

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE CLUB

WITH TEACHING COMMENTARY BY NICK BOORK

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September 21 – Galatians 6:1-18

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. ⁵For each one shall bear his own load.

⁶Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

⁷Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

¹¹See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! ¹²As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these *would* compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. ¹³For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. ¹⁴But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. ¹⁶And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God. ¹⁷From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁸Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

OKAY, HERE'S MY TEACHING COMMENTARY

Now in this final portion of Paul's letter to the Galatians he covers some very practical instructions beginning with how to restore a fellow Christian when they are over taken in a fault or what's commonly referred to as backsliding. How we treat others when they are weak reveals the kind of spirit and character that is within us. Do we become critical and judge others when they fall or end up in sin or do we have compassion on them and reach out with the love of God in a supportive spirit encouraging them to get back up again? It has been said that the Christian army is the only army in the world that kills their own wounded soldiers. When believers fall or are overtaken in some sin they don't need to receive condemnation from their fellow Christians, but rather a hand up not a foot down!

They need to be restored. But how do you restore someone that has fallen from grace? The Scriptures teach us that we restore them in a spirit of meekness which means that we gently

seek to bring them back into fellowship with Christ. We should all keep in mind that if it wasn't for the grace of God any of us could very easily end up in the same temptation and condition. This is the attitude we need to have restoring others. Remember, that it was the love of God that initially drew us to Christ and caused us to believe the Gospel in the first place. When I think about restoration I think about the story Jesus told of the prodigal son and how the father had compassion on his son and fully restored him.

However, the older brother was very critical and did not want to celebrate his brother's homecoming and restoration to the family. We all need to be like the father that Jesus talked about in Luke chapter 15 that ran out to meet his backslidden son and embrace him and put on his finger a new ring, sandals on his feet and a new robe over his shoulders. The father fully restored his precious son and today, God longs to reconcile and restore all of his wayward sons and daughters and he does it through us, expressing his love, giving his assurance and encouraging the down cast to get up again and take their place in Christ and in the house of the father, his church. So be an agent of spiritual restoration and look for the one sheep that is lost and bring them back.

Paul also reveals a timeless principle of sowing and reaping and applies it to our lives as Christians saying that whatever a man sows that he will also reap. If we sow to our spiritual lives we will reap life everlasting but if we sow to our flesh we will reap the corruption that the flesh brings. When you're planting seeds you have to be patient because you don't see the harvest right away. It takes a long time for those seeds that have been planted to take root and bring forth new fruit and so it is as Christians as well. We really need to have a lot of patience with ourselves and others because it takes time to produce a harvest and that's what Paul is saying here that we will reap if we do not faint. In other words, if we keep on planting the seeds of eternal life and the word of God and the things of the Holy Spirit we're going to reap the fruits of the Spirit which is eternal.

Many of us have planted a lot of negative bad seeds and those seeds that have taken root and grown into thorns and weeds need to be uprooted through repentance. He says we are not to be deceived because God will not be mocked for you cannot ignore this principle and think that you will somehow be able to get away with reaping a different harvest than you sow. If you plant corn seed it's going to produce corn if you plant tomatoes you're going to have tomato plants if you plant wheat it's going to produce wheat so whatever you plant or sow into your life that's what it's going to produce and reap it's harvest good or bad, spiritual or fleshly, temporal or eternal.

When Paul says in verse 14 that the world has been crucified to him and him to the world he is sharing a principle of freedom for the Christian. The cross of Jesus has set us free from trying to please God according to worldly standards or legalistic views. For the Christian, the entire world system has been crucified to us through Jesus Christ and us to that system. We can never please God by living according to the Mosaic law because we all fall and that has been the purpose of his entire letter teaching us that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ

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and therefore all of our own efforts have been crucified in Christ. We now live in a new creation and Paul says that's all that really matters that you have been born again and are now living a new life in Christ!

Finally, when he says let no one trouble me for a beer in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus he's not talking about the stigmata but rather the marks of being beaten, whipped and tortured for Christ through the persecutions that he endured as he preached the gospel. Some believe that stigmata (which are signs that appear in the hands of professing believers that resemble the nail marks put into the hands of Christ) are a sign from God. I believe that interpretation is really twisting the Scriptures because we do not find anyone in the Scriptures representing Christ as his ambassadors manifesting the same marks of the sufferings of Christ in their bodies.

To me, the stigmata is a false sign that was not intended by God to be used to convince people of their need of Jesus Christ but rather causes people to focus on and admire the person manifesting these kinds of marks. Jesus Christ suffered once on the cross with nails piercing his hands and feet and he does not need his followers to replicate the same sufferings today. So beware of those that claim to be special messengers of Christ manifesting the marks of the sufferings of Christ in their hands or anywhere in their bodies. Jesus said that believers would lay hands on the sick and see them recover. He never mentions anything about the same marks of nails piercing their hands as he alone went through this kind of suffering to save us and redeem us from sin, sickness and death.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

- 1) We are called to restore those that are overcome with sins and faults but we're to do it in a spirit of meekness and gentleness.
- 2) The principle of sowing and reaping continues today and believers need to learn to apply themselves to sow to the spirit to reap a harvest of spiritual fruit and eternal blessings.
- 3) Through Christ we have been crucified to all false world religions and systems of self-righteousness. Jesus alone is our righteousness.
- 4) What really matters is if we have been born again by the Holy Spirit into a new creation Paul says this is what really is essential, not being circumcised or uncircumcised but a new spiritual life through faith in Jesus Christ.

- 5) The marks in the body of the apostle Paul were evidence that he was a true servant of Christ having endured great persecution and torture to fulfill his ministry.

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