

## Galatians 5:26-6:18 Bible Study

1. What are three things that matter the most to you? What “evidence” is there that these things matter more than other things?

2. **Read Galatians 5:26-6:6.** Life in the Galatian churches was becoming strained (eg 4:15, 5:13-15) but it ought not and need not have been so (5:22-23). List these implications of the fruit of the Spirit that Paul gives here.

*At least: Not being conceited (“empty of honour”) v26; Ready to restore one caught in sin v1; helping each other v2; Humble – not comparing yourself to others vv3-4; Self disciplined and responsible v5; sharing in and supporting a ministry of the word.*

3. Does v.1 seem possible or impossible to you? Have you ever done this or been on the receiving end? Discuss.

*The command is addressed to all (all have the Spirit therefore are “spiritual”). Gentleness is part of the Spirit’s fruit (5:23) and love that seeks to restore people caught in sin rather than write them off (cf Luke 15:1-2). Sometimes this is done badly – some might have experienced this! – but that shouldn’t stop us seeking to obey God’s word and will for us.*

4. What does Paul mean in v.4? What is he **not** saying? Why is this good advice?

*Take care of what is yours to take care of! (eg see 2 Thess 3:6-10). This “load” is different to that of v.2 which refers more to “oppressive burdens” – things in life that can truly weigh an individual down and is best borne with others. He can’t mean that we are to proud, arrogant, boastful – but glad that we are making progress in the Lord by his strength. A good rule of thumb- never compare yourself to others, but compare yourself to **yourself** ie 6 months ago, 5 years ago etc and see what changes the Lord is bringing about. This will free us from envy and pride and enable us to help others with their burdens.*

5. What do you think v.6 means? How do we express that in our church?

*Ministry of the word is to be supported by those who benefit from it. So at the very least, paid pastoral workers are worthy of their financial support from the church members! But it also implies a sharing of other benefits – encouragement you receive in the word, help with their burdens. It also implies that we all need and will be under a ministry of the word.*

6. **Read Galatians 6:7-10.** In the context of Galatians, what is “sowing to please the sinful nature”? What is “sowing to please the Spirit”??

*Sinful nature – either legalism where I can take credit for my salvation because of my law-keeping, or self-indulgence, where I abuse the freedom I have in Christ and make a mockery of his death for our sin.*

*Spirit – Allowing the fruit of the Spirit to multiply in my life, especially within relationships to others. Hence 5:26-6:6.*

7. How can we keep ourselves from becoming, “weary in doing good”?

*At the very least, to remember and remind each other of the eternal perspective – that at the proper time we will reap a harvest. Rely on God for his strength – so keep praying, allow him to be at work in yourself and others so be patient for “results”,*

8. **Read Galatians 6:11-18.** What are the differences between Paul and the false teachers? How can this help us identify authentic from counterfeit Christianity?

<i>The false teachers</i>	<i>Paul</i>
<i>only interested in outward appearance</i>	<i>Interested in a whole new creation</i>
<i>Compelling people to keep rituals</i>	<i>Appealing to people to love and grow in the fruit of the Spirit</i>
<i>Want to avoid suffering, ignore the cross of Christ</i>	<i>Proclaims the cross, no matter the cost</i>
<i>Ready to boast in religious practices</i>	<i>Boasting only in what Jesus accomplished on the cross.</i>

9. Paul has said some very harsh things in this letter. What is the significance of the final verse?

*Paul doesn’t see them as a lost cause but as family – “brothers”. This is encouraging when we think of anyone who seems to be struggling with false teaching or even sin. It’s “grace” that matters – underserved kindness, and deep transforming work within (“your spirit”) not mere outward acts, however religious they appear.*

If time – look back over Galatians. Share one thing that has stood out to you in this letter. Spend time in prayer in response to this.