

February 27, 2022

"Bearing the Fruth of Redemption"
Lesson 4 of Unit

Galatians 5:22-26, 6:1-10

Intro

Today is the final study from Paul's letter to the Galatians. In the first 2 chapters, Paul writes to reject the teaching of those who said Christians had to become Jews first and follow the law before they could be saved.

In chapters 3-4, Paul shows, using Old Testament Scriptures, that Abraham was never under the law, since he lived hundreds of years before Moses. Abraham's relationship with God was based on faith, not works.

In the last two chapters, part of which we look at today, Paul writes about the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

Read Galatians 5:22-26

1. vs. 22-23: Paul here lists the "fruit of the Spirit"

These 9 qualities are Christian behaviors that go beyond what the law says to do

These fruits are the best, the finest, of human qualities

They break up into three groups of 3:

1) "love, joy, peace—the attitudes that show by the way we live

Love: a godly quality: He loved us despite our sinfulness; we are to serve one another in love in the body of Christ.

Joy: is Godly happiness as we remember how blessed we are in Christ. This is a natural reaction to being in God's presence through the Holy Spirit

Peace: the quiet confidence that God reigns over all, so we are able to put away fear and worry, even in the midst of difficulties

2) "patience, kindness, goodness"

Patience: being willing to wait. As God has patience with sinners so they can come to salvation (2 Peter 3:9), we are called to have patience in our lives

Kindness: the opposite is "harshness". Though people (us as sinners!) may *deserve* harsh treatment, God is kind instead. We are called to act like God towards others who may deserve harshness, so they will get closer to God

Goodness: this is seen through actions, not just the desire to be good. It might best be seen as doing things that benefit others, having a giving spirit.

3) "faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"

These are personal qualities

They are to be the defining qualities of people who are walking with God

Faithful means keeping your word and loyalty to both others and God

Gentleness is strong submissiveness; letting the Holy Spirit guide, not self

Self-control is mentioned frequently in the epistles as a quality that believers need to continually work on and show; our human efforts added to the Spirit's

2. vs. 24: The verse refers to a former “sinful nature”
Paul is referring to the list of vices in Gal. 5:19-21
Christians are those who “belong to Christ Jesus”
This means we have the Holy Spirit to guide, teach, and strengthen us
We were “crucified with Christ” (Gal. 2:20)
We leave those former things behind
We are no longer controlled by our selfish wants and desires
We are now submitting ourselves to the Spirit’s control, in a desire to please and serve God
3. vs. 25: The two phrases in this verse sound very similar
“live by the Spirit” and “walk by the Spirit”
To “live by the Spirit” refers to our salvation, the indwelling of the Spirit
To “walk by the Spirit” refers to our daily choices in how we live
Paul is essentially saying, “If the Holy Spirit lives in you, then you are to conduct yourselves in a way that honors this holy presence.”
4. vs. 26: Paul lists three things that go against a life submitted to the Spirit and to self-control
Being conceited
One who is conceited thinks they are better than others in some way
Paul may be thinking of believers who think they know more than others
They are “above” those who know less
Provoking and envying other believers
To provoke someone is to “stir” them up, to get a reaction
The way Paul uses it here suggests a negative outcome
We are told in Heb. 10:24 to “consider one another in order to stir up love and good works...”
This is the positive use to “stirring up”
Paul warns against stirring others up to cause anger, bitterness, or strife
Envying another is a mark of dissatisfaction with one’s own life
Heb. 13:5 tells us to “Be content with such things as you have.”
To envy a brother or sister in the Lord for anything they may possess, whether material, spiritual, or other areas, is to do the opposite of what Heb. 13:5 commands us to do

Read Galatians 6:1-10

5. vs. 1: Paul states a foundational element of the church: the process of restoration
First, those who are stronger spiritually are to restore those who have gone astray
Second, those who are stronger need to restore in a spirit of gentleness
Being too firm or lacking in gentleness could drive the fallen one away forever
Third, Paul warns the restorers to watch out that they don’t fall in the same way themselves
6. vs. 2: The “Law of Christ” is a phrase not used in the gospels
It refers to Jesus’ teaching to “love your neighbor as yourself” and “do unto others as you would have them do unto you”—the Golden Rule
We fulfill this “law” when we “carry each other’s burdens”
A burden is something beyond one’s ability to carry, in contrast to a “load”, which is a

thing one is expected to be able to carry
We are told to “carry each other’s burdens”
We all have times we can carry our loads, and times they become too much
We help each other in “mutual burden-bearing”

7. vs. 3: This verse needs to be read in the context of vs. 1, the beginning of this line of thinking
Vs. 1 says to “watch yourself, or you also be tempted”
This verse warns against the one who “thinks he is something when he is nothing”
All of us are sinners who are equally in need of grace at the foot of the cross
However, some people struggle with the need to feel important

In connection with vs. 2, this person might come to ignore the needs of others as he basks
in the “something” that he thinks he is
Paul warns that the person who aspires to be “something” is deceiving himself
He is nothing, apart from Christ

8. vs. 4-5: These two verses are still in the context of spiritual leaders, “you who are spiritual” in vs. 1
These are the ones to restore others gently
These are the ones to carry the burdens of others
These are the ones Paul warns about spiritual conceit

Paul’s antidote to spiritual conceit is self-reflection
“test (your) own actions”
By being self-reflective, the leader can take pride “in himself” for accomplishments
Some can feed on the praise of others telling them how well they’ve done
Paul comments at least that he is not a servant of man, but of God

Gal. 1:10, 1 Thess. 2:4
Leaders are required to have a higher standard than the approval of the crowd
The one who is self-examining is using the Word as the guideline for that examination
By doing this, he is seeking to be approved by God and not man

9. vs. 6: Believers are here directed to support materially those who provide spiritual instruction
Paul isn’t asking for things for himself
He is encouraging them to support those who serve them full-time
If they have received quality teaching, they are obliged to share materially with those
teachers

10. vs. 7-8: The word Paul uses which is translated “mocked” comes from the word for “nose”
Paul’s phrasing suggest the idea of “turning up one’s nose” to God
This action implies that someone thinks they are better than God and doesn’t need
to listen to Him
Paul describes two actions: reaping to the sinful nature and reaping to the Spirit
The one who does the first will reap “destruction” for himself
The one who reaps to the Spirit will reap “eternal life”

Paul is reminding believers that our actions have consequences, for good or for bad

11. vs. 9: In John 12:8, Jesus says, “The poor you always have with you...”

They may not always be poor, but there are always people in need

They may be in our congregation, they may be people in the community

Paul says “Let us not become weary in doing good...”

This suggests that it *is* wearying to be always doing good for those in need

He encourages us to continue to do good, even though it is tiring at times

He reminds believers that there is a reward coming

It could be a “well done” from Jesus

But it could also be a someone who comes to faith because of one’s kindnesses

It could also be a thanks for doing something that became a turning point for them

12. vs. 10: This verse concludes the ideas about serving by using a two-tiered approach

We are called to “do good to all people”

This tells us to do good to people whether or not they come to church, vote the way we do, dress like us, or even live like us

There is never a time when kindness is not an appropriate action

We are then called to do good “especially to those who belong to the family of believers”

If we help those who aren’t believers, then we should help believers even more

Believers are part of God’s family, as we are

Helping the family especially is a part of the thinking of most of us

So helping others in God’s family follows that same track

Application: This lesson began with the fruit of the Spirit, the qualities that should guide the actions of believers in daily life. These actions should result in observable results, but to us and to others. Paul’s words of instruction and encouragement in this passage guides us about what to focus on, what to work on, how to think of ourselves and others. Let our energies be daily focused on reaping to the Spirit with the goal of making Christ more real to the world around us.

Prayer: Father God, help us to daily submit ourselves to the Spirit’s control. We desire to be used by You for Your kingdom. Help us to see ourselves as You see us, and to see the needs of others and to carry those burdens gladly. In Jesus’ name, Amen.