

Galatians: Freedom In Christ

Week 12: Doing Good (Gal 6:1 – 18)

Look Around

What comes to mind as you read the following quote:

My life, my choices, my mistakes, my lessons - not your business. Mind your own problems before you talk about mine. My life is not your story to tell.

We often set boundaries to protect ourselves from the preying eyes of others. This is sometimes necessary, but it need not always be the case. As believers in Christ, we are responsible for holding one another accountable to the things of God in love. When we hold others and ourselves accountable to the things of God, we strengthen the community bond, ensuring that we grow together in Christ, not apart.

Look at the Text – Key Concepts

- Works of the Flesh – the things humans naturally tend towards that are contrary to God’s design for us.

Look at the Text – Context

In this final section of the letter, Paul continues his lesson on the Galatian's responsibility to live by the Spirit. Not only do the Galatians have an obligation before God to live by the Spirit consistently, but they also have a duty to hold one another accountable to life by the Spirit within the community. In teaching this balanced lesson of accountability and responsibility, Paul cautions the Galatians on the dangers of pride and weariness when doing good.

Look at the Text – Observation & Interpretation

Galatians 6:1 – 18

Observation

- Who is responsible for restoring brothers and sisters in Christ when they are caught in sin?

- What caution does Paul give about restoring others caught in sin?

- What warning does Paul give to Galatians in 6:7-8?

- What choice is Paul asking the Galatians to make in verses 6:9-10?

- At the end of the letter, Paul again reminds the Galatians that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matters. This time, what does Paul say is more important than obeying The Law?

Interpretation

- Why do you suppose Paul is reminding the Galatians about their communal responsibility to carry the burdens of others?

- What do you think it means to carry the burdens of another?

- Why is walking by the Spirit a requirement for restoring others from sin gently?

- What is the "Law of Christ" that Paul mentions in Galatians 6:2. How does carrying each other's burdens fulfill this law?

- What does it mean to "test our own actions," and why is it necessary?

- After telling the Galatians to carry each other's burdens, Paul tells them that each person should also carry their own burdens. These statements seem to contradict each other. Why do you think Paul makes this statement?

- Why do you think Paul encourages the Galatians against growing weary in doing well?

- In the final sentences of this letter, Paul tells the Galatians, “What counts is the new creation.” What do you suppose Paul means by this statement?

Look At God

- In wisdom and love, God gifted us with a faith community to help us grow in our efforts to walk by the Spirit. What thoughts, feelings, or images come to mind as you imagine what your faith community would look like if everyone helped each other grow in love as God intended.

- In this section of the letter, Paul spells out our responsibility to God to walk by the Spirit. How do you suppose God feels when you shun your responsibility to walk by the Spirit? How do you think it affects your relationship with God?

Look At Me

- What freedom do you feel you have to restore another brother or sister caught in sin in your faith community?

- When you notice the sins of another, does the temptation to think you are something that you are not ever rise within you? If so, how do you handle this temptation?

- The idea of carrying the burdens of another can come in many forms. What are some of the ways you have carried the burdens of another. How has someone has carried your burdens?

- Carrying the burdens of others can become overwhelming. Where do you grow weary when carrying the burden of others within your faith community?

- One of the most important lessons of this letter is tucked away at the very end, "what counts is the new creation." When you have carried someone's burdens, or they have carried yours, what changes did you notice in yourself, the other person, or your faith community?