greater” believer didn’t have so much success being the “perfect Christian,” even though they are fake.

6:1

“**caught**” – is passive and means “to overtake by surprise,” “to overpower before one can escape.” This is a slip

“**restore**” (*katartizo*) is used in Mt. 4:21 and Mk. 1:19 of repairing fishing nets. It is a technical term for resetting bones that are out of place. It can be translated “set him right again,” “to make perfect,” “to equip.” But the general idea here is “to restore” or “to restore to its original condition.”

“**you who are spiritual**” is you who are mature and walking in the Word or living in step with the Spirit. “You who are spiritual” is NOT a reference to people who hear the voice of the Spirit, or have visions, or can manifest special spiritual gifts! “You who are spiritual” refers to those who are mature and are manifesting genuine fruit and righteousness in their lives

“**you**” plural switches to “**yourself**” singular

6:2

“**Carry each other’s burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**”

This is the second practical example of the spiritual person.

“**carry**” (*bastazo*) is used four times in the Greek in Galatians:

- a) 5:10 – the Judaizers are to bear Paul’s judgment of the situation
- b) 6:5 – each believer is to bear his own load
- c) 6:17 – Paul bears in his body the marks of Jesus Christ in his body
- d) Here in 6:2 – is believers are to help others carry their load The word “carry” means “to bear, to carry away, to endure)

This could refer to:

- 1) When temptation oppresses someone
- 2) When life circumstances depress them.

The concept is that love fulfills the law. When someone else needs something, the spiritual man is going to help.

6:3

“**If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing he deceives himself.**”

When a believer has accepted legalism, circumcision or imitation fruit as the standard of spirituality or Christian maturity (including the misidentification of spirituality being visions and voices in their head) then they think they are something, but they really are nothing.

There are two problems that will keep you from fulfilling these two practical examples properly:

- 1) 6:3 – You think you are something you are not. . .
 - a) Pride

- b) The over estimating of your own self
- 2) 6:4 – You think you are nothing when compared to the “great” believers. . .or, You think you are doing great when compared to the “lesser” believers
 - a) Low self-esteem, Lack of confidence in God’s calling on your life
 - b) The under estimation of God’s place for you in his plan

The first here in 6:3 is when a believer neglects meeting someone else’s need it is because they are focused on themselves:

- a) they do not see the need to being consumed with themselves
- b) they do not think they should have to stoop to help
- c) they believe that they themselves do not have that problem because they are doing things right

Paul’s statement in the Greek builds heavily on the contrast of these words:

- 1) **“thinks”** with **“is”**
- 2) **“something”** with **“nothing”**
 - a. the believer only “thinks” he’s “something”. . .imaginary superstar
 - b. in reality the believer “is” “nothing”. . . reality a zero Also see Romans 12:3

6:4

“Each one should test his own actions.”

“test” is δοκιμαζετω which means to examine, to approve after testing or examination. It refers to testing the quality of metal. (Also see James 1:2-12)

With a renewed mind, a correct understanding of God, his purpose, his overall general plan and how we are generally supposed to fit into it and behave, then examine your application of these truths. How are you doing? Do you see the genuine fruit of the Spirit in your life?

This is the cure. You test yourself. . .

- a) What has God called you to do? Are you doing it?
- b) What has God placed in front of you? Have you turned away from it?
- c) What do you know to be right? Are you obeying it?
- d) Are there any areas in your life where you are:
 - disobedient and so unable to fulfill God’s purpose
 - legalistic (pride, self-service) and so distracted from spiritual purposes

“Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else. . .” Other people are not our standard. The Christian life is not competition.

We don’t copy the copies (or, we don’t copy believers), but we reproduce the image of Christ by maturing through the intake of the Word of God. We don’t copy the copies, but we inhale the original.

6:5

“For each one should carry his own load.”

The duty of the Christian is to carry his own load.

The duty of the Christian is to run his own race, fulfill the purpose that God has assigned to him.

There is no contradiction between 6:2 and 6:5.

A) 6:2 is “Carry each other’s burdens (“bare”)

i. the word “bare” (Βαρη) means burden, that which is heavy

B) 6:5 is “each one should carry his own load (*phortion*)

i. the word ***phortion*** (φορτιον) means a burden, a load which one is expected to bear. It refers to a back pack. It is a term from the military that referred to a soldier’s kit.

The ***phortion*** φορτιον was something that is expected to be carried by a healthy soldier or in this case any healthy believer. It is no one’s responsibility but your own.

In 6:2 the burden is not the normal weight of a back pack. It was something no man would be expected to carry alone.

The spiritual man knows when the weight is a φορτιον or a Βαρη (or, a personal responsibility or a oppressive burden)

6:6, “Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.”

“κοινωνειτω	δε	ο	κατηχουμενος	τον	λογον
“let him share	the	one	being instructed in	the	word
τω	κατηχουντι	εν	πασιν	αγαθοις”	with
the one	instructing	in	all	good things”	

“let him share” κοινωνειτω means “to share with someone, to exercise fellowship. The apostle is thinking here especially of material things.” (Linguistic Key, Rogers and Rogers)

“being instructed in” κατηχουμενος present passive and “instructing” κατηχουντι present active

This root word’s etymology means “to fill with sound” and so it means to put a thing into another person’s mind with constant repetition” (Pulpit Commentary)

It is translated “inform, instruct, teach”

Strong’s Expanded says, “This word indicates verbal instruction which is ‘sounded down into the student’s ears,’ and then repeated by the student to assure learning has taken place. It also denotes ‘to teach orally, inform instruct,’ and is rendered “to teach” in 1 Corinthians 14:19 and twice in Gal. 6:6.

“Word” λογον - This word means the rational expression of a thought.

According to Strong’s Expanded it refers here to the saying or statement about God’s revelation of the gospel and the sum of the utterances of God.

“good things” αγαθοις It describes things that are good in character and so bring beneficial results

Paul’s examples of the Spiritual Man

1. 6:1 – The spiritual man restores the one taken in sin.
2. 6:2 – The spiritual man helps carry others overbearing burdens if they are in the spiritual, physical or emotional arena.
3. 6:3, 5 - The spiritual man knows his spiritual gift and responsibility and operates without comparing himself to “lesser” servants nor to “greater” servants.
4. 6:4 – The spiritual man can judge his own heart (motives, attitude) from the position of the renewed mind. He can be ruthlessly honest with himself about himself and find the strength to make corrections.
5. 6:5 – The spiritual man carries his own spiritual “backpack” of responsibilities that come with his unique calling and that for which he has been given unique “measure of faith” that separates him from anyone else’s responsibility.
6. 6:6 – The spiritual man supports the stream of teaching that makes numbers 1-5 possible in his life. The carnal man is going to spend his financial resources on carnal things. The spiritual man is naturally going to spend his finances on spiritual things.

POINT: Note the spiritual man needs to receive this information through teaching of the logos just like all points of doctrine. But, the spiritual man does not need to be manipulated into giving to his instructor. If the instructor finds himself convincing the believer to give money then neither the instructor nor the student is adequately spiritual to be receiving or giving money.

Examples from Paul’s Own Ministry

1. Paul did not collect money from immature, young Christians 1 Corinthians 9:1-18
2. Paul did not receive money at the beginning of a ministry in a city. Instead he supported himself:
1 Thes. 3:6-10, How could Paul use himself as an example if all he did was collect money from people. Today, some people think the reason for starting a ministry is to organize people to support them.
3. Paul did receive money to be distributed to others in need:
1 Cor. 16:1-8
4. Paul did receive money for his own ministry support and for traveling expenses:
Romans 15:23-29
2 Cor. 8:1
2 Cor. 9:6
Philippians 4:10-13
5. Paul tells Timothy that he could receive money from believers for his personal needs:
1 Timothy 5:17-18

Tithing is a principal but it is not a New Testament church law or standard.

The standard is stated in several places:

1 Corinthians 16:2 –

2 Corinthians 8:14 –

Spiritual giving is detailed in 2 Corinthians 8:1:

8:5 - people gave themselves first to the Lord, then gave money to men.

8:8 - Paul did not command giving (tithe was an OT command) but rather *dokimazo* (tested) them.

8:10 – The people should first experience a desire to give. It is a fruit of the Spirit

The people should not be giving for external reasons first. Keep your money if you are not spiritually motivated in your heart to support the work of God. If you give before you are ready your giving is carnal and legalistic.

8:12 – Willingness makes the gift acceptable. If it is manipulated or commanded it is not an acceptable gift for God nor an acceptable gift to be received.

Do the rest of the verses 6:7-10 continue on the theme of money? Yes.

1. Verse 6:10 returns to the theme of money and so verses 7-9 are sandwiched between two verses obviously about money.
2. 6:7 is a saying that Paul used to encourage generous giving in 2 Cor. 9:6. (Deut. 15:4-11)
3. This letter is to the Galatians who had recently heard the decision of the Jerusalem council and the resulting letter from Acts 15. Galatians 2:10 says that Paul was accepted by the Jerusalem council but was only asked to remember the poor. This refers to collecting money for the poor believers.
4. This may be Paul's way of reminding them to be setting aside money for the poor in Jerusalem like he does in 2 Corinthians 16:1 which reads: "Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income. . . ."

These verse teach three things about money:

- a) Support the teacher
- b) Use money to build up your spiritual life and the spiritual life of others
- c) Spend your money to help others in need, namely, believers.

6:7, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."

Verses 6:7,8 sound like 2 Corinthians 9:6

This is a principle that is true in every area of life.

6:8, "The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction;

If a man spends his money on fleshly things, then those things will produce more fleshly desires and worldly attitudes and natural stuff.

All of these things will be destroyed when the natural world passes away. He will reap from the fruit of his labors the destruction of that fruit because it is not eternal.

This is what Jesus said about storing up treasure in heaven or on earth. Earthly treasure will be consumed by rust, moth or thieves. Eventually you will be separated from them at your death.

6:8, “the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

In context, the group of people who will support a good teacher of the logos will reap eternal benefits from their giving as that instructor leads them into greater spiritual production.

6:9, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Two phrases in the imperative:

- 1) Do not become weary
- 2) Do not give up.

Paul may be including himself in this since he switches to the first person plural.

Paul has been laboring with the Galatians and has seen little fruit. But, this spiritual principle is true for Paul's labors also.

He can not get discouraged and give up. The Galatians will produce fruit in their lives

6:10

This is the closing of the letter. It is a letter focused on one issue. Paul does not distract from the issue he has been dealing with the whole letter even in his closing. In fact, he appears to grab the writing utensil out of the scribes hand to finish it himself and review the whole case.

6:11, “See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand.”

Paul takes the pen to authenticate the letter as his

- a. 1 Corinthians 16:21, **“I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. If anyone does not love the Lord – a curse be on him. Come, O Lord.”**
- b. Colossians 4:18, **“I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.”**
- c. Romans 16:22, **“I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.”**
- d. 2 Thessalonians 3:17, **“I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.”**
 - i. 2 Th. 2:2, **“We ask you brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you.”**