

Bearing and Sharing Burdens

Galatians 6.1-5 ~ March 21, 2010

➤ Galatians Series

- 17 messages through chapter 5
- 3 more message on chapter 6 (March, April and May)

➤ Galatians 1-5 Review

- 1.1 ~ Paul defends his apostleship ~ briefest of greetings
- 1.6 ~ There's only one gospel – everyone else is wrong
 - *“Our sins deserve punishment; God must and will punish sin; Jesus Christ came into this world and was punished in the place and stead of all that believe on him.” - Spurgeon*
- 1.11-12 ~ The Gospel is of God – not man . . .
- 2.9 ~ Paul and the 3 pillars ~ 5 founders of Christian Church
- 2.11 ~ Paul confronts hypocrisy of Peter (recognize, rebuke, remedy)
- 2.20 ~ Crucified with Christ (Castaway / Wilson metaphor for Law)
- 3.6-7 ~ Justification has always been by faith ~ Abraham and us . . .
- 3.13 ~ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law
- 3.17-18 ~ The law did not annul the promise of salvation by faith
- 3.19 ~ *Why then the Law?* It restrains and reveals sin
- 3.26 ~ Equality as sons of God
- 4.9 ~ Paul pleads with them to value their freedom in Christ
- 4.21-31 ~ Covenants of Law and grace are enemies
- 5.1 ~ Stand fast in your freedom ~ Do not return to law-keeping
- 5.13 ~ Serve God and others with your freedom
- 5.16 ~ Walk in the Spirit (fruit of the Spirit)

➤ Reread Text for Today

- Paul has just reminded them of the war within them (*flesh vs. spirit*)
- **Reread** verses 1 through 5

➤ v1 ~ “Brethren”

- He's addressing everyone in the assembly – not just leaders
- This is not advice for just a few – but for the many . . .

Xition: Let's look at the first phrase . . .

- **v1 ~ “if a man is overtaken in any trespass”**
 - Trespass was committed without premeditation ~ “*not a willful sinner*”
 - The person does not appear to be in denial of the sin
 - The text even suggests they are disturbed by it
 - This advice pertains to many situations ~ but not to all
 - Serious enough to warrant concern
 - by the one who committed the trespass and the other brother
 - It is not to be overlooked
 - “*A man’s glory is to overlook a transgression*” Pr 19.11b
 - “[L]ove will cover a multitude of sins.” 1 Pet 4.8
 - But it’s not so serious that gentleness will not resolve it

- **v1 ~ “you who are spiritual”**
 - *What does this mean? ~ How are we to practically understand/apply this?*
 - Remember Paul is addressing everyone ~ “**brethren**”
 - But here he singles out a subset . . . the “**spiritual**”
 - This assumes not all of the brethren are spiritual ~ at least not always
 - He had just instructed them on the “**fruit of the Spirit**” in 5.22
 - He’s admonishing them to use what he’s taught them
 - He even uses one of the words exactly – “**gentleness**”

- **v1 ~ “restore”**
 - To restore is only one of the actions to take in such circumstances
 - Others are:
 - “**rebuke**” ~ “**in the presence of all**” (elder) ~ 1 Tim 5.20
 - “**rebuke a wise man, and he will love you**” ~ Pr 9.8b
 - “**remove**” ~ “**deliver such a one to Satan**” ~ 1 Cor 5.5
 - *To what is this person to be restored?* ~ fellowship, walk with God
 - Restoration is a process – not a one-time action

- **v1 ~ “considering yourself lest you also be tempted”**
 - Whatever this trespass was ~ it overwhelmed this man’s defenses
 - The “**spiritual**” one should beware
 - “**let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall**” ~ 1 Cor 10.12
 - “**This kind comes out only through prayer and fasting**” ~ Mt 17.21

Xition: Now we move on to the heart of our text . . .

➤ v2 ~ **“Bear one another’s burdens”**

- This means more than just tolerating one another ~ it means to “*help*”
 - This “*help*” is practical ~ phone calls, \$, prayer, study, encouragement
 - It means to “*get involved*” ~ to “*get messy...*”

➤ v2 ~ **“fulfill the law of Christ”**

- This is a law that we are urged to fulfill . . .
- The law of forgiveness ~ kindness ~ gentleness ~ selflessness
- We don’t fulfill this law through independent study projects
 - We fulfill it by engaging with people

➤ v3 ~ **“thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself”**

- This is an admonition to guard against self-delusion
 - III: 1976 SAT test (1 in 4 rated themselves in top 1% in “*getting along*”)
 - III: Univ. of Nebraska (1977 - 95% teachers rated themselves above avg)
 - III: USA driving survey (1981 - 93% drivers rated themselves above avg)
 - III: Hughes Aircraft Co. (Susan Aquino c/her stature)
 - We humans are prone to delude ourselves . . .
- Note here that Paul does not say we are all nothing . . .
- But some people truly are “**nothing**” ~ they can offer “**nothing**”
 - *Why is that? How can that be? How can people have nothing to offer?*
 - Because they’re not “**spiritual**” ~ be they unbeliever or believer
 - In ourselves we are nothing ~ Only “*in Christ*” are we anything
 - Ours is always a derived “*somethingness . . .*”
 - III: Completing electrical circuit ~ We’re like spiritual batteries
 - In **Rom 7.18** ~ “[I]n me (that is, in my flesh) **nothing good dwells**”
- Perhaps you’re uncomfortable with this antithesis ~ something / nothing
- Perhaps you think, “*How can that be?*”
 - “*Is there no middle ground for the cultural Christian?*”
 - . . . for the multitudes of unbelievers that fill American churches
 - No... Such people are spiritually dead...

➤ v4 ~ **“But let each one examine his own work”**

- All true and lasting work must be built upon Christ
 - 1 Cor 3.11 ~ “**For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**”

Xition: Now let’s go on to rejoicing (or boasting) . . .

- v4 ~ “.. and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone ..”
 - Rejoicing can also be translated “boasting”
 - *Is this for real? Is this boasting for real? ~ YES...*
 - 2 Cor 1.12 ~ “**For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.**”
 - Paul voices no regrets in his relations with the Corinthians
 - On the contrary, he takes pride in his conduct towards them

- v5 ~ “For each one shall bear his own load”
 - *Do you see the puzzle Paul presents here?*
 - v2 ~ “**bear one another’s burdens**”
 - v5 ~ “**each one shall bear his own load**”
 - Paul is using the word “bear” in similar phrases for different thoughts
 - In verse 2 the idea is of helping one another
 - In verse 5 the idea is of accepting responsibility / facing reality
 - The two must balance one another out
 - In **verses 1 and 2** we have social responsibility
 - In **verses 3 to 5** we have individual responsibility
 - !!!: Watching the team ice skating (all skate together)
 - We at DCC function individually and collectively
 - We succeed or fail at our individual events
 - We succeed or fail at our collective events
 - *Are you a good sport?*
 - *What do you do if your teammate struggles down the stretch?*
 - *Do you get angry, grumble and complain about them – or to them?*
 - *Or do you come along side them and encourage them?*
 - *What kind of teammate are you?*

Let us pray . . .