

# Galatians 6 Commentary

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- Galatians 6:1
- Galatians 6:2
- Galatians 6:3
- Galatians 6:4
- Galatians 6:5
- Galatians 6:6
- Galatians 6:7
- Galatians 6:8
- Galatians 6:9
- Galatians 6:10
- Galatians 6:11
- Galatians 6:12
- Galatians 6:13
- Galatians 6:14
- Galatians 6:15
- Galatians 6:16
- Galatians 6:17
- Galatians 6:18

Magna Carta of Spiritual Emancipation  
Click chart to enlarge  
Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission



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<a href="#">Paul's First Missionary Journey - map</a>	Acts 13:4-14:28 <sup>+</sup>
<a href="#">Paul's Second Missionary Journey - map</a>	Acts 15:36-18:22 <sup>+</sup>
<a href="#">Paul's Third Missionary Journey - map</a>	Acts 18:23-21:26 <sup>+</sup>

## SUMMARY CHART: EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

Gospel of Grace Defended	Gospel of Grace Explained	Gospel of Grace Applied
Defense of the Gospel Gal 1:1-2:21	Freedom from Legalism Gal 3:1-4:31	Freedom to Love and to Serve Gal 5:1-6:18
Labor	Liberty	Life

Authority Not Opinion		Freedom Not Bondage			Spirit Not Flesh		
Personal Autobiography		Doctrinal Accuracy			Practical Application		
Paul the Apostle  (Gal 1:1-24)	Paul's Authority  (Gal 2:1-21)	Justified by Faith not Works (Gal 3:1-9)	Justified by Faith not the Law (Gal 3:10-4:20)	Grace and Law Cannot Co-Exist (Gal 4:21-31)	Position and Practice of Liberty (Gal 5:1-15)	Power of Liberty (Gal 5:16-26)	Performance in Liberty (Gal 6:1-18)
Vindication		Exposition			Application		
Testimonial and Apologetic		Doctrinal and Argumentative			Practical and Hortatory		
Biographical Explanation		Doctrinal Exposition			Practical Exhortation		
Authentication of Liberty		Argumentation for Liberty			Application of Liberty		
Style or Tone: Vigorous, blunt, aggressive, direct, corrective, urgent, brief, righteous anger, strong words							
Theme: Justification by Faith and not by Works of the Law							
Author: Paul in large letters (Gal 6:11)							
Recipients: Churches in Galatia (Gal 1:2) (Most likely the Southern Region)							
Christ in Galatians: Jesus is the Source and Power for the believer's New Life. (Gal 2:20, 5:16)							

## CONTRAST OF GRACE AND LAW

LAW	GRACE
The law prohibits	Grace invites and gives
The law condemns the sinner	Grace redeems the sinner.
The law says DO	Grace says IT IS DONE.
The law says, Continue to be holy	Grace says, It is finished.
The law curses	Grace blesses
The law slays the sinner	Grace makes the sinner alive.
The law shuts every mouth before God	Grace opens the mouth to praise God.
The law condemns the best man	Grace saves the worst man.
The law says, pay what you owe	Grace says, I freely forgive you all.
The law says "the wages of sin is death"	Grace says, "the gift of God is eternal life."
The law says, "the soul that sins shall die"	Grace says, Believe and live.
The law reveals sin	Grace atones for sin.
By the law is the knowledge of sin	By grace is redemption from sin.
The law was given by Moses	Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
The law demands obedience	Grace bestows and gives power to obey.
The law was written on stone	Grace is written on the tables of the heart.
The law was done away in Christ	Grace abides forever.
The law puts us under bondage	Grace sets us in the liberty of the sons of God.

**An Outline of Galatians - [D Edmond Hiebert](#)**

**THE INTRODUCTION (Galatians 1:1-10)**

1. The salutation (Galatians 1:1-5)
  - a. The writer (Galatians 1:1-2a)
    - i. Paul, the Apostle (Galatians 1: 1)
    - ii. The brethren with him (Galatians 1:2a)
  - b. The readers (Galatians 1:2b)
  - c. The greeting (Galatians 1:3-5)
    - i. The contents of the greeting (Galatians 1:3a)
    - ii. The source of the grace and peace (Galatians 1:3b-4)
    - iii. The doxology (Galatians 1:5)
2. The rebuke (Galatians 1:6-10)
  - a. His astonishment at their fickleness (Galatians 1:6-7)
    - i. The reason for the astonishment (Galatians 1:6)
    - ii. The explanation of the departure (Galatians 1:7)
  - b. His assertion about its seriousness Galatians 1:8-9)
    - i. The seriousness asserted (Galatians 1:8)
    - ii. The seriousness reaffirmed (Galatians 1:9)
  - c. His attitude in the matter (Galatians 1:10)

**I. PERSONAL: THE VINDICATION OF HIS APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY (Galatians 1:11-2:21)**

1. How he got his Gospel (Galatians 1:11-24)
  - a. The origin of his Gospel through revelation (Galatians 1: 11-12)
    - i. The assertion as to its nature (Galatians 1:11)
    - ii. The manner of its reception (Galatians 1:12)
  - b. The previous conduct of the one given the revelation (Galatians 1:13-14)
    - i. The manner of his former life known to them Galatians 1:13a)
    - ii. The description of his former life (Galatians 1:13b-14)
      - a. In relation to the Church of God (Galatians 1:13b)
      - b. In relation to Judaism (Galatians 1:14)
  - c. The description of the revelation received (Galatians 1:15-17)
    - i. The source of the revelation (Galatians 1:15)
    - ii. The subject of the revelation (Galatians 1:16a)
    - iii. The purpose of the revelation (Galatians 1:16b)
    - iv. The response to the revelation (Galatians 1:16c-17)
  - d. His independence of the Jerusalem apostles (Galatians 1:18-24)
    - i. The first visit to Jerusalem (Galatians 1:18-20)
      - a. The time of the visit (Galatians 1:18a)
      - b. The purpose of the visit (Galatians 1:18b)
      - c. The duration of the visit (Galatians 1:18c)
      - d. The scope of contacts during the visit (Galatians 1:19-20)
    - ii. The subsequent absence from Jerusalem (Galatians 1:21-24)
      - a. The place of his withdrawal (Galatians 1:21)
      - b. The lack of acquaintance with the Judean churches (Galatians 1:22)
      - c. The response of the churches to reports about him (Galatians 1:23-24)
2. How his Gospel was confirmed by the apostles at Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1-10)
  - a. The circumstances of its presentation to them (Galatians 2:1-2)
    - i. The journey to Jerusalem (Galatians 2:1-2a)
    - ii. The presentation made at Jerusalem (Galatians 2:2b)
  - b. The outcome of his presentation of his Gospel to them (Galatians 2:3-10)
    - i. The maintenance of his position, as seen in Titus Galatians 2:3)
    - ii. The conflict with the false brethren (Galatians 2:4-5)
      - a. The presence of the false brethren (Galatians 2:4)
      - b. The refusal to yield to their demands (Galatians 2:5)
    - iii. The approval of his Gospel by the Jerusalem leaders (Galatians 2:6-10)

- a. Their failure to add anything to his Gospel (Galatians 2:6)
  - b. Their approval of his Gospel in full (Galatians 2:7-10)
    - 1. The basis of their approval (Galatians 2:7-9a)
    - 2. The expression of their approval (Galatians 2:9b)
    - 3. The one request with their approval (Galatians 2:10)
- 3. How he rebuked Peter's inconsistent conduct (Galatians 2:11-21)
  - a. The circumstances when giving the rebuke (Galatians 2:11-13)
    - i. The fact of his rebuke of Peter (Galatians 2:11)
    - ii. The reason for his rebuke of Peter (Galatians 2:12)
    - iii. The effect of the inconsistent conduct of Peter (Galatians 2:13)
  - b. The justification for giving the rebuke (Galatians 2:14-21)
    - i. His question of rebuke to Peter (Galatians 2:14)
    - ii. His explanation of his doctrinal position (Galatians 2:15-21)
      - a. The insufficiency of the law (Galatians 2:15-18)
        - 1. The discovery of believing Jews about justification (Galatians 2:15-16)
        - 2. The rejection of a conclusion from Peter's action (Galatians 2:17)
        - 3. The significance of a return to law-works (Galatians 2:18)
      - b. The new life in Christ (Galatians 2:19-21)
        - 1. The effect of the law led to the new life (Galatians 2:19)
        - 2. The nature of the new life (Galatians 2:20)
        - 3. The grace of God nullified by law-keeping (Galatians 2:21)
- II. DOCTRINAL: THE EXPOSITION OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH (Galatians 3:1-4:31)
  - 1. The elaboration of the doctrine of justification (Galatians 3:1-4:7)
    - a. The nature of justification as by faith, not law (Galatians 3:1-14)
      - i. The inconsistency of their conduct (Galatians 3:1-5)
        - a. The question about their turning from the crucified Christ (Galatians 3:1)
        - b. The question about the beginning of their Christian life (Galatians 3:2)
        - c. The question about their method of perfection (Galatians 3:3)
        - d. The question about their sufferings as believers (Galatians 3:4)
        - e. The question about the basis of God's work among them (Galatians 3:5)
      - ii. The example of Abraham's justification (Galatians 3:6-9)
        - a. The means of Abraham's justification (Galatians 3:6)
        - b. The identity of the sons of Abraham (Galatians 3:7)
        - c. The announcement to Abraham concerning Gentile justification by faith (Galatians 3:8)
        - d. The sharers in the blessings of Abraham (Galatians 3:9)
      - iii. The deliverance from law-works through Christ (Galatians 3:10-14)
        - a. The curse upon those under law-works (Galatians 3:10)
        - b. The inability of law-works to justify (Galatians 3:11-12)
        - c. The deliverance from the curse through Christ (Galatians 3:13-14)
          - 1. The fact of our deliverance through Christ (Galatians 3:13a)
          - 2. The means of our deliverance from the curse (Galatians 3:13b)
          - 3. The purpose in our deliverance from the curse (Galatians 3:14)
    - b. The limitations of the law and its relations to faith (Galatians 3:15-4:7)
      - i. The covenant with Abraham unaltered by the law (Galatians 3:15-18)
        - a. The illustration of a man's covenant as binding (Galatians 3:15)
        - b. The fact illustrated is the divine promise to Abraham (Galatians 3:16)
        - c. The application of the principle of an unalterable covenant (Galatians 3:17-18)
          - 1. The law did not alter the promise (Galatians 3:17)
          - 2. The inheritance is not through law but promise (Galatians 3:18)
      - ii. The true place and purpose of the law (Galatians 3:19-29)
        - a. The temporary nature of the law (Galatians 3:19-20)
          - 1. The reason for the adding of the law (Galatians 3:19a)
          - 2. The time limit for the law (Galatians 3:19b)
          - 3. The manner of the establishment of the law (Galatians 3:19c-20)
        - b. The inability of the law to produce life (Galatians 3:21-22)
          - 1. The law not contrary to the promise (Galatians 3:21a)
          - 2. The law unable to produce life (Galatians 3:21b)

3. The Scripture shut up all to faith in Christ (Galatians 3:22)
- c. The law as a child-leader to Christ with His blessings (Galatians 3:23-29)
  1. The old position under law (Galatians 3:23-24)
    - a. The position of confinement under law (Galatians 3:23)
    - b. The function of the law as child-leader to Christ (Galatians 3:24)
  2. The new position in Christ (Galatians 3:25-29)
    - a. The nature of the new position (Galatians 3:25-26)
    - b. The entry into the new life (Galatians 3:27)
    - c. The effect of the new life (Galatians 3:28)
    - d. The fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Galatians 3:29)
- iii. The contrasted position under law and faith (Galatians 4:1-7)**
  - a. The illustration of the position of the heir as a minor (Galatians 4:1-2)
  - b. The application of the illustration to believers (Galatians 4:3-6)
    1. The condition of bondage as minors (Galatians 4:3)
    2. The position as free sons through God's Son (Galatians 4:4-6)
      - a. The sending of the Son of God (Galatians 4:4-5)
      - b. The sending of the Spirit of God (Galatians 4:6)
    3. The conclusion for the believer (Galatians 4:7)
2. The appeal for them to drop their legalism (Galatians 4:8-31)
  - a. The acceptance of Jewish legalism is a return to bondage (Galatians 4:8-11)
    - i. Their past condition of bondage (Galatians 4:8)
    - ii. Their present deliverance from bondage (Galatians 4:9a)
    - iii. Their legalism as a return to bondage (Galatians 4:9b-10)
    - iv. Their action a cause of concern to him (Galatians 4:11)
  - b. The appeal from his relations to them (Galatians 4:12-20)
    - i. The appeal for them to adopt his position (Galatians 4:12a)
    - ii. The reminder of his past relations to them (Galatians 4:12b-14)
    - iii. The change in their relation to him (Galatians 4:15-18)
    - iv. The travail he is undergoing for them (Galatians 4:19-20)
  - c. The appeal from the two contrasted covenants (Galatians 4:21-31)
    - i. The question to those desiring to be under law (Galatians 4:21)
    - ii. The story of Abraham's two sons (Galatians 4:22-23)
    - iii. The allegorical interpretation of the story (Galatians 4:24-30)
      - a. The two mothers representing two covenants (Galatians 4:24a)
      - b. The description of the two covenants (Galatians 4:24b-28)
        1. The one representing a covenant of bondage (Galatians 4:24b-25)
        2. The other representing a covenant of freedom (Galatians 4:26-28)
      - c. The expulsion of the slave woman and her son (Galatians 4:29-30)
    - iv. The conclusion from the story (Galatians 4:31)
- III. PRACTICAL: THE LIFE OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY (Galatians 5:1-6:10)**
  1. The call to maintain their Christian liberty (Galatians 5:1)
  2. The peril to Christian liberty (Galatians 5:2-12)
    - a. The peril to them in circumcision (Galatians 5:2-6)
      - i. The consequences of accepting circumcision (Galatians 5:2-4)
        - a. It renders Christ useless to them (Galatians 5:2)
        - b. It makes a man debtor to do the whole law (Galatians 5:3)
        - c. It severs them from Christ (Galatians 5:4a)
        - d. It constitutes a fall from grace (Galatians 5:4b)
      - ii. The attitude of the true believer (Galatians 5:5-6)
    - b. The condemnation of the false teacher (Galatians 5:7-12)
      - i. The explanation for their defection (Galatians 5:7)
      - ii. The characterization of the teaching (Galatians 5:8-9)
      - iii. The condemnation of the one troubling them (Galatians 5:10-12)
        - a. The confidence he has in them (Galatians 5:10a)
        - b. The troubler will bear his judgment (Galatians 5:10b)
        - c. The refutation of charges that he preaches circumcision (Galatians 5:11)
        - d. The wish that these teachers would go to the consistent end (Galatians 5:12)

3. The life of Christian liberty (Galatians 5:13-6:10)
  - a. It is directed by love (Galatians 5:13-15)
    - i. The believer called to liberty (Galatians 5:13a)
    - ii. The use of Christian liberty (Galatians 5:13b)
    - iii. The fulfillment of the law through love (Galatians 5:14)
    - iv. The results of the lack of love (Galatians 5:15)
  - b. It is a walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh (Galatians 5:16-25)
    - i. The command to walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16)
    - ii. The conflict between the Spirit and the flesh (Galatians 5:17-18)
    - iii. The contrasted products of the flesh and the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23)
      - a. The works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21)
      - b. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
    - iv. The persons living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:24-25)
  - c. It is a life of mutual burden-bearing (Galatians 5:26-6:10)
    - i. The burden of moral faults (Galatians 5:26-6:5)
      - a. The warning against wrong attitudes towards others (Galatians 5:26)
      - b. The attitude of humility in restoring the fallen (Galatians 6:1)
      - c. The duty of mutual burden-bearing (Galatians 6:2)
      - d. The proper attitude toward self (Galatians 6:3-5)
    - ii. The burden of temporal needs (Galatians 6:6-10)
      - a. The exhortation to communicate with their teachers (Galatians 6:6)
      - b. The law of the spiritual harvest (Galatians 6:7-8)
      - c. The encouragement to well-doing (Galatians 6:9-10)

#### THE CONCLUSION (Galatians 6:11-17)

1. His reference to his large letters (Galatians 6:11)
2. His rebuke of his adversaries (Galatians 6:12-13)
3. His confidence in the cross (Galatians 6:14-16)
  - a. His glorying only in the cross (Galatians 6:14a)
  - b. His crucifixion through the cross (Galatians 6:14b)
  - c. His evaluation of things through the cross (Galatians 6:15)
  - d. His benediction upon those accepting this principle (Galatians 6:16)
4. His marks of apostleship (Galatians 6:17)

#### THE BENEDICTION (Galatians 6:18+)

**Galatians 6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.**

Thomas Schreiner - Those who are tripped up in sin should be gently restored by fellow believers. ([Galatians](#))

- **Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass:** Ga 2:11-13 Ge 9:20-24 12:11-13 Nu 20:10-13 2Sa 11:2-27 Mt 26:69,75 Ro 14:1 15:1 Heb 12:13 Jas 5:19
- **you who are spiritual:** Ro 8:6 15:1 1Co 2:15 3:1 14:37
- **restore such a one:** 2Sa 12:1-15 Job 4:3,4 Isa 35:3,4 Eze 34:16 Mt 9:13 18:12-15 Lu 15:4-7,22-32 Heb 12:13 Jas 5:19,20 1Jn 5:16 Jude 1:22,23
- **in a spirit of gentleness:** Ga 5:23 Mt 11:29 1Co 4:21 2Co 10:1 2Th 3:15 2Ti 2:25 Jas 3:13 1Pe 3:15
- **each one looking to yourself;** 1Co 7:5 10:12 Heb 13:3 Jas 3:2
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## HELPING OTHERS WALK BY THE SPIRIT

**John MacArthur** summarizes this first section

1. Pick Up,
2. Hold Up,

### 3. Build Up

**James Boice** writes that ""It is easy to talk about the fruit of the Spirit while doing very little about it. So Christians need to learn that it is in concrete situations, rather than in emotional highs, that the reality of the Holy Spirit in their lives is demonstrated." ([Galatians/Ephesians - EBC - 1976](#))

**Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass** - He is speaking to Christian brethren. Beloved, there are only two ways to live the Christian life, by the Spirit or by the flesh. There is no middle ground. And so it should not surprise us that the **anyone** could be any of us, for as James 3:2 says "we all (HOW MANY?) stumble ([ptaio](#)) in many (A FEW?) ways. If anyone does not stumble ([ptaio](#)) in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well." Of course there was only one Perfect Man able to do that (Heb 4:15, 1 Pe 1:19). And so at any point in time it may be **anyone** of us who has been overtaken by sin and stand in need of a helping hand! No believer is 100% "fall proof!" (cf 1 Cor 10:12) Paul explains who is useful in this work writing "Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for **every good work**." (2 Ti 2:21) Notice also that he says **ANY trespass**, so it's not just the "big" scandalous ones, but it is "**ANY**" sin, because a little leaven will leaven the entire loaf (body).

**MacArthur** adds that "If you are fleshly, if you are in sin, if you're not walking in the Spirit, if you're using human means to apply to spiritual matters, and you are functioning in the flesh, you are useless. Your ministry is debilitated. Furthermore, you infect other believers. 1 Cor 5:6 says, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough." (cf Gal 5:9) And if there is sin in your life and you're touching the lives of other people, you are infecting them negatively. So from a positive standpoint if you're functioning in the flesh, you're not useful to God. From a negative standpoint, you're more than not useful, you're useless, you're more than useless, you're trouble because you are negatively impacting the body of Christ. You're not only not helping, you're hindering. ([Sermon](#))

Jesus emphasizes this same principal of the need for spiritual persons to correct fleshly persons in the "speck removal ministry"...

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged. 2 "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. 3 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? 5 "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and **then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye** (Matthew 7:1-5+)

**Robertson** of **if anyone** - Condition of third class, first aorist passive subjunctive of *prolambanō*, old verb to take beforehand, to surprise, to detect. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Brethren** (80)([adelphos](#) from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) means brother or near kinsman. "**Adelphós** generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, and is used here figuratively to describe members of the Christian community, spiritual brother, fellow Christian, fellow believer (Ro 8.29). It speaks of their mutual relationship in the Lord (and the of the same Body) and therefore provides the ground for the exhortation that follows, for if one part of the Body is hurting, the entire Body is hurting!

**Caught in any trespass - NEB** = "If a man should do something wrong...on a sudden impulse." He was not seeking sin, but was caught off guard by a sudden overwhelming urge to sin (We can all identify with that horrible surprise attack by intense temptation!) So given the meaning of **prolambano** which can mean to surprise, this phrase suggests this believe was surprised by the attack of sin which came in an unanticipated way and an unexpected time. **Schreiner** ([Galatians](#)) comments that "Paul envisages situations in which believers sin in unplanned and unexpected ways." Sin is like that as Moses records in God's words to Cain ""If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, **sin is crouching at the door**; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." (Ge 4:7)

**Donald Campbell** on **caught in any trespass** - "The thought is that of someone running from sin but sin, being faster, overtakes and catches him. Two passages show how the legalists responded to such (cf. John 8:3-5; Acts 21:27-29)." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**De Haan** makes an interesting comment - Notice that this brother was "overtaken" in a fault. This is quite a different thing than OVERTAKING a sin. Some people go looking for sin, and go out of their way to find it. But this is not the case in our Scripture. This brother was "overtaken," implying that he was trying to get away from it, trying to avoid it, but because of weakness, failure of prayer, or failure to look to the Lord for victory, was overtaken. It was not deliberate sinning, but being "overcome" in a moment of weakness. THE first verse of Galatians six is a solemn warning against legality and sitting in judgment upon weak, stumbling believers. It is a plea for compassion, forbearance and helpfulness to those who fall into sin. The sinner seeks sin—the believer flees sin. But even though he flees, he may still be "overtaken in a fault." Toward such we should be patient, kind and helpful, realizing the weaker the brother, the more he needs our sympathy and aid. Instead of condemning and avoiding him we are told to restore such

an one in the spirit of meekness. ([Studies in Galatians](#))

**Garlington** adds that "because of a lack of watchfulness one is caught "unawares" or is "surprised," in many cases by a "besetting sin." The term carries the sense of being "surprised" by sin rather than being "detected" in it....The verb (prolambano) suggests that "the sinner has been forcibly laid hold of by sin before he was able to reflect" (Fung, Galatians, 284). Ridderbos agrees that the person was "caught hard upon the act of sin." ([An Exposition of Galatians](#))

**Don Anderson** - Now there are THREE THINGS that are obvious when a person is overtaken by a sin:

1. he's out of fellowship with God. You grieve the Spirit by sin. You quench the Spirit by saying "no." He's been overtaken so he said "no."
2. he's operating in the flesh and not the Spirit because the Spirit has been grieved and quenched.
3. he's selfish. He's thinking now only of himself and wondering what the consequences are going to be.

**Caught** (4301) (prolambano from **pro** = before + **lambano** = to take) literally means to take beforehand, to anticipate, to overtake, to surprise. In this passage caught in, discovered in, overcome by. As an aside remember that sin will always catch up with us! Numbers 32:23 says "be sure your sin will find you out." (cf Ge 4:7 = "sin is crouching [PICTURE IT JUST WAITING FOR YOU TO LET YOUR GUARD DOWN - THAT'S WHEN IT POUNCING ON YOU! I KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE!] at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.")

**Ralph Earle** comments on **prolambano** in Gal 6:1 - Some scholars have held that the reference here speaks of a Christian being surprised in his sin by some fellow Christian who caught him in the act. But it seems much more natural to hold that it refers to the believer being him-self overtaken by sin, perhaps to his own surprise. That is, it suggests the deceitfulness of sin in causing us to stumble before we realize fully the danger we are in. Burton says that it means being taken by surprise or seized unawares. The element of surprise should be emphasized.

**BDAG** - to do something that involves some element of temporal priority (do something before the usual time, anticipate something - "begin the growth **beforehand** in favorable weather") "She has anointed my body **beforehand**" (Mk 14:8). To take, get of a meal (of the taking of food in the temple of Asclepius in Epidaurus), in eating, "for in your eating each one **takes** his own supper **first**" (1 Cor 11:21). To be overtaken or surprised here in Gal 6:1. In the present context means to overtake by surprise, to overpower before one can escape.

**Prolambano** - 3x - Mk. 14:8; 1 Co. 11:21; Gal. 6:1 - beforehand(1), caught(1), takes...first(1).

**Uttley** on **if anyone is caught in any trespass** - The phrase points to our own responsibility for our sin but also of sin's subtle temptations and traps (cf. Eph. 4:14; Eph 6:10-18). These people did not premeditatively violate God's grace; they were duped. The guidelines which follow are extremely helpful to show the church how believers are to restore a fallen brother to fellowship. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Related Resource:**

- [Backsliding](#)

**Trespass** (3900) (**paraptoma** from **para** = aside + **pipto** = fall) is literally a falling aside or beside, a crossing of the line, to stumble on something (so as to lose footing) and figuratively describes a "false step", a slip or lapse rather than a presumptuous wilful sin. "Though it is one of the many Greek words for sin in the NT, it suggests the less serious type of sin, that which is not deliberate or premeditated....But the word in this context seems to carry a somewhat stronger connotation. It refers to a lapse in Christian experience which requires a restoration. The unfortunate one, however, has been overtaken or seized suddenly and unexpectedly. That often happens, especially to the new convert." (Ralph Earle)

In this passage **paraptoma** conveys the idea that the one **caught** does not commit premeditated sin but instead fails to be on guard and/or flirts with a temptation he thinks he can withstand. Looked at another way, in context of Paul's preceding instruction that we need to depend on the Spirit to live the Christian life, this individual attempts to live his/her life in their own power and fails, producing a deed of the flesh instead of bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

**Guthrie** says this verb speaks of steps which is what Paul has been alluding to in walking by the Spirit and keeping in step with the Spirit and thus "The results of stepping aside (paraptoma) may have been chosen because of its appropriateness to the Christian life as a walk by the Spirit." (Albeit clearly this person is not walking by the Spirit!)

**Wiersbe** - The legalist is not interested in bearing burdens. Instead, he adds to the burdens of others (Acts 15:10). This was one of the sins of the Pharisees in Jesus' day: "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders;



but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers" (Matt. 23:4). The legalist is always harder on other people than he is on himself, but the Spirit-led Christian demands more of himself than he does of others that he might be able to help others.....Why did Paul use this illustration? Because nothing reveals the wickedness of legalism better than the way the legalists treat those who have sinned. Call to mind the Pharisees who dragged a woman taken in adultery before Jesus (John 8). Or the Jewish mob that almost killed Paul because they thought he had defiled the temple by bringing in Gentiles (Acts 21:27ff.). (Legalists do not need facts and proof; they need only suspicions and rumors. Their self-righteous imaginations will do the rest.) So, in this paragraph, Paul was really contrasting the way the legalist would deal with the erring brother, and the way the spiritual man would deal with him. ([Commentary](#))

**You who are spiritual** - This is not some elite corps of Christians! He is not even saying only those who are mature (contrary to what a number of commentaries suggest). Paul is simply speaking to believers who are filled with/controlled by the Spirit (Eph 5:18<sup>+</sup>), walking by the Spirit (Gal 5:16<sup>+</sup>, cf Col 1:9-10<sup>+</sup>), empowered by the Spirit (Micah 3:8<sup>+</sup>, Lk 4:14<sup>+</sup>, Acts 1:8<sup>+</sup>, Acts 10:38<sup>+</sup>, Ro 15:13<sup>+</sup>, Ro 15:19<sup>+</sup>, 1 Cor 2:4, Eph 3:16<sup>+</sup>), guided by the Spirit (Gal 5:18<sup>+</sup>, Ro 8:14<sup>+</sup>). Note Paul does not say "You who are sinless!" John writes "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us." (1 Jn 1:8<sup>+</sup>). If this spiritual helper need to be sinless there would be no one to help this transgressing brother! But it is important that the one giving a helping hand to the fleshly believer is a Spirit filled believer, for a fleshly believer cannot help a fleshly believer!

**Utley** comments on **you who are spiritual** - Spiritual maturity is: (1) having the mind of Christ; (2) living out the fruit of the Spirit; (3) having a servant's heart; and (4) serving fellow Christians. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Spiritual** (4152) (**pneumatikos** from **pneuma** = wind, spirit <> in turn from **pneo** = to blow) is an adjective which means pertaining to the wind and then relating to the realm of the spirit referring to the inner, invisible sphere of a human being. As **Barclay** says "the man who is **pneumatikos** is the man who is sensitive to the Spirit and whose life is guided by the Spirit (cf Gal 5:18<sup>+</sup>)." Thus **Pneumatikos** in the present passage describes the Spirit filled pattern of life which is to be the "normal" Christian life.

**Barry Horner** - At a church this writer pastored many years ago, there were those who believed that we should have congregational sharing meetings at which we would ventilate our problems before all. This verse was used as justification for such a practice, though the writer vigorously opposed it on the grounds that first, Gal 6:1 qualifies that the sharing is only to be with a "spiritual person," and surely in private, and second, indiscriminate public sharing would only stimulate carnality rather than blessing. ([Galatians 6:11-18](#) Commentary)

**MacArthur** writes that **restore** "basically means to pick them up, lift them up. That is the responsibility that we as believers have."

Don't rejoice that they have fallen  
but restore those who are fallen!

**Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness** - **Restore** is in the [present imperative](#) calling for this to be the spiritual persons habitual practice. It is a practice which in turn necessitates continual dependence on the enabling power of the Spirit ([See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands](#)). Furthermore **gentleness** is a fruit of the Spirit, underscoring that Paul is here addressing this command to a Spirit filled/controlled individual. The implication seems to be that it would not be best for a person who is not controlled by the Spirit to carry out this corrective action. And so the idea (see [katartizo](#) below) is that something is "broken," or is not "working properly" in regard to the brother's spiritual walk. Spiritual brethren are to come along and "repair" or strengthen these "broken saints."

**McGee** - The word used for "**restore**" in this verse is a verb which means "to set a broken bone." If a fellow falls down and breaks his leg, what are you going to do? Are you going to walk off and leave him in pain? God says, "You who are spiritual set the broken bone. Get him back on his feet again." ([Galatians 6](#))

We see a similar idea in Hebrews 12:12<sup>+</sup>

"Therefore, **strengthen** ([anorthoo](#) in the [aorist imperative](#)) the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble."

There is a similar thought in James 5:14, 16

Is anyone among you sick? Then he **must call** ([aorist imperative](#)) for the elders of the church and they are to **pray** ([aorist imperative](#)) over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord....Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

So in the preceding passage we see practically how we can begin the process of restoration - by confession of sins and by praying for them, praying specifically that God would "strengthen" (Heb 12:12) their spiritual walk. The restorative process also involves use

of the appropriate means of convincing of sin and encouraging repentance.

[Don Anderson](#) on **restore** - It's letting people know that you still care for them. That you love them. Now there are THREE THINGS that are obvious when a person is overtaken by a sin.

We also see a description of the process of restoration in Mt 18:15-17 where Jesus is speaking about the church (v17)...

(FIRST STEP) If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 (SECOND STEP) "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 17 (THIRD STEP - THEY ACTUALLY DO THIS AT COMMUNION SERVICES AT MACARTHUR'S CHURCH IF IT IS NEEDED!) "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the **church**; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector (I.E., YOU PUT HIM OUT OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENS THE ENTIRE CHURCH!).

**MacArthur** comments - I really believe, beloved, that one of the major problems in the church today is the church preaches against sin but doesn't do anything about it. And consequently it has a somewhat pure message and an impure population. There's leaven, maybe not in the preaching, but there's leaven in the living. And that takes the very life from the church....You don't discipline in the church to put people out, you discipline in the church to lift them up. That's the purpose. Putting them out is a last resort for the sake of the purity and safety of the body. ([Sermon](#))

**Restore** (2675) ([katartizo](#) from **katá** = with + **artizō** = to adjust, fit, finish, in turn from **ártios** = fit, complete) means to fit or join together and so to mend or repair (first use = mending nets - Mt 4:21). **Linguistic Key** says **katartizo** "is used especially as a surgical term of setting a bone or joint; or in other contexts of the strengthening or sustaining of a worn down people, of the mixing of medicine, of a sailor outfitting his boat, of fishermen mending nets, or of politicians appeasing factions and restoring unity."

In the Septuagint **katartizo** is used of rebuilding walls (Ezra 4:12,13), which suggests a beautiful picture of the spiritual one rebuilding the broken down life of one caught in sin. Another great word picture is to put a dislocated member of the body into its proper place. This description of orthopedic repair is a great picture of the spiritual restoration. The spiritual are to perform restorative surgery so to speak. Indeed, every genuine believer who falls into sin becomes a "dislocated member" and is in effect disabled from functioning in the Body of Christ!

**Katartizo** implies care and healing because a broken bone does not heal instantly. **Wuest** adds that **katartizō** "has in it the idea of equipping something or preparing it for future use (ED: IN THIS CASE A "BROKEN" BELIEVER IN NEED OF "MENDING"!)" **Katartizō** conveys the fundamental idea of putting something into its appropriate condition so it will function well. It conveys the idea of making whole by fitting together, to order and arrange properly. When applied to that which is weak and defective, it denotes setting right what has gone wrong, to restore to a former condition, whether mending broken nets, setting broken bones or coming alongside "broken" people! Too often I have heard the phrase that they church is the only institution that shoots it's wounded. That's a graphic way of saying that we do a poor job of helping people who have been "overcome by some sin" to get "back onto the right path." Paul's instructions counter such a sad practice. Church discipline should always seek to be redemptive, never vindictive! The propose is restoration to service. The fallen can be used of God once restoration has taken place. As **John Brown** says "When a member of the human body is dislocated, amputation is not immediately resorted to."

**Katartizō** was used in secular Greek to describe a trainer who adjusts parts of the body, as a surgical term of the setting of a broken bone or putting a dislocated limb back in place or of the repairing and refitting of a damaged vessel (ship). **Katartizō** is used in other contexts of the strengthening or sustaining of a worn down people, of the mixing of medicine or of politicians appeasing factions and restoring unity (used by Herodotus for composing civil disorder)

**Barclay** - The word that Paul uses for **restore** is a word that is used for executing a repair, and it is also used for the work of a surgeon in removing some growth from a man's body, or in setting a broken limb. The whole atmosphere of the word lays the stress, not on punishment, but on cure; the correction is not thought of as a penalty but as an amendment. And Paul goes on to say that when we see a man fall into a fault or sin we would do well to say, "There but for the grace of God go I."

## SPIRITUAL FRUIT OF GENTLENESS

**Gentleness** (Gal 5:23+) is the gift of (fruit of) the Holy Spirit and is mandatory if one is to restore another brother. So if you who are spiritual are restoring, you will be doing it in a spirit of gentleness. "A gentle and humble spirit does not provoke one who has sinned but treats that person with dignity." (Schreiner) **Gentleness** is in striking contrast with the spirit described in the immediately

preceding passage (perhaps not the best chapter break) Gal 5:26+ "boastful, challenging one another, envying one another." Galatians 5:26 describes how the fleshly person responds to another, whereas Galatians 6:1 describes how the Spirit controlled person responds.

**Anders** - A harsh, legalistic reaction to a sinning brother will only make things worse. A gentle, graceful response can help. We can only ask ourselves which response we would want if we were the one caught in a sin. ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

We see parallel passages that speak in essence of gentleness (although they do not use the specific word)...

Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority, so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. (2 Cor 2:6-7)

If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. (2 Th 3:14-15)

**Comment** - You come to them as one who loves and cares.

**Gentleness** (4240) ([prautes](#) related to [praus](#) = used to describe Jesus Mt 11:29+) describes the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance (see Paul in 2 Cor 10:1). **Prautes** is a quality of gentle friendliness - gentleness, meekness (as strength that accommodates to another's weakness), consideration, restrained patience, patient trust in the midst of difficult circumstances. In Greek literature **prautes** was sometimes used of a feigned, hypocritical concern for others that is motivated by self-interest. But in the New Testament it is always used of genuine consideration for others. **Prautes** was used in secular Greek writings to describe a soothing wind, a healing medicine, and a colt that had been broken. In each instance, there is power for a wind can become a storm, too much medicine can kill and a horse can break loose. Thus **prautes** describes **power under control**. **Prautes** is an interesting word. Aristotle defined it as the correct mean between being too angry and being never angry at all. It is the quality of the man whose anger is so controlled that he is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time. It describes the man who is never angry at any personal wrong he may receive, but who is capable of righteous anger when he sees others wronged.

We must be meek, but at the same time we cannot compromise the truth in order to appeal to the backslider. Let us also remember that it is not our job to punish the erring believer, but to help him up. We are to get him back on his feet and back in God's house.

**Matthew Henry** - Many needful reproofs lose their efficacy by being given in wrath; but when they are managed with tenderness, and from sincere concern for the welfare of those to whom they are given, they are likely to make a due impression.

**H A Ironside** - A hard, critical spirit will drive the failing one deeper into sin and make it more difficult to recover him at last. But a loving, tender word, accompanied by gracious effort to recover, will often result in saving him from further declension.

**Max Anders** writes that "believers with Christlike character traits produced by the Holy Spirit encourage faltering Christians. The legalist is judgmental, harsh, and condemning toward those who struggle with sin (Acts 15:10). They know the law, and they know the consequences of falling short of obedience to the law. But they do not know mercy. ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

**Don Anderson** on **restore** - But have you been around Christians like I have that just delight to take the assignment to go twerk somebody— straighten them out. It's amazing, you can almost write it down in your book that that person is probably living in the flesh and loves to have a brother who is also living in the flesh but would like to really criticize him. Some people actually enjoy the confronting role, and their rebuke comes off as a verbal equivalent of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. But anyone who savors muckraking through someone else's sin just to flex the muscles of his own spiritual pride is guilty of spiritual malpractice.

## THE WARNING REGARDING RESTORATION

**Each one looking to yourself** - "**Each one**" added by translators of **NAS**. This is a word of caution to *restorers* that they themselves don't become *offenders*! Spiritual believers can stumble! The idea is the one who is spiritual and is carrying out the restoring needs to be very attentive to his own heart (cf Pr 4:23) lest he also fall into temptation and sin! There is none of us who could not be tempted to sin! This warning recalls a similar one by Paul to the saints in Corinth "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall." (1 Cor 10:12).

**Matthew Henry** - We ought to deal very tenderly with those who are overtaken in sin, it may some time or other be our own case.

This will dispose us to do by others as we desire to be done by in such a case.

**Augustine** said "There is no sin which one person has committed that another person may not commit also."

**Radmacher** - Even as a doctor can catch a disease from treating a patient, so one restoring a fallen sinner can be tempted to fall into sin. That danger is well worth considering.

**Fenelon** says "To realize God's presence is the one sovereign remedy against temptation."

**John Calvin** - Considering thyself. It is not without reason that the apostle passes from the plural to the singular number. He gives weight to his admonition, when he addresses each person individually, and bids him look carefully into himself. "Whoever thou art that takest upon thee the office of reproofing others, look to thyself." Nothing is more difficult than to bring us to acknowledge or examine our own weakness.

**Schreiner on looking to yourself** - One does not focus on the sins of others, provoking and discouraging them because they have fallen. Instead, those who restore the fallen remain humble because they remember their own fallibility and propensity to sin. They realize that they too may be tempted and fail. Today they are reinstating one who has sinned, but tomorrow they may need to be reinstated. Recognition of one's own failures will keep believers from triumphalism or arrogance. ([Galatians](#))

**MacArthur** adds that when you go to restore "you come with understanding. You don't come lording it over them....Don't start thinking that you are invulnerable to their temptation/sin. Take a good look at your own vulnerability to temptation and then go in gentleness. You remember in Matthew 12:20...where it says a bruised reed He will not break and smoking flax He will not extinguish? When the reed that was played by the shepherd, that he made himself and punched the little holes in and played like a reed flute, when it got old it began to bend. And once it was bent the air would not go through and it would not make music and so they would snap it and throw it away. And when the flax was only smoldering on the little oil lamp, a piece of flax would be floating in it, and when it got down to the very bottom it would just smolder and make smoke but no light, so they would throw it away. The prophet said of the Messiah, when He comes He will not break the bruised reed and He will not extinguish the smoking flax. The point is that when a person is bruised and when their candle is low, Jesus doesn't throw them away. That's the point. And that's the way we have to approach this process."

**Looking** (keeping an eye on)([present tense](#) - call for continual attentiveness to our own heart!) [\(4648\)](#)([skopeo](#) from [skopos](#) = distant mark looked at, goal or end in view) means to "spy out", to look at, to observe, to contemplate, to look attentively. **Skopeo** implies mental consideration and so conveys the picture of attentively fixing one's attention upon something (in this case one's own person).

**Vincent** - Notice the passing to the singular number—"looking to yourself." The exhortation is addressed to the conscience of each. Before you deal severely with the erring brother, consider your own weakness and susceptibility to temptation, and restore him in view of that fact. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**So that you too will not be tempted**- Those who are filled with the Spirit and demonstrating Christ-like love that glorifies God as prime targets, from our mortal enemy within (fallen flesh) and without (Satan).

**Robertson** adds "Spiritual experts (preachers in particular) need this caution. Satan loves a shining mark." [Galatians 6 Commentary](#)

**Be tempted** [\(3985\)](#)([peirazo](#) from the noun [peira](#) = test from [peiro](#) = pierce through to test durability) is a morally neutral word simply meaning "to test". Whether the **test** is for a good (as it proved to be in Heb 11:17) or evil depends on the intent of the one giving the test and also on the response of the one tested. In this particular context clearly the temptation would be potentially detrimental and could cause one (yes, even a Spirit filled individual who is not cautious and circumspect) to commit sin. Luke used [peirazo](#) of Satan tempting Jesus to sin (Lk 4:2+). In this context the source of temptation is most likely our internal enemy, the sinful flesh (although of course the Adversary could also contribute to the temptation). The point is that the spiritually person must remain spiritually alert and on guard within and without!

#### Related Resources:

- [What does the Bible say about church discipline?](#)
- [What is excommunication in the Bible?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about the form of church government \(polity\)?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about shunning?](#)
- [When is it necessary to rebuke another believer?](#)
- [What is disfellowshipping?](#)

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**Ray Pritchard has an excellent, practical exposition on Galatians 6:1** - Who are the “fallen” people and how can we help them? This verse gives us four answers to that question.

**First**, they are trapped by sin. The word “caught” was sometimes used for a bird or an animal caught in a trap. It describes a believer who has been suddenly overcome by some temptation that came upon him unawares. A perfect example is Peter who, after boasting that he would never desert the Lord, denied him three times. It is the picture of a believer whose leg is caught in a trap of sin. The bone is broken and the person is trapped with no hope of escape. What will you do when you hear your brother, your sister, crying for help? Will you walk away? Or will you come and help them?

**Second**, they require the help of spiritual people. The phrase “you who are spiritual” in this context describes those who are walking in the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, producing the fruit of the Spirit, and keeping in step with the Spirit. Since this is not meant to describe a certain class of super-spiritual saints, it really applies to everyone who loves the Lord and wants to please him. One writer comments that truly spiritual Christians would never use that term to describe themselves. But the mark of their spirituality is that they are alarmed at what sin has done to a brother or sister in Christ, and instead of walking on by, they stop to help out.

I picture in my mind’s eye a vast army of the Lord’s servants, marching along together. They are laughing and singing as they go. As you march with this happy band, your friends are to your right and left. Together you sing “Shout to the Lord” and “Our God is an Awesome God.” Suddenly you notice the friend to your right is no longer there. Looking back, you see him in the distance, lying by the side of the road, his foot badly mangled by a trap labeled “Lust.” His face is contorted in pain, his left leg covered with blood. You can see that he cannot free himself. With pitiful cries, he begs you to come and help him. What will you do? The army marches onward. Will you go back and help your buddy? Or will you march on with the happy throng? If you are truly spiritual, you go back and help your friend for that’s what buddies do for one another.

Needed: Gentle Hands

**Third**, they must be restored gently. The word “restore” was used for setting a broken bone and for mending a fishing net. If you’ve ever had a broken bone, you know how painful that can be. And if the doctor is rough, he can make your pain much worse even as he tries to help you heal. That’s why the work of spiritual restoration must be done “gently” or as the King James Version says, “meekly.” It has the idea of doing something quickly, quietly, and with enormous kindness. When a friend is down and hurt by sin, you don’t announce it to the world. You don’t try to ruin his reputation. No, you go to his aid and do what you can to help him recover.

**Fourth**, they must be approached carefully. Here is a warning we all need to consider. Paul says that we should be careful in our helping lest we should fall into the same hole as our friend. Satan is tricky. He knows that if he can get one Christian trapped in sin, he may soon get another and then another. This is why doctors wash their hands so often. Not only must they avoid giving germs to their patients, they must also guard against receiving germs from their patients. In our attempts to help struggling Christians, we must be careful lest we start making excuses, offering rationalizations, avoiding confrontation, and letting sympathy replace truth.

Before we leave this noble ministry, I should note that Paul does not specify the sins involved and he does not specify the precise pattern we are to follow. This verse describes a willingness to get involved with others and the attitudes that best promote healing and restoration. The precise details and the time involved will vary from case to case and from person to person. Just as no one medicine cures all diseases, there is no magic formula that works in every case. We are called to care enough to get involved and to act in a compassionate, careful way. ([Restoring the Fallen](#))

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## **Adrian Rogers - What to Do with Your Burdens - Galatians 6:1-5**

- [Click here to listen to the 16 minute audio](#)

### **I. BURDENS WE WILLINGLY TAKE UP (Galatians 6:1)**

#### **A. The ministry of restoration**

##### **i. A broken person doesn't need**

1. A lecture
2. To be ignored
3. To be reported
4. To be shot down
5. To be cut off or cast away

#### **B. The manner of restoration (Galatians 6:1-2)**

- i. Do it gently
- ii. Do it humbly
- iii. Do it sympathetically

1. A person needing restoration experiences
    - a. A broken fellowship with God (Psalm 51:4)
    - b. A guilty conscience (Psalm 32:4)
    - c. Satanic accusation
    - d. Public shame
  - C. The motives of restoration
    - i. He's our brother (Galatians 6:1)
    - ii. We're members of the same family
    - iii. To fulfill the law of Christ which is love (Galatians 6:2)
    - iv. To mend the broken net; to repair our witness for Christ
  - II. BURDENS WE FAITHFULLY STAY UNDER (Galatians 6:4-5)
    - A. This type of burden is one that is necessary and useful
    - B. There are certain responsibilities that nobody can do for us
      - i. It is our responsibility to repent and trust Christ
      - ii. Prayer burdens
      - iii. To be a witness for Christ
  - III. BURDENS WE GLADLY LAY DOWN (Psalm 55:22)
    - A. Cast your burden upon the Lord; He will sustain you ([Source](#))
- 

**Warren Wiersbe** summarizes Galatians 6

- See others humbly (Gal 6:1-2). Your response to another's fall reveals your own walk, whether it is spiritual or not. Pride will make it impossible for you to help the fallen, but humility will bring blessing to you and to them.
  - See yourself honestly (Gal 6:3-5). Do you use somebody's fall to make yourself look better? Or do you know yourself, accept yourself, and seek to please God alone?
  - See your leaders appreciatively (Gal 6:6-10). When you give to others whose ministry blesses you, you are sowing seed that will bear fruit. When you use your resources for sinful purposes, you sow to the flesh and will reap a sad harvest.
  - See the Cross clearly (Gal 6:11-18). The false teachers wanted the world's praise, so they avoided the Cross; but the true believer will glory in the Cross, even if it means suffering the world's enmity. ([Commentary](#))
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### **Pride Goes before a Fall**

In the 1988 presidential campaign, commentators and voters made much about the character of the candidates, especially those who were rumored to be womanizers. One of the leading candidates had ridiculed another man who had fallen under public attack for his conduct toward women. This leading candidate dared the press to follow him and try to find any misconduct on his part. The press took him up on the dare. Some time later news media published photos of this man himself on a yacht in the Caribbean with an attractive lady who was not his wife. The name of the yacht, prophetically, was Monkey Business. The scandal grew so large that this candidate was forced to withdraw from the campaign which he might have won.

A similar incident happened during the eighties with moral scandals that rocked the Christian television industry. A leading television evangelist was caught in a moral lapse which made headline news all over the United States for a long time. I recall hearing an interview with another television minister who leveled a scathing rebuke of the evangelist who had sinned. I was taken aback at the intensity of this attack but somewhat comforted by the thought that I wouldn't ever need to worry about this evangelist falling into immorality. However, it wasn't long before the story of this second evangelist's moral lapse was on newspapers and weekly newsmagazines across the nation.

Both the television evangelist and the leading presidential candidate were arrogant in their condemnation of others, and their own indiscretions were revealed a short time later.

Paul warned of that attitude in this final chapter of Galatians. (Holman New Testament Commentary)

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### **A Gracious Spirit by John Calvin**

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

In bearing with imperfections of life we ought to be far more considerate. For here the descent is very slippery and Satan ambushes us with no ordinary devices. For there have always been those who, imbued with a false conviction of their own perfect sanctity, as if



they had already become a sort of airy spirits, spurned association with all men in whom they discern any remnant of human nature.

There are others who sin more out of ill-advised zeal for righteousness than out of that insane pride. When they do not see a quality of life corresponding to the doctrine of the gospel among those to whom it is announced, they immediately judge that no church exists in that place. This is a very legitimate complaint, and we give all too much occasion for it in this most miserable age. And our cursed sloth is not to be excused, for the Lord will not allow it to go unpunished, seeing that he has already begun to chastise it with heavy stripes. Woe to us, then, who act with such dissolute and criminal license that weak consciences are wounded because of us! But on their part those of whom we have spoken sin in that they do not know how to restrain their disfavor. For where the Lord requires kindness, they neglect it and give themselves over completely to immoderate severity. Indeed, because they think no church exists where there are not perfect purity and integrity of life, they depart out of hatred of wickedness from the lawful church, while they fancy themselves turning aside from the faction of the wicked.

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## Galatians 6:1 RESTORING A BROTHER

Genesis 14:10-16

What should be our attitude when a brother is taken captive by the things of this world?

Some have a distorted concept of separation. When they see a brother fall into sin, they shout it from the housetops and publish it in their magazines. This is not what Christ instructed.

Galatians 6 tells us what our attitude should be toward a fallen Christian brother. The Apostle Paul exhorted, "Brethren, if any person is overtaken in misconduct or sin of any sort, you who are spiritual [who are responsive to and controlled by the Spirit] should set him right and restore and reinstate him, without any sense of superiority and with all gentleness, keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also" (v. 1, Amplified).

When Abraham realized what had happened to Lot, he became very bold. "When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus" (Gen. 14:14,15).

God rewarded his courage because Abraham "brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people" (v. 16).

"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one" (Gal. 6:1).

## Galatians 6:2 **Bear** one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

- **Bear one another's burdens:** Ga 6:5 5:13,14 Ex 23:5 Nu 11:11,12 De 1:12 Isa 58:6 Mt 8:17 11:29,30 Lu 11:46 Ro 15:1 1Th 5:14 1Pe 2:24
- **thereby fulfill the law of Christ:** Jn 13:14, Jn 15:34 Jn 15:12 1Co 9:21 Jas 2:8 1Jn 2:8-11 4:21
- [Galatians 6:2 Burdens - Great Texts of the Bible](#)
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CHRISTIAN WALK IS A SHARED JOURNEY

Now that you have begun the restoration of a fallen brother you need to follow up by helping hold him up. In other words we are not to just help restore him from his sin and walk away. How many times we have experienced spiritual victories only to be blasted with a subsequent attack. The implication is that this brother would be vulnerable and in need of accountability and/or fellowship in the follow up period. So whatever "burden" (e.g., temptation to return to the previous sin) the brother has, we are to help him bear that burden. While the burden could be a number of things, in context, it might be the heavy, oppressive temptation that comes on the brother luring them into that same sin. And all of us have experienced these types of temptations that were like "heavy loads" which were so strong we felt like we could simply not fight them off. So the spiritual brother is to help the restored brother fight off these strong desires to commit sin. Practically this means that the spiritual brother needs to be available and I would go so far as to say even "24/7." I have had an accountability partner and he has made it clear that if I needed to call him at 1 AM in the morning, then I should call him. That's bearing one another's burdens!

**Bear one another's burdens** - Paul does not say "Tolerate each other," or "Put up with each other" but "Jointly shoulder each member's burdens." "Keep on bearing one another's burdens." **Bear** is in the [present imperative](#) calling for this to be the spiritual persons habitual practice. It is a practice which in turn necessitates continual dependence on the enabling power of the Spirit ([See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands](#)). As discussed below the Greek word for **burdens** is [baros](#) which speaks of an extremely heavy load to the point that it is even unbearable by one person (see [discussion below](#)).

**John MacArthur** calls this the second principle, the first being to lift them up in Gal 6:1 and here to hold them up....How can you do this? Sometimes it means a relationship. I know in my own case there are people that I've tried to help carry their burdens and we do that by meeting regularly or by having a regular phone conversation. (**ED: THIS BEGS THE QUESTION - DO YOU HAVE ANYONE IN YOUR LIFE YOU ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO? IF NOT YOU NEED TO BE VERY WARY BECAUSE TEMPTATIONS ARE ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE AGAINST "LONE RANGER" CHRISTIANS!**)

**Don Anderson** - What he's saying here is, you don't just go and confront somebody. You enter into their lives in some kind of an accountability or discipleship structure—whatever the need is for the moment—and you are a servant to them. You "keep on bearing [their] burdens" in helping them to go on to maturity. And you are observing "perfectly the law of Christ." ([Notes](#))

**One another** is the first word in the Greek for emphasis. Paul uses **one another** 7 times in 5 verses (Gal. 5:13; Gal. 5:15; Gal. 5:17; Gal. 5:26; Gal. 6:2) in this section on the ethical conduct of believers who are walking in the Spirit. Gal 6:2 would be an example of Gal 5:13 "through love serve one another" and is the antithesis of "bite and devour one another...consume one another." (Gal 5:15).

**Vincent on one another** - The emphasis is on one another's, in contrast with the selfishness which leaves others to take care of themselves. The primary reference in burdens is to moral infirmities and errors, and the sorrow and shame and remorse which they awaken in the offender. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Bear** (carry, endure, support, tolerate)([941](#))([bastazo](#) from **basis** = foot) generally means to take up and hold (Jn 10:31), to support as a burden. Used of Jesus bearing His Cross in John 19:17. Metaphorically **bastazo** means to bear, support, endure, i.e., labors, sufferings (Mt. 20:12, Rev. 2:3), bear patiently (Ro 15:1; Gal. 6:2; Rev. 2:2). Paul uses **bastazo** 4 times in Galatians all in this last section - Gal. 5:10; Gal 6:2, Gal 6:5, Gal 6:17

**Robertson - Baros** means weight as in Mt 20:12; 2 Cor 4:17. It is when one's load ([phortion](#), Galatians 6:5+) is about to press one down. Then give help in carrying it. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Utley** - As a way of life mature Christians are to carry their weaker, less mature brothers (cf. Ro 14:1; Ro 15:1). **'Burden'** was used of a crushing weight put on a domestic pack animal (cf. Mt. 23:4). In context it was used metaphorically for the oral traditions of the Judaizers. It is a different term than "burden" in verse 5, a soldier's backpack. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Donald Campbell on burdens** - the context has special reference to the heavy and oppressive weight of temptation and spiritual failure. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Ridderbos** on burdens - "The burdens apparently in the first place refers to whatever oppresses man spiritually, threatens to induce him to sin, or to keep him in sin. This is pictured as a burden because one goes bowed under its weight and fears that he will succumb to its pressure" ([The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia](#))

**Hendriksen** - Everybody should put his shoulder under the burdens under which this or that individual member is groaning, whatever these burdens may be. They must be carried jointly. Though the term "one another's burdens" is very general, and applies to every type of oppressing affliction that is capable of being shared by the brotherhood, it should be borne in mind, nevertheless, that the point of departure for this exhortation (see on 6:1) is the duty to extend help to the brother so that he may overcome his spiritual weaknesses.

**Burdens** ([922](#))([baros](#)) literally refers to a heavy weight. In the NT **baros** is used only figuratively meaning something pressing on one physically or emotionally. **Baros** was used in some Greek secular writings in a metaphorical sense to describe grief or misery. The related verb [bareo](#) is used in 2 Cor 1:8 Paul writing "we were burdened ([bareo](#)) excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life," the idea being they had become distressed with extreme sorrow, the idea being of having to bear a burden too heavy for them to bear (cf use of [bareo](#) in 2 Cor 5:4). And so the picture of **baros** is that of being pressed down by a crushing weight, much different than [phortion](#) in Gal 6:5.

**Paul** gave similar exhortations...

Now we who are strong ought ([opheilo](#) - obligated, indebted) to **bear** (same verb [bastazo](#)) the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. (Ro 15:1+)

**Comment** - The weaker brethren are not necessarily fleshly in this passage, but the idea is that the more



mature spiritual brethren should bear the weaknesses of those less mature. The strong help the weak.

We urge you, brethren, **admonish** the unruly, **encourage** the fainthearted, **help** the weak, **be patient** with everyone. (1 Th 5:14<sup>+</sup>)

**Comment** - All verbs above in **red** are [present imperative](#) calling for this to be the spiritual saint's habitual practice and calling for this saints continual dependence on [the Holy Spirit to obey these NT commands](#). The spiritual help the fleshly.

**Anders** - When a fellow believer succumbs to temptation, it is not our place to judge and condemn him (Matt. 7:1-6). Rather, we are to make sure he knows we love him and want to help him overcome his weakness and grow spiritually. ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

**Barclay** - Twice in this passage Paul speaks about bearing burdens. There is a kind of burden which falls on a man which comes from the chances and the changes of life; it comes to him from outside; some crisis, some emergency, some sorrow may descend upon him (Gal 6:2). It is fulfilling the law of Christ to help everyone who is up against it. But there is a burden which a man must bear himself (Gal 6:5). The word which Paul uses is the word for the soldier's pack. There is a duty which none can do for us and a task for which we are personally responsible. There are things which no one, however kind, can do for us, and which, however much we want to, we cannot push off on to someone else.

**De Haan** - The weights or loads we are to help one another bear must be viewed in the light of the preceding verse (Gal. 6:1), where we are admonished to restore a weak brother overtaken in a fault. Instead of condemning such, and discouraging them, we are to assist them and help in overcoming the fault. We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak (Rom. 15:1). It includes instructing young believers, encouraging stumbling saints. It would include comforting the bereaved and afflicted, visiting the sick and lonely, assisting those who are in financial straits, counseling and advising in perplexities, guidance in the Word, and prayer for new converts. There are thousands of burdened souls whom we can help by prayer, encouragement, material assistance, and helpful counsel. How can we lift the burden of the forgotten souls in chronic sickness, in old age, and in poverty! This we believe to be the force of "bear ye another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." This burden-bearing is not a legal obligation, but it goes far beyond the demands of the law. It is motivated by grace and love, and is the obedience to the new law of liberty. ([Studies in Galatians](#))

**Garlington** on how we are to bear one another's burdens - For one, sin always has its consequences, its "burdens." Frequently, the consequences have a domino effect, meaning that problems can be multiplied and compounded almost indefinitely because of one foundational mistake. To "bear the burdens" of the other, in this case, is to get involved in the difficulties occasioned by sin. Sometimes, of course, these problems are intricate in the extreme, particularly where sexual sin is involved and families are broken as a result. Yet fulfilling the law of Christ may require involvement to this degree. In this light, the logic of 6:2, as it connects with the love-motif of 5:13-6:5, is self-evident: there can be no higher expression of love than bearing one another's burdens—this is love going into action....In the second place, we are to bear with the person himself/herself. Sin is not eradicated overnight. There may well be a period of time—even a lengthy period—during which the power of sin is being subdued. Since the process is not instantaneous, the original "trespass" may at intervals reappear. Therefore, to bear the burden of sin means to forbear the person who has sinned. Not that we are condoning sin itself, but we are telling the sinner that he is not rejected, either by Christ or by us....To bear one another's burdens in such a manner is not only to manifest a Godlike (1 Pet 5:7) or Christlike quality (1 Pet 2:24), it is to "fulfill the law of Christ." ([An Exposition of Galatians](#))

## FULFILLING THE LAW OF CHRIST

**And thereby fulfill the law of Christ** - Notice the irony -- he had been criticizing those who advocated keeping the Law as a means of salvation and here mentions fulfilling the law of Christ by bearing one another's burdens. The former (legalists) rely on their flesh, but the latter can only fulfill **the law of Christ** by reliance on the Holy Spirit. The former is natural, the latter is supernatural. Instead of shouldering the burden of legalism, get under each other's burdens and fulfill the Law of love, which in fact sums up the whole Old Testament Law. (Ro 13:8, Mt 22:37-39, 40)

**Jamieson, Fausset & Brown** say that "Since ye desire "the law," then fulfil the law of Christ, which is not made up of various minute observances, but whose sole "burden" is "love". ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Lightfoot** adds that "If you must needs impose burdens on yourselves, let them be the burdens of mutual sympathy. If you must needs observe a law let it be the law of Christ."

**Matthew Henry** - Though as Christians we are freed from the law of Moses, yet we are under the law of Christ; and therefore,

instead of laying unnecessary burdens upon others, it must more becomes us to fulfil the law of Christ by bearing one another's burdens

The **law of Christ** is the call to love one another as Jesus commanded in John 13 "A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (Jn 13:34) In James 2:8 the apostle writes "If, however, you are fulfilling **the royal law** (THE LAW OF CHRIST) according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well." And then in the preceding context Gal 5:14 Paul declared that "the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." Love seeks to help others in their distress and share the load with them.

**Vine** adds that "The believer is to remember that he is in the world not for what he can get out of it but for what good he can do in it, for what help he can render while he is here. So was it with Christ, so must it be with the Christian."

So this is the **law of Christ**, the law of love and calls for the spiritual person to lift them up, to hold them up, to bear their burden. Of course, burden here is used figuratively, but when a person falls under the full weight (so to speak) it is essentially an unbearable burden. Beloved, most of us understand exactly what Paul is saying by describing this temptation/sin as a heavy burden, for we have all had times in our life where we were overwhelmed by a persistent, oppressive, "excessively heavy" temptation!

**Don Anderson** - What is the "law of Christ"? Love one another, wasn't it? John 13:34-35 So a serving Christian, lending a hand to someone who has a heavy load, they—in this context—would be fulfilling the "law of Christ." ...Do you remember Simon of Cyrene (Mt 27:32-33, Mk 15:21-22)? He just showed up for the crucifixion and ended up carrying the cross. The Roman government demanded that you carry it at least for a mile if a soldier or anybody else asked you to do something, you took it for a while and carried it....As I shared with you back in one of the earlier studies, I went on a little journey of reading Isobel Kuhn's books. And I was not prepared for the last one. It hadn't been published but they found it after she died in 1957 in some of her notes. The title of the book is called **Second Mile People**. Wouldn't you love, in heaven, to be noted for all eternity that you were a second mile people? That you went above and beyond the requirements that were asked of you and you stayed by the stuff, and you were faithful. And there's an army of people who thank God because you are that kind of a person. That's continually "bearing one another's burdens, and so observe perfectly the law of Christ."([Notes](#))

**John MacArthur** adds that "falling to the flesh is a result of an unbearable burden of temptation. The temptation load gets so heavy you just fall. You've got to help them carry it or else they may fall again and again and again. Have I any need to remind you that sin likes to have you alone? And the more alone you are the more tempted you are? And the more isolated you are the more tempted you are? And have you noticed that when you are among other believers and when you're in a strong Christian family or in a strong Christian relationship, how you feel the strength of that relationship? How you feel the strength of that accountability in your life? We need to bear one another's burdens. We don't do well alone at all. We get away from the church. We get away from our Christian family. I know many men in the business world fight this. Christian men having to travel all the time alone, in meetings and all by themselves for days on end, have great battles with temptation that do not even exist when they are in the fellowship of God's people. So we need to bear burdens. " ([Sermon](#))

**Uteley on law of Christ** - The Law of Christ is also mentioned in 1 Cor. 9:21 and "the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ" in Rom. 8:2. The Law of Christ is also characterized in different ways in James: (1) Gal 1:25, "the flawless law that makes men free"; (2) Gal 2:8, "the royal law" and (3) Gal 2:12, "the law of liberty." As the yoke of the oral traditions interpreting the Mosaic Law had become a pressing burden to the Jews, the yoke of Christ is easy and light (cf. Matt. 11:29–30). However, a yoke it is, and this yoke is our responsibility to love and serve one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Fulfill** (378)([anapleroo](#) from **aná** = up + **pleroo** = to fill) means to fill up, spoken of a measure. The preposition (ana) in compound gives the idea of a complete filling. **Anapleroo** is stronger than **pleróo** and means to make very full, to the very end, to perfection. Thus **pleróo** emphasizes the act while **anapleróo** emphasizes the measure, as **Vincent** says "the supplying of what is lacking to fulness; the filling up of a partial void" ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#)). To carry out an agreement or obligation.

**Vincent on anapleroo** in this passage - The verb denotes, not the filling up of a perfect vacancy, as the simple πληροϋν, but the supplying of what is lacking to fulness; the filling up of a partial void. Comp. 1 Cor. 16:17; Philip. 2:30; 1 Th. 2:16.\* ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

## ONE ANOTHERS

**One Others in the NT** - most are positive but some are negative. Believers are to minister to other believers in basically two ways - through the exercise of their spiritual gift (or gifts) (1 Pe 4:10-11<sup>+</sup>) and through the practice of the "one others." How are you doing in these areas beloved. If you are not exercising your spiritual gift in your local body, then the Body is less effective than it should be if you were plugged in. Too many saints are sitting and soaking, but seriously and sadly neglecting to exercise their gifts.

Take a moment and (under grace not law) ponder what that day will be like for you when you stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10<sup>±</sup>). Will you have regrets that you did not use the grace gift God gave you when He saved you?

Rom. 12:10; Rom. 12:16; Rom. 13:8; Rom. 14:13; Rom. 14:19; Rom. 15:5; Rom. 15:7; Rom. 15:14; Rom. 16:16; 1 Co. 6:7; 1 Co. 7:5; 1 Co. 11:33; 1 Co. 12:25; 1 Co. 16:20; 2 Co. 13:12; Gal. 5:13; Gal. 5:15; Gal. 5:17; Gal. 5:26; Eph. 4:2; Eph. 4:25; Eph. 4:32; Eph. 5:19; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:3; Col. 3:9; Col. 3:13; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 3:12; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Thess. 4:18; 1 Thess. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:13; 1 Thess. 5:15; 2 Thess. 1:3; Tit. 3:3; Heb. 3:13; Heb. 10:24; Heb. 10:25; Jas. 4:11; Jas. 5:9; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 Pet. 4:8; 1 Pet. 4:9; 1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:5; 1 Pet. 5:14; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Jn. 3:11; 1 Jn. 3:23; 1 Jn. 4:7; 1 Jn. 4:11; 1 Jn. 4:12; 2 Jn. 1:5

**Warren Wiersbe on one another** - The story has often been told about the message the founder of the Salvation Army sent to their international convention. General William Booth was unable to attend personally because of ill health, so he cabled the delegates a message containing one word: "**OTHERS!**" In the popular comic strip "Peanuts," Lucy asks Charlie Brown, "Why are we here on earth?" He replies, "To make others happy." She ponders this for a moment and then asks, "Then why are the others here?" "One another" is one of the key phrases in the Christian's vocabulary. "Love one another" is found at least a dozen times in the New Testament, along with "pray one for another" (James 5:16), "edify one another" (1 Thes. 5:11), prefer one another (Ro 12:10), "use hospitality one to another" (1 Peter 4:9), and many other like admonitions. ([Commentary](#))

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**Ray Pritchard on Galatians 6:2** - The second ministry is a bit broader in that it includes restoring the fallen but goes on to include ministering to those hurting for any reason. When we see a friend burdened with the problems, cares and pressures of life, we are to drop what we are doing and go to his aid.

First, there is the need to bear the burdens of others: "Carry each other's burdens" (Galatians 6:2a). The burden of this verse refers to an overwhelming load, an impossibly huge boulder weighing you down as you stagger along the highway of life. The boulder may represent any number of things: sickness, sudden calamity, personal loss, financial difficulty, broken dreams, a failed marriage, family problems, career setbacks, or the death of a loved one. I find it significant that Paul does not focus on what the burden is or where it comes from. That doesn't seem to matter. What matters is that when you see your brother or sister staggering under a heavy load, you drop what you are doing and go help them bear that load. Instead of judging them, you help them by doing whatever you can for as long as you can. Will this not slow you down? Assuredly it will, and if getting to the finish line first is your goal in life, then you won't bother to bear very many burdens. But if helping the hurting is part of your vision of Christian discipleship, then for you bearing burdens isn't a distraction, it's at the heart and core of what it means to follow Jesus.

What Would Jesus Do?

And that brings us to a crucial principle. In every situation, do what Jesus would do: "And in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2b). Theologians debate this verse because Paul has said over and over again that we are not under the law, meaning keeping the Law of Moses as a way of gaining God's favor. What is the "law of Christ?" It probably refers to Jesus' call to love God supremely and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40). As you march through life, and as you see others falling around you, and as you come upon those suffering from various troubles, ask yourself the question that has become so famous in recent years: What would Jesus do? In almost every instance, the answer will not be, "Just keep on marching." Almost every time, the answer will be, "Jesus would make a difference in this situation." He would be there, he would care, he would minister the love and grace and mercy of God.

It may help to imagine yourself as the person under such a heavy load. What would you wish that a friend would do for you? Go and do likewise. And when you "do unto others," you will be doing the work of Jesus Christ. Soon after the terrorist attacks on September 11, Gordon and Gail MacDonald volunteered to work at Ground Zero where the World Trade Center once stood. They are part of a large team of Salvation Army workers who are ministering to the men who trudge into "the pit" to remove debris and carefully search for human remains. This week I've been reading Gordon MacDonald's daily dispatches. In his first one he talks about the clean uniforms of the men as they go into "the pit." When they come out a few hours later, the workers are covered with a thick layer of dirt and grime. The smell of death is on them so strong that it takes rubbing alcohol to remove it. The work is physically dangerous and takes an enormous emotional toll. The Salvation Army workers offer water, encouragement, and a prayer when appropriate. The first dispatch ends with Gordon MacDonald talking about the heroism of the men and women who go into the "the pit" each day. Then he muses to himself, "This is where Jesus would most want to be."

I think he is right. If you are looking for Jesus, don't start by going to church on Sunday morning. I know the Lord is with us as we worship, for he is always with his people when they come together. But if you are looking for Jesus, look for those who give themselves to help hurting people. He is always present when Christian people carry the light of hope into the darkest corners of this very dark world. ([Restoring the Fallen](#))

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Let me illustrate the utter ridiculousness of some of our attitudes and actions toward other believers with a somewhat silly idea. Can you imagine the ear making the following comment to the eye? "Say, did you hear about the serious trouble the foot is having? My, my, isn't it too bad? That foot surely ought to get his act together." No, no, our bodies don't behave that way at all! Instead the entire body cries out, "My foot hurts! I feel awful!" Why does the whole body hurt when only one part is injured? It is because all the parts of the body make up one indivisible whole. And when one part hurts, no matter what the reason, the restorative powers of the entire body are brought to bear on that hurting member. Rather than attacking that suffering part or ignoring the problem, the rest of the body demonstrates concern for the part that hurts. This is the way the Body of Christ should function. ([Recovering the Meaning of True Fellowship](#) by Jerry Bridges)

John Wesley used to spend a large amount of money in helping those less fortunate than himself. On one occasion a poor minister received a very loving letter from him containing the words, "Trust in the Lord, and do good, . . . and verily thou shalt be fed." The good founder of Methodism said, "I felt impressed to write and call your attention to his great promise," etc. He enclosed a five-pound note, but said nothing of this in his letter. The answer from this minister has happily been preserved. "My dear Mr. Wesley, how can I sufficiently thank you for your letter and gift. I have often read that verse and many expositions of it, but this is the best expository note I have ever seen."

**Charles Allen** has a satirical comment on bearing one another's burdens: I was hungry, and you formed a humanities club and discussed my hunger. I was imprisoned, and you crept off quietly to your chapel in the cellar and prayed for my release. I was naked, and in your mind you debated the morality of my appearance. I was sick, and you knelt and thanked God for your health. I was homeless, and you preached to me the spiritual shelter of the love of God. I was lonely, and you left me alone to pray for me. You seem so holy, so close to God, but I'm still very hungry and lonely and cold. ([You Are Never Alone](#))

#### **Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.**

NET Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

GNT Galatians 6:3 ε γ ρ δοκε τις ε να τι μηδ ν ν, φρεναπατ αυτ ν.

MLB Galatians 6:3 for if anyone thinks he is somebody important and yet is of no account, he is deceiving himself.

NLT Galatians 6:3 If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important.

KJV Galatians 6:3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

ESV Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

ASV Galatians 6:3 For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

CSB Galatians 6:3 For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

NIV Galatians 6:3 If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

NKJ Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

NRS Galatians 6:3 For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves.

YLT Galatians 6:3 for if any one doth think himself to be something -- being nothing -- himself he doth deceive;

NAB Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is deluding himself.

NJB Galatians 6:3 Someone who thinks himself important, when he is not, only deceives himself;

GWN Galatians 6:3 So if any one of you thinks you're important when you're really not, you're only fooling yourself.

BBE Galatians 6:3 For if a man has an idea that he is something when he is nothing, he is tricked by himself.

- **For if anyone thinks he is something:** Ga 2:6 Pr 25:14 Pr 26:12 Lu 18:11 Ro 12:3,16 1Co 3:18 1Co 8:2
- **when he is nothing:** 1Co 13:2 2Co 3:5 12:11
- **he deceives himself:** 1Co 3:18 2Ti 3:13 Jas 1:22,26 1Jn 1:8
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

Proverbs 25:14 Like clouds and wind without rain Is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely.

Proverbs 26:12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Luke 18:11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

Romans 12:3; For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

Romans 12:16 Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

1 Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise.

1 Corinthians 8:2 If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know;

## BEWARE OF SELF SEDUCTION IN OVERESTIMATING OUR WORTH

Paul is still speaking primarily to the spiritual one of Gal 6:1, the one who is helping the caught brother/sister with their heavy burden. So here Paul confronts the danger of the spiritual one thinking he is superior to the one in sin and he looks down on him. When a brother sins it is easy for us to fall prey to the temptation of pride. The flesh in all of us so quickly tempts us to have a self-righteous attitude toward the sinner, to be judgmental, to be censorious or even condescending thinking "they fell but I did not." Some may go so far as to secretly even be pleased that their brother fell into that sin! And this "holier than thou" attitude is just another form of pride! And if the fallen believer perceives such an attitude on our part, we are unlikely to be of much value in the restorative process. So given the seriousness of these potential problems, Paul cuts these fleshly attitudes to pieces in these next two verses.

Usually a man who thinks he is something becomes quite excessively proud of himself or his achievements. He is a man who is only interested in himself and has great difficulty in being constructively involved in the lives of others. There are blind spots in his life that continue to be there simply because he is unwilling to open up in a fellowship of believers and to be helped constructively along the path to fruitfulness by letting someone else minister to his needs.

**Thomas Schreiner** explains that "Those who are proud are warned about the self-delusion of thinking that they are something. The logical relationship between this verse and 6:2 is a bit elusive. What does carrying the burdens of others have to do with pride? We actually have another piece of evidence that 5:26 belongs to this section, for it also warns against conceit. Those who are conceited and proud are consumed with themselves rather than others." ([Galatians](#))

**Donald Campbell** writes that "Something must be laid aside if a believer is to be a burdenbearer and that is conceit, an attitude that breeds intolerance of error in others and causes one to think he is above failure." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Gerald Borchert** - The maxim, "If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important," seems to have been a popular adage about those who think they are superior if they bear the burdens of others. ([Romans, Galatians Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**James Montgomery Boice** interprets Gal 6:3 as Paul addressing an error which might have prevented a believer from fulfilling his role as restorer of a fallen brother explaining that he is conceited "thinking himself to be more important than he is. The implication seems to be that if the Christian neglects to bear another's burdens or refuses to bear them, it is because he thinks himself above it. But this is to be self-deceived, for, measured by God's standards, no one amounts to anything." ([Galatians/Ephesians - EBC - 1976](#))

**John MacArthur** has a similar comment noting that "One of the chief reasons many Christians do not bother to help fellow Christians is that they feel superior to sinners and wrongly consider themselves to be spiritually **something** when the truth is they are really **nothing**. Like the Pharisees, their concern is not for the true righteousness that God gives and that comes only through humility (see Mt. 5:3-8) but for their own self-righteousness, which has no part in God's kingdom or its work (Mt 5:20). Their desire is not to help a stumbling brother but to judge and condemn him. At best, they leave him to "stew in his own juice," thinking, if not saying, "He got himself into this mess; let him get himself out." ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))



**Thomas Schreiner** - Those who do not help others in their struggles, who live lives of splendid isolation, are guilty of pride. They think they are **something** when they are **nothing**. Or perhaps Paul thinks of those who are proud because they think they are "immune to temptation," and hence they need not worry about their own failings but can devote their lives to helping others. Arrogance cuts people off from the lives of others, but it is also deceitful, for those who are proud are impressed with themselves, when in actuality they are **nothing**. Those who help others in their spiritual struggles must be conscious of their own sins, and thereby they will not fall prey to the deception that they are part of the spiritual elite. ([Galatians](#))

One writer said "I've often thought that if I ever fall into a trespass I will pray that I don't land in the hands of those censorious, critical, self-righteous judges in the church. Let me fall into the hands of bar keepers, street walkers, or dope peddlers because such church people would tear me apart with their long, wagging, gossiping tongues, cutting me to shreds." That is a sad testimony.

**John Brown** writes "The man who thinks himself something is the man who has a high opinion of his own Christian attainments, who thinks himself a very enlightened, accomplished Christian. The apostle obviously refers to the man who is vain-glorious—who, instead of restoring a fallen brother, glories over him, and who does not consider himself that he also may be tempted—who does not lighten his neighbour's burden by assistance or sympathy, but lets him bear it alone the best way he can, nay, perhaps adds to it....Humility is a leading trait in the character of every genuine Christian. He knows and believes that he is guilty before the God of heaven exceedingly, and he feels that he is an ignorant, foolish, depraved creature—that of himself he is nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. Feeling thus his insignificance as a creature, and his demerit and depravity as a sinner, he is not—he cannot be—vain-glorious. Whatever he is that is good he knows God has made him to be. Whatever he has that is good he knows God has given him. The falls of others excite in him not self-glorification, but gratitude. "Who maketh me to differ?" "What have I that I have not received?" "By the grace of God I am what I am." The greater advance a man makes in true Christianity, the more humble he becomes. He gets better acquainted with himself, more emancipated from the dominion of self-love, and obtains higher and juster ideas of that holiness, which is the object of his ambition." ([An Exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians](#)- 1853)

**Barry Horner** - The man of the world commonly makes the claim that he is at least as good as the rest of mankind. However the believer should see things differently. He has a realistic view of human nature: "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall" (1 Cor. 10:12; cf. Gal 6:1b). He knows the depth of sin in the human heart and especially pride within the thought processes (Ro 7:18-20). He is sensitive to his accountability before a holy and a righteous God. Hence don't be foolish enough to think you are somebody when compared with another sinner, says Paul. You are attempting to boast in your ranking as a fair sow in a pig farm! ([Galatians 6:11-18](#) Commentary)

**Jon Courson** writes that "It has been wisely said that to determine how important you are, stick your finger into a bucket of water, pull it out, and see how long it takes to fill the hole. We all have a tendency to think we're irreplaceable—but we're not. Paul doesn't say we deceive ourselves *if* we are nothing. He says we deceive ourselves *because* we are nothing." ([Jon Courson's Application Commentary](#))

Conceit is an excessively favorable opinion of one's own ability, importance, wit, etc. It is one thinking himself to be more important than he is. And in the context of bearing one another's burdens the implication is that if he neglects or refuses to bear another's burdens, it is because he thinks himself above it. A good "*antidote*" for this type of deceptive thinking is to meditate on Paul's exhortation in Romans 12:3 "Through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith." (Romans 12:3+)

**Jamieson** agrees writing that "Self-conceit, the chief hindrance to forbearance and sympathy towards our fellow men, must be laid aside." ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**For if anyone thinks he is something when he is(present tense) nothing, he deceives himself** - Short sighted self comparison! "If" here introduces a first class conditional statement, one that is presumed to be true. We all know what Paul is talking about here, because it is so easy to begin to take credit and feel good about ourselves when God gives us the privilege of joining Him in some spiritual work He is doing! **Thinks** is in the [present tense](#) which pictures this as a continuing thought. We all have these thoughts from time to time, but this person seems to hold on to it longer. So what Paul says when you have this mindset you need to remember that you are **nothing**! It is a reminder that the only thing that made this person useful to God in the first place was that he was **spiritual** (Gal 6:1), he was Spirit-filled and empowered. Without the Spirit's power, he is **nothing**. And in Gal 6:4 he continues this same idea calling on this person to do self-examination.

I like **Phillips paraphrase** - - If a man thinks he is "somebody", he is deceiving himself, for that very thought proves that he is nobody.

The old **Amplified** has "For if any person thinks himself to be somebody [too important to condescend to shoulder another's load] when he is nobody [of superiority except in his own estimation], he deceives and deludes and cheats himself."

**Robertson** quips on **when he is nothing** - "Thinks he is a big number being nothing at all (neuter singular pronouns). He is really zero." ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Vincent** on the phrase **is something** - For the phrase see Acts 5:36 (claiming to be somebody); Acts 8:9 (claiming to be someone great) 1 Cor. 3:7 ( is anything); 1 Cor 10:19 (is anything); Gal. 2:6; Gal 6:15. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Jamieson** on **is something** - possessed of some spiritual preeminence, so as to be exempt from the frailty of other men. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**R C H Lenski** comments that "what makes us tender and helpful, meek and kindly toward others is the realization that we ourselves are nothing and that we, too, need our brethren. Satisfaction with self makes poor helpers for those in need of fraternal support." ([The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians](#))

**Thinks** (1380) (**dokeo**) "primarily, to be of opinion, think, imagine, suppose. To hold an opinion based upon appearances which may be significantly different from reality. It also signifies "to seem, be accounted, reputed." (Vine) **Dokeo** is a verb with the general meaning "to think" in a variety of contexts. The underlying sense is that of "making a rational assessment," or "giving consideration to." **Dokeo** reflects the subjective mental estimate or opinion about some matter, in this passage in Galatians 6 in regard to one's state of personal "religiosity". It means to regard something as presumably true, without particular certainty. When used with a reflexive pronoun it means to seem to oneself - to be of opinion, suppose (Acts 26:9).

**BDAG** - (1) to consider as probable, think, believe, suppose, consider, trans., of subjective opinion (2) to appear to one's understanding, seem, be recognized as.

**Friberg** - (1) transitively, of subjective opinion think, presume, suppose - to regard something as presumably true, but without particular certainty (Mt 6.7); often followed by an infinitive translated as a finite verb (1Co 3.18); choose, be disposed to (1Co 11.16); (2) intransitively seem, have the appearance, appear (Acts 17.18); of having a reputation for something be recognized as, count for, be regarded as (Gal 2.6); (3) impersonally - it seems to me, I think; used with the dative of person and an infinitive to express one's will or pleasure it seems best or good, decide (Lk 1.3) ([Analytical Greek New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - There are two basic functions of **dokeō** in **classical Greek**, and these largely continued to dominate throughout the early history of the term. First, **dokeō** is used with an object (transitive use); thus: "I think (that . . . )" or "I believe (something)." Second, **dokeō** is used without an object (intransitive use); thus: "It seems (to me)," "to be supposed." Sometimes in this usage **dokeō** was contrasted with reality—the supposed versus the real. Such an antithesis marked its role in the language of ethics (Kittel, "dokeō," Kittel, 2:232ff.). The imprecise character of **dokeō** as well as its subjective nature made it highly difficult to find direct Hebrew equivalents. In the Septuagint **dokeō** translates 8 Hebrew words in only 17 instances with Hebrew originals. Many Hebrew texts have no counterpart to the Greek (e.g., Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; 17:28; 26:12). Other texts have doubtful correspondence (e.g., Job 15:21; 20:7,22). The intransitive use predominates in the Septuagint (e.g., Genesis 38:15; Exodus 25:2; Esther 1:19; 3:9). **The New Testament usage accords with the classical pattern.** **Dokeō** is employed transitively: ". . . for they think (dokousin) that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matthew 6:7; with *hoti*; see also Matthew 26:53; Mark 6:49; 2 Corinthians 12:19; James 4:5); or, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham" (Matthew 3:9; cf. Luke 24:37; John 5:39; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 7:40). Intransitively **dokeō** can mean "to seem, to appear." Jesus asked Peter, "What thinkest thou, Simon?" (Matthew 17:25). Here Peter was asked to subjectively interpret his own thoughts and feelings (cf. Matthew 18:12; 21:28; 22:17,42; see Luke 10:36). A second intransitive usage meaning "be influential, be recognized as being something" (see Bauer) also occurs (cf. Mark 10:42: "those who are regarded as rulers" [NIV]; see also Galatians 2:2,6). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Dokeo** - 62v - deem(1), expect(1), has a mind(1), inclined(1), recognized(1), regarded(1), reputation(3), reputed(1), seem(3), seemed best(1), seemed fitting(1), seemed good(4), seems(3), suppose(5), supposed(2), supposes(1), supposing(4), think(18), thinking(1), thinks(6), thought(4). Matt. 3:9; Matt. 6:7; Matt. 17:25; Matt. 18:12; Matt. 21:28; Matt. 22:17; Matt. 22:42; Matt. 24:44; Matt. 26:53; Matt. 26:66; Mk. 6:49; Mk. 10:42; Lk. 1:3; Lk. 8:18; Lk. 10:36; Lk. 12:40; Lk. 12:51; Lk. 13:2; Lk. 13:4; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 22:24; Lk. 24:37; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 5:45; Jn. 11:13; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 11:56; Jn. 13:29; Jn. 16:2; Jn. 20:15; Acts 12:9; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:25; Acts 15:28; Acts 15:34; Acts 17:18; Acts 25:27; Acts 26:9; Acts 27:13; 1 Co. 3:18; 1 Co. 4:9; 1 Co. 7:40; 1 Co. 8:2; 1 Co. 10:12; 1 Co. 11:16; 1 Co. 12:22; 1 Co. 12:23; 1 Co. 14:37; 2 Co. 10:9; 2 Co. 11:16; 2 Co. 12:19; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 2:6; Gal. 2:9; Gal. 6:3; Phil. 3:4; Heb. 4:1; Heb. 10:29; Heb. 12:10; Heb. 12:11; Jas. 1:26; Jas. 4:5

**Dokeo** in the **Septuagint** - Gen. 19:14; Gen. 38:15; Exod. 25:2; Exod. 35:21; Exod. 35:22; Exod. 35:26; Jos. 9:25; Est. 1:19; Est. 3:9; Est. 5:4; Est. 8:5; Est. 8:8; Job 1:21; Job 15:21; Job 20:7; Job 20:22; Prov. 2:10; Prov. 14:12; Prov. 16:25; Prov. 17:28; Prov. 26:12; Prov. 27:14; Prov. 28:24; Jer. 27:5; Dan. 4:1; Dan. 4:17; Dan. 4:25; Dan. 4:32; Dan. 5:21

**Lovett** - the proud Christian is pharisaical and censorious, assuming his own life to be the standard for judgment. The Lord washed

the disciples' feet to show how far we should go in humbling ourselves before each other. ([Lovett's lights on Galatians](#))

**Don Anderson** - You see, you've got to be humble. You've got to be broken. You've got to be willing to get down there and wash feet. And the Upper Room was full of proud hearts and dirty feet. There wasn't anyone that wanted to wash feet so the Lord upon Himself took the messy task. And all Paul is saying is that when you're living in the flesh (that takes us back to Gal 5:26): "let us stop becoming vain-glorious, provoking one another, envying one another." And so this is the reason that he gives the command. He is not deceiving others, "he is deceiving himself" because of the blind spots in his life. Think of "Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say." (3 Jn 9) So basically he is addressing pride, unbroken will, selfishness, performance rather than relationship—because a lot of these folks are caught up in that. ([Notes](#))

**Barry Horner** - When we bear another's burden, are we not at the same time tempted to be patronizing, condescending in our attitude? We look at the sin of our brother and wonder how he could fall since we did not. We deign to lift him back to our impeccable level. We applaud ourselves, believing we have come much further in the Christian life than our brother. We are like Hopeful in The Pilgrim's Progress who considered that he would have put up a better fight against assailed Little-faith's three muggers, Faint-heart, Mistrust, and Guilt.<sup>16</sup> Whereas here Paul declares that with this attitude we "deceive ourselves," we are deluded in terms of our real "spirituality" that does not accord with the definition of v. 1. In Christian work, one of the most common pitfalls is that of pride in relation to other believers' activities. ([Galatians 6:11-18](#) Commentary)

**Lovett** - The one who thinks himself too spiritual to assist a brother in trouble or in need, is deceived. Blinded by conceit, he may claim to be Spirit-filled, but he isn't, for the Spirit moves godly men to help each other. God's estimate of spirituality has more to do with the way one pays his bills, speaks to his wife, raises his children and serves his employer than with a stand on doctrinal issues or emotional experiences. ([Lovett's lights on Galatians](#))

**He deceives himself** - He is not deceiving other members in the Body of Christ, nor the Lord of the Body, but only **himself**! In other words he is seduce into the trap of self-deception. And as I always tell my kids, when a person is deceived, by definition they do not even know they are deceived. Self-deception is indeed the worst kind of spiritual blindness! And the [present tense](#) pictures this as a continuing state of spiritual blindness!

**Deceives** (Only NT use)([5422](#))([phrenapatao](#) from [phren](#) = mind + [apatao](#) = to lead astray; cf [phrenapates](#)) means to deceive in one's mind, to deceive, to cause to have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth. This verb is coupled with heauton (himself) which means he is self-deceived. [Vincent](#) says [phrenapatao](#) is a word "Denoting subjective deception; deception of the judgment." Paul's point with this verb is to caution believers against the dangers of pride and self-exaltation and exhort them instead to sober self-examination.

**Don Anderson** - Paul is addressing the whole issue of PRIDE when it comes to ministering and helping others. It is the manifestation here of an UNBROKEN WILL. It is the manifestation of SELFISHNESS. It is a picture of PERFORMANCE VS. RELATIONSHIP. It is a picture of LAW VS. GRACE. ([Notes](#))

**Ray Pritchard on Galatians 6:3-4** - Too Good to Get Involved? Paul next mentions a danger we should all consider. When you see your brother or your sister suffering, don't be too proud to get involved. "If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else" (Galatians 6:3-4). It's very easy to look down your nose and say, "They deserve it." "She's so weak." "He just can't handle the pressure." "I saw it coming." "Maybe they'll listen to me next time." "I don't want to get involved." "I'm just glad it's them and not me." "I know I would never do something like that." How quick we are to condemn, to look the other way, to pass by on the other side. Paul puts his finger on the problem: personal pride. If you think you are something special, then you'll find it easy to condemn. But if you think that you're a nobody apart from the grace of God, then you'll be quick to forgive and ready to help the hurting. Perhaps we can rephrase that a bit. The reason you find it easy to condemn is because you've got an inflated opinion of your own importance. If you were more conscious of your own sin, you'd be more forgiving of the weakness and failure of others. Aesop said that every man carries two bags over his shoulder. With one bag hanging in back he carries his sins; with the bag hanging in front, he carries his neighbor's sins. If we were more aware of our own sins, the sins of our neighbor would bother us less than they do. So before you condemn or criticize, take a good look in the mirror. You're not as hot as you think you are, and your hurting friend isn't as bad as you think he is. ([Restoring the Fallen](#))

**Galatians 6:4** But each one **must examine** his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.



another's load] when he is nobody [of superiority except in his own estimation], he deceives and deludes and cheats himself.

Phillips Galatians 6:4 Let every man learn to assess properly the value of his own work and he can then be glad when he has done something worth doing without dependence on the approval of others.

TLB Galatians 6:4 Let everyone be sure that he is doing his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work well done and won't need to compare himself with someone else.

NET Galatians 6:4 Let each one examine his own work. Then he can take pride in himself and not compare himself with someone else.

GNT Galatians 6:4 τ ὁ ργον αὐτο δοκιμαζτω καστος, κα τ τε ε ς αὐ τ μ νο ν τ κα χημα ξει κα ο κ ε ς τ ν τερον·

NLT Galatians 6:4 Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else.

KJV Galatians 6:4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

ESV Galatians 6:4 But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.

ASV Galatians 6:4 But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor.

CSB Galatians 6:4 But each person should examine his own work, and then he will have a reason for boasting in himself alone, and not in respect to someone else.

NIV Galatians 6:4 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else,

NKJ Galatians 6:4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

NRS Galatians 6:4 All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride.

YLT Galatians 6:4 and his own work let each one prove, and then in regard to himself alone the glorying he shall have, and not in regard to the other,

NAB Galatians 6:4 Each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason to boast with regard to himself alone, and not with regard to someone else;

NJB Galatians 6:4 but everyone is to examine his own achievements, and then he will confine his boasting to his own achievements, not comparing them with anybody else's.

GWN Galatians 6:4 Each of you must examine your own actions. Then you can be proud of your own accomplishments without comparing yourself to others.

BBE Galatians 6:4 But let every man make test of his work, and then will his cause for glory be in himself only, and not in his neighbour.

- **But each one must examine his own work:** Job 13:15 Ps 26:2 1Co 11:28 2Co 13:5
- **and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone** Pr 14:14 1Co 4:3,4 2Co 1:12 1Jn 3:19-22
- **and not in regard to another:** Ga 6:13 Lu 18:11 1Co 1:12,13 3:21-23 4:6,7 2Co 11:12,13
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Psalm 26:2 **Examine** me, O LORD, and **try** me; **Test** my mind and my heart. (3 commands = "please Lord!")

### THE REMEDY OF SELF-CONCEIT

**But** - Term of contrast. Instead of being continually ([present tense](#)) deceived (Gal 6:3) in one's self-conceit, each one is to be

actively continually carrying out a self-examination to be sure his own attitudes and life are right in the eyes of the Lord before he attempts to give spiritual help to others. A thorough self-examination will discern whether or not we have allowed pride to creep into our interaction with our fallen brother.

A good parallel passage is Philippians

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself (Php 2:3+).

**Donald Campbell** adds that "Something must be laid aside if a believer is to be a burden-bearer and that is conceit, an attitude that breeds intolerance of error in others and causes one to think he is above failure." ([BKC](#))

**MacArthur** - Believers first must be sure their lives are right with God before giving spiritual help to others.

**John Brown** writes "As a cure for vain glory, the apostle prescribes an impartial and thorough examination of the individual's own conduct." ([An Exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians](#)- 1853)

**Each one must examine his own work** - Test his own actions. Paul is still dealing with man in verse 3 who thinks himself to be something. The idea is, if you think you are something—prove it! **Must examine** is a [present imperative](#) calling for this to be the saint's habitual practice, continually choosing ([active voice](#)) to carry out this assaying of one's work. **Dokimazo** (see below) was a blacksmith's term for testing so as to approve a piece of metal for its strength. In like manner, Paul calls upon each one to examine and test himself to be sure that he is what we say we are.

This recalls David's words in Psalm 139 (notice that the Lord had already examined him in Ps 139:1-2 but he wants more examination)(the verbs in **red** are each commands)...

**Search** (Lxx has [dokimazo](#) in the [aorist imperative](#)) me, O God, and **know** my heart; **Try** me and know my thoughts. And **see** if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way. (Psalm 139:23-24)

And again in Psalm 26 David prays a prayer we might all consider praying (the verbs in **red** are each commands)...

**Examine** (Lxx has [dokimazo](#) in the [aorist imperative](#)) me, O LORD, and **try** me; **Test** my mind and my heart. For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth. (Ps 26:2-3)

**MacArthur** - Believers first must be sure their lives are right with God before giving spiritual help to others (cf. Mt 7:3-5). [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Horner** comments that "While the believer is to "examine" himself, as if assaying metals or validating money, no objective standard of judgment is directly stated. However, in addressing Christians, surely "the law of Christ," Gal 6:2, is assumed (John 13:34; 1 Cor. 9:21; 1 John 2:3-6; 3:23-24). Hence, measure yourself against the standard of Jesus Christ's matchless character, especially as demonstrated in His earthly ministry. If you claim to be a better tennis player than this writer, you do not prove very much; but suppose you compare yourself with the number one ranking tennis professional, then you may or may not have much to boast about. Likewise if I compare myself with God's standards, only then will I have anything to boast in, or, more likely, be overcome with shame. In the light of Gal 6:14, comparison with Christ will shut our mouths, except to boast in grace alone. ([Galatians 6:11-18](#) Commentary)

**Don Anderson** has an interesting comment - Just as the Lord is going to put our works as believers to the test when we appear before Him at the Judgment Seat of Christ, so in anticipation of that time we ought to be testing our own works to see whether they are wood, hay and stubble; or gold, silver, and precious stones. What the Apostle Paul is asking of us here is that we prepare ourselves for the final examination by a lot of little pop quizzes along the way....What Paul is asking us to do here is to CRITICIZE OURSELVES—put ourselves to the test rather than to spend our time criticizing others.

**Must examine (test)**(1381)([dokimazo](#) from **dokimos** = tested, proved or approved, tried as metals by fire and thus purified from **dechomai** = to accept, receive) means to assay, to test, to prove, to put to the test, to make a trial of, to verify, to discern to approve. **Dokimazo** involves not only testing but determining the genuineness or value of an event or object. That which has been tested is demonstrated to be genuine and trustworthy.

**Don Anderson** - You don't have to brag about that stuff. It's just you know in your heart that your heart is right and that you're doing what needed to be done in walking with the Lord Jesus Christ. "But HE WHO BOASTS IS TO BOAST IN THE LORD. 18For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends." (2 Cor 10:17-18) So we're taught in scriptures to criticize ourselves. Not that we're putting ourselves down but evaluation. ([Notes](#))

**Vincent** - He means that if, on examination, one finds in himself anything to boast of, his cause of boasting will lie simply and

absolutely in that, and not in his merit as compared, to his own advantage, with that of another. ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**NLT** says "Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else."

**Matthew Henry** - By our own work is chiefly meant our own actions or behaviour. These the apostle directs us to prove, that is, seriously to examine them by the rule of God's word. Instead of being forward to judge and censure others, it would much more become us to search and try our own ways; our business lies more at home than abroad, with ourselves than with other men. The best way to keep us from being proud of ourselves is to prove our own selves: the better we are acquainted with our own hearts and ways, the less liable shall we be to despise and the more disposed to compassionate and help others.

**Vine** - The present passage is another form of the same exhortation to that rigorous self-judgment which is repeatedly urged upon believers in view of the natural tendency to sit in judgment upon others. But whereas self-judgment is profitable to godliness, judgment of others is a usurpation of the functions of the Lord Jesus

**And then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone**- That is that when he correctly assesses his value and his own work, it will be obvious that it has been God's Spirit Who has accomplished this through him as a vessel of honor. This makes me think of Paul's words in Second Corinthians...

Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider **ANYTHING** as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from **God, Who also made us adequate** as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but **the Spirit gives life**. (2 Cor 3:5-6<sup>+</sup>)

Indeed, outside of our covenant relationship with the Vine Christ Jesus (cf Jn 15:5) and His empowering Spirit, none of us can boast of anything that God does through us in the spiritual realm! This is a good reminder for all of us, especially when we experience some "successes" in various spiritual activities. We need to remember that it is "from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Ro 11:36<sup>+</sup>) And as Peter reminds us "Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that (HERE IS THE HIGH AND HOLY PURPOSE) in all (HOW MANY?) things **God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**" (1 Pe 4:11<sup>+</sup>)

**Schreiner** has a slightly different take on this passage and places a great deal of importance on the fact that Paul uses the future tense (he will have reason for boasting) - We should note here that the construction is future, "**he will have boasting**" (τ καύχημα ἔξει), and it **probably** (SO THIS IS HIS SUPPOSITION) refers to the final judgment, to the day when the Lord assesses each person's work. Therefore, the **boasting** that is commended here does not relate to this life but to the life of the age to come, and in that day all vain and conceited boasting will disappear. Furthermore, we see in the context that the boasting envisioned is a result of the Spirit's work in believers (Gal 5:16, 18, 22-23, 25; 6:8). It is the result of the new creation (Gal 6:15). Hence, the boasting is not autonomous here." ([Galatians](#))

**MacArthur** on **boasting** - If a believer rejoices or boasts, it should be only boasting in the Lord for what God has done in him (cf. 2Co 10:12-18), not for what he supposedly has accomplished compared to other believers (see 1Co 1:30, 31). ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Boasting** (2745) ([kauchema](#) akin to **aucheo** = boast + **euchomai** = pray to God <> **auchen** = neck which vain persons are apt to carry in proud manner) strictly speaking describes either a boast (the act) or the ground or the matter of glorying or boasting (the object). The boast can be either proper or improper (sinful, as in 1Co 5:6), and whether it is a good or bad sense is determined by the [context](#).

The old **Amplified** has "But let every person carefully scrutinize and examine and test his own conduct and his own work. He can then have the personal satisfaction and joy of doing something commendable in itself alone] without [resorting to] boastful comparison with his neighbor."

**And not in regard to another** - The idea of comparison is implied. NIV has "Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else." NLT "and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else."

**Galatians 6:5 For each one will bear his own load.**

- Isa 3:10,11 Jer 17:10 32:19 Eze 18:4 Mt 16:27 Ro 2:6-9 Ro 14:10-12 1Co 3:8 4:5 2Co 5:10,11 Rev 2:23 20:12-15 22:12
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## EACH OF US HAVE A LOAD

**Glen Spencer** - Rest assured that there is no contradiction here. Verse 2 has to do with helping someone else with their burden while verse 5 has to do with bearing our own responsibility when we stand before Christ at the Judgment Seat (2 Cor 5:10, Ro 14:10-12).

This is simply bearing our part of the work, doing faithfully our part of the service. It is the use of our spiritual gift to the edification and the building up of other believers (cf 2 Ti 1:6). Each of us has a responsibility to which we are accountable and we cannot put it on someone else.

**Horner** adds that "When a Christian has this perspective in mind, he qualifies as a good "burden bearer," and is much better able to help the likes of Job. He is continuously humbled by a dominant vision of the righteousness of God, his own accountability proving him to be unworthy, and consequently the only ultimate hope of grace and mercy!" ([Galatians 6:11-18 Commentary](#))

**Don Anderson** - There are certain things that each of us, just by the fact that we have life, that we can't share with others—that we personally are responsible for. And so saying, there are things that each of us—in the body of Christ—must bear by ourselves. You say, ok Don, define it. What do you mean by packs? Well I'd say: 1. SUFFERING—God has unique tools of suffering just for you. Philippians 1:29 There are things that you'll suffer because of the way you're made and because of the way Christ wants you to become and for the fruit of the Spirit to be shown. I can't bear your suffering and you can't bear mine because there's a unique curriculum for my life as there is for yours. And we must accept that. 2. DEATH—We all are terminal. We're going to die. Body function will fail. And what you do with that burden is between you and the Lord. 3. JUDGMENT—the Judgment Seat of Christ. Everyone shall give account of himself before the Judgment Seat of Christ—whether it's good or bad. That's your computer printout that's laying on His desk. And mine is also there and there are things that only I can bear. 4. SIN—the consequences of sin can only be entered into with a brother and sister if restoration is involved. But as far as sin is concerned, the consequences of that sin is your burden and my burden for the sins I've committed. Psalm 51:4 Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned and done this great wickedness in your sight, ... The family couldn't help him. Anybody else couldn't help him. This was something he did and so he prays: Psalm 51:10, 12 You see, all of that is PERSONAL. And that's his own **pack**. Those are the things that he must personally take responsibility for.

**Max Anders** comments "It is improper for us to compare ourselves to a sinning Christian and to feel superior to him. Rather, we are to look at the normal, day-to-day responsibilities each of us carries around and feel a permissible good pride when we are fulfilling them responsibly." ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

**For each one will bear** (see [bastazo](#) above) **his own load** - He repeats **each one** from Gal 6:4 (**each one** must examine). Now **each one** will bear. As discussed below the word for **load** ([phortion](#)) is not the same as the word for **burdens** ([baros](#)) in Gal 6:2. A load referred to anything carried, but not to anything excessively heavy or difficult. It was used in Greek for a soldier's pack (I like that in light of 2 Ti 2:3-4+). So in this context **load** is used figuratively to speak of the general matters of life which we all have to bear.

**Donald Campbell** says that the Greek word here for **load** "is used to designate the pack usually carried by a marching soldier. It is the "burden" Jesus assigns to His followers (cf. Matt. 11:30). There are certain Christian responsibilities or burdens each believer must bear which cannot be shared with others. Jesus assured His disciples that such burdens were light." ([BKC](#))

**Ryken** says "God has given you a unique set of gifts for your situation in life. You will not have to answer for what you might have done with someone else's gifts. But you, and you alone, will have to answer for the way you carry the responsibilities that God has given you. Martin Luther wrote, "A faithful sexton is no less pleasing to God with his gift than is a preacher of the Word, for he serves God in the same faith and spirit." This is true because God will not judge sextons on the basis of their ability to preach (or preachers on the basis of their ability to repair the church). God will judge us all on the basis of our calling, gifts, and obedience. So do your own work. Do it without comparing yourself to anyone else. And do it well, for one day you will have to answer to God, both for what you have done and for what you have left undone." ([Galatians Reformed Expository Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** - For a Christian, load can refer to "his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad," for which he will give account "before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:12-15). His load can also refer to fulfilling his personal calling and ministry for the Lord. Jesus assures His followers that the "load" [phortion] of service He gives them "is light" (Matt. 11:30). In either case, every believer is accountable to bear his own load, even the light one Christ gives him, and to answer for his faithfulness in so doing when he faces Him. ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Schreiner** agrees writing that "Paul emphasizes in this paragraph, then, that believers are to support and help one another with the burdens and cares of life. At the same time they must recognize that they will stand alone before God on the day of judgment, that

they will not be judged with relation to what others have done but what they themselves have accomplished." ([Galatians](#))

**Lenski** agrees writing that "'Will carry" matches "will have" in Gal 6:4, both refer to the final judgment. "Their works do follow them," Rev. 14:13. ([The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians](#))

**Martin Luther** - Before the judgment throne of Christ everybody will have to bear his own burden. As it is, the praise of men stops when we die. Before the eternal Judge it is not praise that counts but your own conscience. True, the consciousness of work well done cannot quiet the conscience. But it is well to have the testimony of a good conscience in the last judgment that we have performed our duty faithfully in accordance with God's will.

**Hendriksen** adds that "Responsibility cannot be transferred. Each man will be judged in accordance with his own deeds (Jer 17:10; Jer 32:19; Ezek 18:20; Mt 16:27; Ro 2:6; Rev 2:23; Rev 20:13). Works do not save anyone. That truth has been emphasized over and over again in this epistle. Nevertheless, the "reward" will be measured out in harmony with each man's works. These works will show the degree in which each man has been true to his trust, the extent to which grace has been operative in his life. Burdens should be carried jointly, but the load of responsibility differs for each individual, and in the Judgment Day the manner in which brother A has assumed his responsibility will not make things easier or harder for brother B. The latter, too, will have to carry his own load." ([Exposition of Galatians](#))

In Romans Paul gives a sobering reminder which should stimulate us bear our own load...

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 11 For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." 12 So then **each one** of us will give an account of himself to God. (Ro 14:10-12<sup>+</sup>)

Paul speaks of what we have done whether good or bad (not sin, but things that are useless)...

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that **each one** (hekastos) may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor 5:10<sup>+</sup>)

**Each one** (1538) (**hekastos** from **hekas** = separate) means each, every one, of any number separately. There are 2 main uses - (1) **Hekastos** is used as an adjective qualifying a noun = each, every (Lk 6:44, Mt 16:27 = repay **every** man, Mt 26:22 = **each** one; Jn 19:23 - **every** soldier; Lk 4:40 = **each** one; Lk 16:5, Acts 2:3 = rested on **each** one; Acts 20:31; 1 Cor 12:18; Eph 4:7, 16, Col. 4:6; 1 Th. 2:11; 2 Th. 1:3); (2) **Hekastos** is used substantively which means it functions as a noun (or as a distributive pronoun) = each one, every one (Mt 18:35, Mt 25:15, Mk. 13:34 = **each one**; Acts 4:35; Ro 2:6 = **each person**; Gal. 6:4 = each one; Phil 2:4; Heb 8:11 **everyone...everyone**;) Louw Nida - "each one of a totality in a distributive sense"

**Hekastos** is used in one of my favorite verses in Hebrews

But encourage one another day after day (literally "**every** day"), as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Heb 3:13<sup>+</sup>)

**Zodhiates** on **hekastos** - **(I) Generally**, as in Matt. 16:27, "to each one separately" (a.t. [Luke 6:44; John 7:53; Rom. 2:6]). Followed by the gen. pl. (Matt. 26:22, "each one of them" [a.t.]; John 6:7; Rom. 14:12). This idea of separation or singling out is expressed still more strongly by heís hékastos, each one (Acts 20:31; Eph. 4:16; Rev. 21:21). Followed by the gen. pl. (Luke 4:40; Acts 2:3). In the phrase kath' hekástēn hēméran, with the prep. katá, a distributive, and hēméra, day, we have the strengthened distributive force of katá (Heb. 3:13; Rev. 22:2). **(II) Distributively**, in construction with pl. verbs where it is in apposition with the pl. noun implied (Matt. 18:35; John 16:32; Heb. 8:11). Followed by the gen. pl. (Acts 11:29). Heís hékastos, each one (Acts 2:6). In apposition, with the pl. noun or pron. expressed (Luke 2:3; Acts 2:8; Eph. 5:33). With heís (1 Cor. 12:18). ([Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Hekastos** - 75v - each(36), each man(4), each man's(3), each one(22), each one's(1), each person(2), every(1), every man(2), every one(2), every\*(1), everyone(4), personal(1).

Matt. 16:27; Matt. 18:35; Matt. 25:15; Matt. 26:22; Mk. 13:34; Lk. 2:3; Lk. 4:40; Lk. 6:44; Lk. 13:15; Lk. 16:5; Jn. 6:7; Jn. 7:53; Jn. 16:32; Jn. 19:23; Acts 2:3; Acts 2:6; Acts 2:8; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:26; Acts 4:35; Acts 11:29; Acts 17:27; Acts 20:31; Acts 21:26; Rom. 2:6; Rom. 12:3; Rom. 14:5; Rom. 14:12; Rom. 15:2; 1 Co. 1:12; 1 Co. 3:5; 1 Co. 3:8; 1 Co. 3:10; 1 Co. 3:13; 1 Co. 4:5; 1 Co. 7:2; 1 Co. 7:7; 1 Co. 7:17; 1 Co. 7:20; 1 Co. 7:24; 1 Co. 11:21; 1 Co. 12:7; 1 Co. 12:11; 1 Co. 12:18; 1 Co. 14:26; 1 Co. 15:23; 1 Co. 15:38; 1 Co. 16:2; 2 Co. 5:10; 2 Co. 9:7; Gal. 6:4; Gal. 6:5; Eph. 4:7; Eph. 4:16; Eph. 4:25; Eph. 5:33; Eph. 6:8; Phil. 2:4; Col. 4:6; 1 Thess. 2:11; 1 Thess. 4:4; 2 Thess. 1:3; Heb 3:13; Heb. 6:11; Heb. 8:11; Heb. 11:21; Jas. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:17; 1 Pet. 4:10; Rev. 2:23; Rev. 5:8; Rev. 6:11; Rev. 20:13; Rev. 21:21; Rev. 22:2; Rev. 22:12



Gen. 10:5; 11:7; 13:11; 34:25; 37:19; 41:11; 42:21,25,35; 43:21,33; 44:1,11,13; 49:28; Exod. 1:1; 5:4,8; 7:12; 11:2; 12:3-4,22; 16:16,18,21,29; 18:16; 26:5; 28:21; 30:12; 32:27,29; 33:8,10; 35:21; 36:4; 39:14; Lev. 7:10; 10:1; 19:3,11; 25:10,13,46; Num. 1:4; 2:17,34; 4:19; 5:10; 7:3,5; 11:10; 16:17-18; 17:2,9; 25:5; 26:54; 31:53; 32:18; 35:8; 36:7-9; Deut. 1:41; 3:20; 12:8; 16:17; 24:16; Jos. 1:15; 3:12; 4:2,4-5; 6:5; 24:28,33; Jdg. 2:6; 7:21; 9:49; 15:7; 21:25; Ruth 1:8-9; 1 Sam. 4:10; 5:4; 8:22; 9:9; 10:11,25; 13:2,20; 14:34; 20:15,41; 25:10,13; 26:23; 27:3; 30:6,22; 2 Sam. 2:3,16,27; 6:19; 1 Ki. 4:20,27; 7:36; 8:31,38,66; 10:25; 12:24; 20:20,24; 22:17,36; 2 Ki. 9:13; 14:6; 18:33; 1 Chr. 16:43; 28:16-17; 2 Chr. 9:16,24; 11:4; 18:9,16; 23:8,10; 25:4,22; 31:1-2; 36:4; Est. 2:11; 3:4; 9:19; Job 1:4; 2:11-12; 34:11; 42:11; Ps. 6:6; 7:11; 12:2; 42:3,10; 62:11; 145:2; Prov. 5:22; 24:12; Isa. 36:16,18; 41:6; 42:25; 56:11; Jer. 1:15; 5:8; 6:3; 9:4-5; 12:15; 16:12; 17:10; 18:11-12; 19:9; 22:8; 23:14,27,30,35; 25:5,26; 26:3; 31:30,34; 32:18; 34:9-10,15-17; 35:15; 36:16; 37:10; 46:16; 49:5; 50:16; 51:6,9; Ezek. 1:9,23; 7:16; 8:11-12; 9:1-2; 10:22; 18:30; 20:7,39; 22:6,11; 24:23; 33:20; 45:20; 46:18; 47:14; Dan. 1:5; 2:24-25; 6:11; Joel 2:7-8; Jon. 1:5,7; 3:8; Mic. 4:4-5; 7:2; Zeph. 2:11; Hag. 1:9; 2:22; Zech. 3:10; 7:9-10; 8:4,10,16-17; 10:1; 11:6,9; 13:4; 14:13; Mal. 2:10; 3:16

**De Haan** on **burden** - The **burden** here is associated with the yoke of service, obedience and submission. Now the word "**burden**" in Galatians 6:5 is the same word as in Matthew 11:30. It refers to personal discipleship and service. And of this Paul says no one else can substitute for you. It is your own individual personal responsibility for service. Each one of us has a job to do which we only can do. ([Studies in Galatians](#))

**Don Anderson** notes that "There are actually FOUR LOADS that each of us must carry individually as believers and they cannot be shared: 1. SUFFERING, 2. DEATH, 3. JUDGMENT—at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and 4. SIN.

**Load** ([5413](#))(**phortion** from **phortos** = something carried from **phero** = to bear, carry) is literally that which is carried as of a ship's "cargo" (Acts 27:10). More often **phortion** refers to the load or burden of life's responsibilities, cares, obligations, duties. (cf Mt 23:4). **Phortion** is the pack a soldier is expected to carry. **Phortion** is used only 5x in NT - note the contrast of Jesus' **burden** with burdens of legalists! - Matt. 11:30; Matt. 23:4; Lk. 11:46; Acts 27:10; Gal. 6:5

**Gilbrant** on **phortion** in In the classical and Koine Greek, including Josephus and the papyri, the word is common for "ship's lading, wagon load, lading, freight." It is used of sacks of grain on a beast of burden and even of a child in its mother's womb (cf. *ibid.*). It has the general sense of "goods." From Demosthenes through the papyri it also means "burdening" with cares, duties, tasks, sickness, age, etc. (Moulton-Milligan). (*Ibid*)

Someone has said "Burdens can become a tombstone hung around our necks, or the weights to keep the diver down as he looks for precious pearls."

**Galatians 6:6** The one who is taught the word is to **share** all good things with the one who teaches him.

Wuest - Moreover, let the one who is being taught the Word constantly be holding fellowship with the one who is teaching in all good things. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

NET Galatians 6:6 Now the one who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with the one who teaches it.

GNT Galatians 6:6 Κοινωνετω δ κατηχομενος τ ν λ γον τ κατηχο ντι ν π σιν αγαθ ς.

NLT Galatians 6:6 Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers, sharing all good things with them.

KJV Galatians 6:6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

ESV Galatians 6:6 Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

ASV Galatians 6:6 But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

CSB Galatians 6:6 The one who is taught the message must share all his good things with the teacher.

NIV Galatians 6:6 Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.

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

NRS Galatians 6:6 Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

YLT Galatians 6:6 And let him who is instructed in the word share with him who is instructing -- in all good things.

NAB Galatians 6:6 One who is being instructed in the word should share all good things with his instructor.

NJB Galatians 6:6 When someone is under instruction in doctrine, he should give his teacher a share in all his possessions.

GWN Galatians 6:6 The person who is taught God's word should share all good things with his teacher.

BBE Galatians 6:6 But let him who gets teaching in the word give a part in all good things to his teacher.

- De 12:19 Mt 10:10 Ro 15:27 1Co 9:9-14 1Ti 5:17,18
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## SHARING ALL GOOD THINGS

**The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him - Share** (first word in Greek text for emphasis) is in the [present imperative](#) calling for this to be one's habitual practice, which [necessitates continual dependence on the Holy Spirit](#). Many teach that Paul is saying here that those who are taught spiritual truth should share their material goods with the teacher. While this principle is certainly true, not everyone agrees with this interpretation as shown in comments at end of this verse note.

**All good things** - While it is possible this includes money, it says all good things which would be much broader than money. I would suggest it includes good things like speaking a kind word to the teacher, sending him an email of encouragement (I receive those on [preceptaustin.org](#) and have been amazed how God stimulates someone to send a kind note of gratitude "out of the blue" many times when I am feeling a bit "blue!"), telling them you are praying for them (is that in fact worth far more than money!), etc.

**Share** (2841) ([koinoneo](#) from **koinos** = common, shared by all) means literally to share one's possessions with the implication of some kind of joint participation and mutual interest. It conveys the idea of sharing equally and the related noun (*koinonia*) means fellowship. This Greek word was used in a marriage contract where the husband and wife agree to a joint-participation in the necessities of life. The key idea in the word is that of a partnership, a possessing things in common, a belonging in common to.

**Good** (18) ([agathos](#)) means intrinsically good, inherently good in quality but with the idea of good which is also profitable, useful, benefiting others, benevolent (marked by or disposed to doing good). **Agathos** is one whose goodness and works of goodness are transferred to others. **Agathos** is used in the New Testament primarily of spiritual and moral excellence (e.g., "good things" in Ro 10:15)

**Taught** (instructed) (2727) ([katecheo](#) from **katá** = down or intensive + **echeo** = sound, our English "echo") literally means to sound down on or into the ears. From this the derived meaning is "to inform" or "to instruct orally." The idea is to re-sound, to re-echo, to teach by by insistent repetition into the ears as the Arabs do when learning the Koran (learning aloud). The [present tense](#) indicates they were continuously being ([passive voice](#)) instructed out. Continuously systematically instructed through catechetical instruction. This formal instruction is the basis of the critical discrimination or discernment.

**The Word** (3056) ([logos](#) from **légō** = to speak with words; English = logic, logical) means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. The definite article ("the") signifies a specific word and could refer to the Gospel or Scripture in general.

**John MacArthur** - Some people think this verse means you should pay the preacher. **I don't think that's what it means at all.** Why would he drop that obtuse thought in the middle of this context? What he is saying is the one who bears the burden and holds this guy up, or this lady up, is obviously teaching the Word to that person. That's part of it. And they mutually share, [koinoneo](#), in **all good things**, all the noble, moral, spiritual excellencies that he is learning. The implication here is simply this. You're involved in a building process. You **pick them up** by confronting sin, calling for a confession, repentance, prayer, back to the Word. **You hold them up** by an accountability relationship in which you get under the burden and help them carry the burden. **And you build them up** by sharing back and forth all the good, excellent, moral truths that flow out of the process of teaching. That's an essential part of it. You might give someone a book. You might give them a tape. You might bring them to church with you. You might be in a Bible study with them. It's been a joy for me, I guess this is one of the, one of the privileges of being the preacher. I would never be able to personally teach all the people that I would like to be able to teach, to follow them up, but I have the privilege of preaching publicly every week so that they can come and sit under that teaching and I can cover a lot more ground that way. But there must be that personal sharing in the edifying process of the Word of God. For you, that means that if you're going to confront someone and

you're going to lift them up and then you're to pray for them and hold them accountable and have a sort of relationship with them that maintains that stimulation of holiness and then you're going to have to build them up that somehow you're going to have to get involved in their life. Am I my brother's keeper? What's the answer? Yes. And nothing is more frustrating than the realization that we're not following through on this responsibility. It's too bad for the fleshly because they don't get any help. And so if you're going to be spiritual, you're going to have to have this sensitivity. And if you are spiritual, I think you'll do this. I think as the Spirit directs and as you walk in the Spirit this will happen. And it will never be a burden, it will always be a joy, because the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy. You see, with all that the Holy Spirit does, with all that He does in our lives individually, we still fail. We still fall to the level of the flesh. And God has set in motion the church as an accountability body closely knit together for the purpose of the spiritual coming alongside the fleshly to lift them up, to hold them up, to build them up. ([Sermon](#))

**Don Anderson** - Now, when you get to verse 6, I have changed my interpretation in verse 6 because I'm getting older...(I'm in the minority here)...Now the reason people believe that this is money is because he's going to say "sowing" and "reaping" in the next two verses....But remember, what he's talking about here is something that has to do with what the student does for the teacher.....Why do we have to go to money in sharing good things?....When you share **good things**—you share emails, you share cards, you say words of affirmation—those things mean more than any dollar bill anytime or anyway (**ED: I TOTALLY AGREE!**). And to put money in the situation, I think it's completely out of context. I think it would be putting Paul in the position that because he's there and he's given of himself to them, they're obligated financially. That doesn't mean that there are not financial needs and that we have responsibility for each other, for ministry, and doing that. And God delights in that and that's what he was telling the Corinthians that they needed for the poor saints in Jerusalem.

**Galatians 6:7** **Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.**

Wuest Stop leading yourselves astray. God is not being outwitted and evaded. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

Phillips - Don't be under any illusion: you cannot make a fool of God!

Amplified - Do not be deceived and deluded and misled; God will not allow Himself to be sneered at (scorned, disdained, or mocked by mere pretensions or professions, or by His precepts being set aside.) [He inevitably deludes himself who attempts to delude God.]

NET Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived. God will not be made a fool. For a person will reap what he sows,

GNT Galatians 6:7 Μ πλαν σθε, θε ς ο μυκτηρ ζεται. γ ρ ν σπε ρ νθρωπος, το το κα θερ σει·

NLT Galatians 6:7 Don't be misled-- you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant.

KJV Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

ESV Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

ASV Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

CSB Galatians 6:7 Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he will also reap,

NIV Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

NKJ Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

NRS Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow.

YLT Galatians 6:7 Be not led astray; God is not mocked; for what a man may sow -- that also he shall reap,

NAB Galatians 6:7 Make no mistake: God is not mocked, for a person will reap only what he sows,

NJB Galatians 6:7 Don't delude yourself: God is not to be fooled; whatever someone sows, that is what he will reap.

GWN Galatians 6:7 Make no mistake about this: You can never make a fool out of God. Whatever you plant is what you'll harvest.

BBE Galatians 6:7 Be not tricked; God is not made sport of: for whatever seed a man puts in, that will he get back as grain.



- **Do not be deceived:** Ga 6:3 Job 15:31 Jer 37:9 Ob 1:3 Lu 21:8 1Co 3:18 6:9 15:33 Eph 5:6 2Th 2:3 Jas 1:22,26 1Jn 1:8 3:7
- **God is not mocked:** Job 13:8,9 Jude 1:18
- **for whatever a man sows:** Job 4:8 Pr 1:31 6:14,19 11:18 Ho 8:7 10:12 Lu 16:25 Ro 2:6-10 2Co 9:6
- [Galatians 6:7 Sowing and Reaping - Great Texts of the Bible](#)
- [Galatians 6:7 Do Not Be Deceived - Sparkling Gems from the Greek](#) - Rick Renner
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Click here for much more in depth discussion of Galatians 6:7](#) - there is some repetition of that material on this page

## DON'T THUMB YOUR NOSE AT GOD!

**Thumb your nose** - A sign of derision made by putting your thumb on your nose and wiggling your fingers. Original motion created by placing ones thumb upon the side of their nose and pushing out as if giving thumbs up. Guaranteed to offend. A synonymous expression, which is more common in British English, is *to cock a snook*. This expression originated in the first half of the 1900s. This rude gesture was common for children to do in the past. It was a way of mocking someone. Similar antics included sticking out one's tongue (with or without blowing a raspberry) or chanting the mocking song *na na na naaa naaa*. You cannot snub God and get away with it! You may think you are escaping His just judgment, but this is why it is called deception and self-deception is the worst kind of all!

**Robert Louis Stevenson** said it this way...

"Sooner or later in life,  
we all sit down  
to a banquet of consequences."

**Lloyd Ogilvie** writes that...

The Interpreter's Bible refers to this section as Paul's call for Christians to engage in "the agriculture of the Spirit." That is a colorful and suggestive thought which aptly describes what Paul is talking about. The law of the harvest is relevant to our spiritual development and describes our destiny. A well-known Baptist preacher, R. G. Lee, had a famous sermon he preached hundreds of times, all over America, "Payday Someday." ([Read sermon](#)) The title alone is gripping and captures the truth. (The Preacher's Commentary)

**Do not be deceived** - This is a command preceded by a negative ([present imperative with a negative](#)) which can mean stop something already in practice (being deceived) or don't begin this practice. In the case of the Galatian believers, it seems quite likely that some were already falling for the seductive, flesh pleasing, legalistic teachings of the Judaizers.

**Do not be deceived** (4105) ([planao](#) from **plane** which describes "a wandering"; English = planet) means literally made to wander and so to go (active sense) or be led (passive sense as of sheep in Mt 18:12-13) astray. This same verb is used in a similar sense in 1 Cor 15:33 "**Do not be deceived** ([planao](#) in [present imperative with a negative](#)): "Bad company corrupts good morals." That warning would certainly be apropos in the context of the "bad company" of the Judaizers. Paul warns Timothy about the last days writing that "evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving ([planao](#) in [present tense](#) and [active voice](#) = volitional choice to lead others astray) and being deceived ([planao](#) in [present tense](#) and [passive voice](#)). (2 Ti 3:13) So these false teachers sow deception, but are continually reaping self-deception (and when you are deceived, you don't know you are deceived! Think of [Jim Jones](#) and his self-deception that led to the murder of many and the loss of his life. He was deceived!)

**God is not mocked** is [mukterizo](#) (from **mukter** = the nose, nostril) and literally means to turn up one's nose and thus pictures the idea of scorn. Hence the idea is to turn one's nose up to God, in a vain attempt to mock, deride, sneer, ridicule or treat Him with contempt. How foolish to think one can make a fool of God! Turning one's nose up at God does not alter the immutable law of the harvest!

## THE IMMUTABLE LAW OF THE HARVEST

[Immutable](#) means not subject or susceptible to change or variation in form, quality, or nature,

**For** - Term of explanation. Paul explains the clear cause-effect.

As an aside Galatians 6:7-8 are a great practical application of Galatians 5:16ff, for it begs the question are we living by the flesh or walking by the Spirit?

**Whatever a man sows** - **Whatever** would include thoughts, words or deeds. Stop a moment and ask "What am I planting in each of these areas?" We are planting seeds all day long, every day, for each day is filled with manifold choices and each choice is either leaning toward the flesh or toward the Spirit. There is no neutral "field" for our seed choices!

Earlier Paul had declared "those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Gal 5:24) In the present passage, the idea is one is gratifying the flesh, not crucifying it!

**Sows** (4687) (**speiro** from **spao** = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and the opposite of reaping or gathering. Speiro is used figuratively to describe the sowing of the "seed" of the Word of God, the Gospel (= "the word of the kingdom" - Mt13:19, cp Mk 4:14 15, 16, 18), "the ideas and precepts that have been implanted like seed in their hearts, ie, received in their hearts (Mk 4:18)." (Thayer). Jesus used **speiro** repeatedly in His parables (Mt 13:3, 18, 24, 31)

**Matthew Henry** said it well "Our present time is seed-time: in the other world there will be a great harvest. We shall reap then as we sow now."

**This he will also reap** - This is an unbreakable promise, an immutable principle in God's order. It applies to both believers and non-believers. While God commands us to be holy, we should not be surprised that we are seeing little growth in holiness if we are frequently sowing seeds to our fallen flesh.

One of the deceptive aspects of sowing and reaping is that one almost never reaps the same as he has sown. Think of it this way - an acorn is a very small seed, but when it is sown, it will bring forth a large tree! We can choose the seed we sow but we cannot choose the consequences that seed will reap. In Hosea 8:7 we read "For they sow the wind And they reap the whirlwind." Notice that the reaping comes after a period of time and is greater (whirlwind) than what was sown (wind)! Do not be deceived beloved. Sowing seeds to sin will yield a harvest that is more than you could have imagined. Let this truth be an impediment to giving in quickly to those strong seductive urges to commit some sin, falsely thinking, "It's only a little sin. No one else will know. No one will be hurt," etc goes the self-deceptive false logic! God always knows and always sees. Hidden sin on earth is open scandal in heaven! Daniel Webster said "The most awful thing he knew was the recognition of his accountability to God." (cf Ro 14:12)

THOUGH the mills of God grind slowly,  
Yet they grind exceeding small;  
Though with patience He stands waiting,  
With exactness grinds He all.  
--Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

**Reap** (2325) (**therizo** from **théros** = summer, harvest time ~ time of harvests) conveys the picture of cutting ripe grain and gathering the bundles together. To reap, to harvest, harvest, reaping.

The tissues of the life to be  
We weave with colors all our own;  
And in the field of Destiny  
We reap as we have sown.  
-W H Griffith-Thomas

**Charles Eade** (1814–1884) is apparently responsible for the first version of the famous quote...

Sow an act, and you reap a habit.  
Sow a habit, and you reap a character.  
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.

Here is the "amplified" version by **Samuel Smiles**...

**Sow a thought, and you reap an act;**  
Sow an act, and you reap a habit;  
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;  
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.

I think Samuel Smiles' addition ("Sow a thought, and you reap an act") is vitally important to consider, for indeed the law of sowing and reaping (whether the harvest is good or bad) is set in motion by our **thought life**! Little wonder that in [Philippians 4:8-note](#) Paul commands ([present imperative](#)) the believers at Philippi to **continually pursue "righteous reckoning"** ("dwell on" = [logizomai \[word study\]](#))!

**THOUGHT** - How is your thought life? What do you think about? Are you in the Word of truth daily so that

God's truth might be in you, renewing your mind (2Co 4:16, Ep 4:23+, Col 3:10+), setting you free (Jn 8:31, 32, 36), washing you clean from the polluting thoughts and images of our morally decaying society, transforming your mind into conformity with the mind of Christ (1Co 2:16, Ro 12:2+)? If not, do not be surprised when thoughts come into your mind (cp Ep 6:16+) that reap an evil act and may even "bloom" into an evil habit! Set a guard continually at the doorway of your heart (Pr 4:23+). May our daily "obsession" be for the Savior's disposition, His thoughts and His outlook, as we cry out, even in desperation,...

Lord of every thought and action,  
Lord to send and Lord to stay;  
Lord in speaking, writing, giving,  
Lord in all things to obey;  
Lord of all there is of me,  
Now and evermore to be. Amen  
--E. H Swinstead

**Lovett on HARVEST.** Not only is it true that a man can only get back what he sows, he must get it from the same field in which he sows. Yet many Christians believe they can sow to the flesh, i.e., live to suit themselves in this life and still reap a joyous harvest for heaven. It just won't work. God's Law will not bend to the whims of men. Those investing their lives in earthly things such as fame, families and fortune, will reap a harvest that is useless in eternity. Even worse, they will watch it go up in smoke at the Judgment (1 Cor. 3:15). The man who sows to the Spirit, (his new nature), investing himself in others in Jesus' Name, will reap a crop in heaven which he may enjoy forever. A man's two natures are like two fields. The crops are being sown in this life, to be reaped at death. ([Lovett's lights on Galatians](#))

**Rob Salvato** says the **law of reaping and sowing** is immutable irregardless of whether we believe it or not. He goes on to say that "Its like the guy who denied the law of gravity - just didn't believe it applied to him and so he decided to prove it. He climbed to the top of a twenty-story building and dove off. His last words were heard as he sailed past a guy on the third floor, "Hey, nothing's happened yet!" Paul says God is not mocked!" ([Sermon](#))

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**Illustration of Reaping** - The Emperor Charlemagne wanted to have a magnificent bell cast for the church he had built. An artist named Tancho was employed by the church to make it. He was furnished, at his own request, with a great quantity of copper, and a hundred pounds of silver for the purpose. He kept the silver for his own personal use, however, and substituted in its place a quantity of highly purified tin. When the work was completed, he presented the bell to the Emperor, who had it suspended in the church tower. The people, however, were unable to ring it. So Tancho himself was called in to help. But he pulled so hard that its tongue fell down and killed him, reaping what he had sown!

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**Elliot Johnson** - MUHAMMED ALI was one of the greatest athletes of the 20th century. He knew the "Law of the Harvest," realizing that he would reap in the ring what he sowed in training. "Before I get in the ring," he said, "I have already won or lost [the match] out on the road. The real part is won or lost somewhere far away from witnesses—behind the lines, in the gym, and out there on the road long before I dance under those lights." All of us reap what we sow. It's called the "Law of the Harvest." God cannot be mocked. The word "mocked" means "to turn up the nose in contempt." We can live to please our old evil nature by spending much time and money on pleasure, comforts, and self-promotion, or we can live to please the Spirit of God. (Game Day Decisions: Devotions for Athletes)

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## Galatians 6:7 Sowing and Reaping

2 Samuel 12:1-10

David's harshness and lack of pity were due to his being out of touch with God. No wonder he failed to remember the judgment prescribed by the Law. At this point the Holy Spirit gave Nathan boldness to say to David, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7).

Through Nathan, the Lord reminded David of His sovereign choice of David, of His protection of him through the years of Saul's bitter enmity, of his elevation to the throne and of the abundance of God's provision for him. In spite of God's mercies, David had despised God's commandment. God hid nothing from His servant. David was forced to face his sin.

Nathan's message to David not only reminded him of God's tender mercy, love, abundant gifts and honor but also warned David that, because he had sinned, he would reap a harvest of sorrow. "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife" (v. 10).

The Lord made it very plain in the New Testament that believers cannot escape reaping the kind of harvest they sow. We cannot

hide our sin; we will not get away with it. The secrets of the night are not hidden from God.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

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**P G Ryken** has written that "The book of Lamentations is one long illustration of the eternal principle that "a man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7b)". (Ryken, P. G. *Jeremiah and Lamentations : From Sorrow to Hope*. Preaching the Word. Page 743. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books)

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**Sowing the Wrong Seed** - I once read a fable about a farmhand who was given instructions to plant a field of barley. He acted immediately, but he sowed oats instead of barley. After several weeks, the owner of the farm went out to inspect the crop and was astonished to see oats growing instead of barley. The workman was told to report to the owner's office at once. "I told you to plant barley," he said. "Why did you sow oats?" "Oh," the man responded, "I didn't think it would make any difference. I figured that even if I planted oats, I could expect barley to come up." Enraged, the owner shouted, "Are you crazy, man? What ever made you think that?" The farmhand replied, "I got that idea from you, sir. I've been watching the way you live. And I've noticed that even though you're constantly sowing 'seeds of evil,' you expect to be reaping 'fruits of virtue'!"

No one can avoid the natural laws of sowing and reaping. Whatever we sow, we will reap. **What are you sowing?** —R. W. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**The cost of living goes up and down,  
but the cost of sowing wild oats remains the same!**

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A woman gave her teenage son a used automobile. The youth enjoyed racing the car around curves so he could hear the tires squeal. One morning his car skidded and smashed into a telephone pole. The boy was thrown through the windshield and rushed to a hospital. When his pastor reached the hospital, the boy's mother was frantic. She grasped the pastor's hands in hers and exclaimed,

"Why would God let this happen?"

Her question is understandable, but it misses the hard truth of the situation. She can't blame God for that accident. If the Lord were to suspend the laws of physics and snatch a telephone pole from in front of her son, He might just as well place one in front of someone else who was driving carefully.

God doesn't cancel the rule of sowing and reaping just because we become Christians. But there is an upside to that principle. If we sow "to the Spirit [we] will of the Spirit reap everlasting life" (Gal. 6:8). —H. W Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us (Isaiah 59:12).

A group of young people from Renaissance High School in Detroit cut classes to attend a rock concert in Hart Plaza. They probably thought they had gotten away with their truancy, but the next day, when the Detroit News appeared on the newsstand, it carried a color photo of the concert on the front page. And who was in that picture? That's right—the delinquent students of Renaissance High, easily recognizable to anyone. According to the paper, "Eagle-eyed assistant principal Dr. Elijah Porter spotted the students and had a conversation with them." As for the kids, it went on, "There was nothing they could say."

The Bible teaches that we cannot hide our iniquities. We may be able to cover them up for a while and even get away with them for an extended period of time. But the time will inevitably come when we must face up to them, either in this world or in the next. Paul told the Galatians,

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked;  
for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Whenever we have a sin we are hiding, we must confess and forsake it. Or, when we are tempted to pursue something we know is wrong, thinking we won't get caught, we must determine to go no further. Our picture may not appear on the front page, but the Bible says we won't get away with it. —D. C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**The seed of wrongdoing maybe sown in secret,  
but the harvest cannot be concealed.**

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**Sowers and Reapers** - The principle of sowing and reaping is often used to warn about the inevitable consequences of evil deeds. But it can also be used as an encouragement to believers in their service for Christ.

**A. B. Simpson** said,

"I believe the toils and prayers of 20 years ago are not lost. We may not see the results of our labor and sacrifice immediately, but in due time they will issue into beauty and glory.

"The love you give, the forgiveness you show, and the patience and forbearance that grace your life will surely produce much fruit. The friend you long to bring to Christ may refuse to be reconciled to Him. His heart may seem to be very hard, and your prayers and efforts may appear to be lost; but they are not! They will come back to you a hundredfold—perhaps long after you have forgotten them.

"Give God time! The results are working themselves out slowly but surely. There must be seedtime and summer before the autumn reaping."

This agrees with Solomon's words:

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days (Ec 11:1).

Keep on sowing! In His own time, and in His own way, the Lord will send the harvest! -- Richard De Haan [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Keep on working through the seasons  
In the sunshine and the rain;  
Earnest prayer and faithful sowing  
Yield a wealth of golden grain. —Anon.

**God promises no loaves to loafers.**

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**Seeds and Fruit** - I read a fable about a man who was browsing in a store when he made the shocking discovery that God was behind a sales counter. So the man walked over and asked, "What are You selling?" God replied, "What does your heart desire?" The man said, "I want happiness, peace of mind, and freedom from fear ... for me and the whole world." God smiled and said, "I don't sell fruit here. Only seeds."

In Galatians 6, Paul stressed the importance of sowing seeds of God-honoring behavior, for "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal 6:7). We can't expect to experience the fruit of God's blessings if we don't recognize the importance of doing our part.

It helps to follow the example of others who have sown good seed. Author Samuel Shoemaker said that a good example can either inspire us or cause us to say, "Oh yes, he (or she) is like that. He is not troubled by temper or nerves or impatience or worry as I am; he is just a happier temperament." Shoemaker continued, "It may not occur to us that perhaps he had to fight for his serenity, and that we might win if we would do the same."

Are you weary of the way you are? Ask God for His help and begin sowing seeds of new actions and responses today. In due season the Spirit will give the increase. -- Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We're always sowing seeds in life  
By everything we do and say,  
So let's make sure the fruit we reap  
Comes from the good we do each day.  
—Hess

The seeds we sow today  
determine the kind of fruit we'll reap tomorrow.

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**Count On It!** - A children's book titled **'The Chance World'** describes an imaginary planet where everything happens unpredictably. For example, the sun might rise one day or it might not, and it might appear at any hour. Some days the moon might come up in its place. One day you might jump up and not come down, and the next day find gravity so strong you can't even lift your feet.

[Henry Drummond](#), the Scottish biologist, writer, and lecturer, read 'The Chance World'. He commented that in such a place where natural law was annihilated,

reason would be impossible. It would become a lunatic world with a population of lunatics.

We should be thankful for the dependability of the natural laws the Creator has set in motion. They can be a great benefit to us if we recognize and respect them.

If we violate those laws, however,  
we will suffer the consequences.

That is also true of God's spiritual laws, such as the one in today's text (Gal 6:7-8) The person who ignores God's standards and caters to sinful appetites can expect destruction. But the person who follows the leading of the Spirit will experience the blessings of everlasting life.

God's laws never fail. You will reap what you sow. Count on it!

Surer than autumn's harvests  
Are harvests of thought and deed;  
Like those that our hands have planted,  
The yield will be like the seed.

**If we sow nothing but sin,  
we can count on a harvest of judgment.**

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**Examples of Attempts to Mock God - Ernest Hemingway** became famous for snubbing his nose at morality and at God, declaring that his own life proved a person could do anything he wanted without paying the consequences. Like many others before and after him, he considered the ideas of the Bible to be antiquated and outdated, completely useless to modern man and a hindrance to his pleasure and self-fulfillment. Moral laws were to him a religious superstition that had no relevance. In a mocking parody of the Lord's Prayer he wrote, "Our nada [Spanish for "nothing"] who art in nada." (**Ed:** Woe! He had no concept of He 10:31-note and He 12:29-note) But instead of proving the impunity of infidelity, the end of Hemingway's life proved the folly of mocking God. His debauched life led him into such complete despair and hopelessness that he put a bullet in his head.

Other famous authors, such as **Sinclair Lewis** and **Oscar Wilde**, who openly attacked the divine moral standard and thumbed their noses at God, mocking His Word and His law, were nonetheless subject to that law Lewis died a pathetic alcoholic in a third-rate clinic in Italy, and Wilde ended up an imprisoned homosexual, in shame and disgrace. Near the end of his life he wrote, "forgot somewhere along the line that what you are in secret you will some day cry aloud from the housetop." (John MacArthur)

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**Reaping What You Sow** - Because of the natural law of seedtime and harvest, the farmer knows when and what to plant to achieve the desired result. He knows that you harvest wheat if you sow wheat, that you do not sow weeds and reap wheat. God's moral and spiritual laws work in the same way. You cannot sow sin and reap righteousness, or indulgence and reap health, or strife and reap peace. You cannot sow "the works of the flesh" and reap "the fruit of the Spirit." But there is a further truth in this law. You reap what you sow in quality, but you reap more than you sow in quantity. From one grain of corn will come hundreds of grains of corn. Applying this in the moral and spiritual realms, it is no wonder that so many lives are ruined, that the world is in such turmoil, and that uncounted millions of souls stumble on their blinded way toward hell! And all because people live contrary to this benevolent but inexorable spiritual law of God. (Hobbs, H. H. - My favorite illustrations. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press)

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**Dirty Hands** — One of William Shakespeare's most intriguing characters is Lady Macbeth. Having heard a prophecy that her husband would become king, she convinced him to assassinate the reigning monarch. When the bloody deed was done, Macbeth was conscience-stricken. His wife rebuked his squeamishness and helped him cover up the crime. Her husband was crowned king. But that wasn't the end.

Lady Macbeth's initial resolve turned to remorse. She grew mentally unstable, and couldn't stop washing her hands. "Will these hands ne'er be clean?" she asked. Finally, the guilt drove Lady Macbeth to suicide.

Guilt is an emotion that can weigh us down whenever we cross a moral boundary. All of us are capable of feeling guilty when we violate the law of God written in our hearts (Ro 2:14, 15). If we continue to sin willfully, however, we will dull our conscience.

Lady Macbeth is a good reminder of a biblical principle:



**Whatever we sow, we will certainly reap** (Gal 6:7, 8).

When we feel temptation, we need to listen to our conscience—not try to silence it. It's far better to avoid committing an act we will later regret than to live with the consequences. — by Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sometimes there's just one step to go  
Before we yield to sin,  
But God will help us to say no  
If we trust His power within.  
—Hess

**Only Jesus' blood can wash away the stain of sin.**

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- [Click here for much more in depth discussion of Galatians 6:7](#) - there is some repetition of that material on this page

**Galatians 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.**

Wuest For whatever a man is in the habit of sowing, this also will he reap; because the one who sows with a view to his own evil nature, from his evil nature as a source shall reap corruption. But the one who sows with a view to the Spirit, from the Spirit as a source shall reap life eternal. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

Phillips - A man's harvest in life will depend entirely on what he sows. If he sows for his own lower nature his harvest will be the decay and death of his own nature. But if he sows for the Spirit he will reap the harvest of everlasting life by that Spirit.

Amplified - For he who sows to his own flesh (lower nature, sensuality) will from the flesh reap decay and ruin and destruction, but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

NET Galatians 6:8 because the person who sows to his own flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

GNT Galatians 6:8 τι σπερων ες τιν σαρκα αυτο κ τς σαρκς θερ σει φθορ ν, δ σπερων ες τινε μα κ το πνεματος θερ σει ζω ν α νιον.

NLT Galatians 6:8 Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit.

KJV Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

ESV Galatians 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

ASV Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.

CSB Galatians 6:8 because the one who sows to his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

NIV Galatians 6:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

NKJ Galatians 6:8 For 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.

NRS Galatians 6:8 If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

YLT Galatians 6:8 because he who is sowing to his own flesh, of the flesh shall reap corruption; and he who is sowing to the Spirit, of the Spirit shall reap life age-during;

NAB Galatians 6:8 because the one who sows for his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows for the spirit will reap eternal life from the spirit.

NJB Galatians 6:8 If his sowing is in the field of self-indulgence, then his harvest from it will be corruption; if his sowing is in the Spirit, then his harvest from the Spirit will be eternal life.

GWN Galatians 6:8 If you plant in the soil of your corrupt nature, you will harvest destruction. But if you plant in the soil of your spiritual nature, you will harvest everlasting life.

BBE Galatians 6:8 Because he who puts in the seed of the flesh will of the flesh get the reward of death; but he who puts in the seed of the Spirit will of the Spirit get the reward of eternal life.

- **For the one who sows to his own flesh:** Ro 6:13 8:13 13:14 Jas 3:18
- **will from the flesh reap corruption** Pr 22:8 Jer 12:13 Ho 10:13 2Pe 2:12,19 Rev 22:11
- **but the one who sows to the Spirit:** Ga 6:7 Ps 126:5,6 Ec 11:6 Isa 32:20 Jas 3:18
- **will from the Spirit reap eternal life:** Mt 19:29 Lu 18:30 Joh 4:14,36 6:27 Ro 6:22 1Ti 1:16 Tit 3:7 Jude 1:21
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Click here for much more in depth discussion of Galatians 6:8](#) - there is some repetition of that material on this page

**For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption-** In short, if you want to live for self, to gratify self, to go for all the "gusto" you can get, to really "live it up," to live as if you only go around once, etc, etc, THEN you can mark it down -- Your life can be characterized by one word - DECAY! What a legacy you will leave to your children, relatives and friends! A life that in the scales of eternity not only amount to absolutely nothing but even worse is like decay, like decaying garbage. This sounds harsh, but sadly it will be the reality for many souls who reject the free gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus. Wouldn't you like your life to count for eternity? Then believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved (Acts 16:31+) and you will then be able to live life with an eternal perspective!

**Sows** (4687) ([speiro](#) from **spao** = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and the opposite of reaping or gathering.

**Flesh** (4561) ([sarx](#)) in the present context refers to its moral/ethical or spiritual sense which is typified by an outlook toward self, a propensity/predilection to commit sin, an active adversity/opposition to God and a relentless pursuit of one's own ends in self-sufficient, independence from God.

**John Piper** defines the fallen flesh as "the old ego that is self-reliant and does not delight to yield to any authority or depend on any mercy. Flesh craves the sensation of self-generated power and loves the praise of men... in its conservative form it produces legalism -- keeping rules by its own power for its own glory... (in its more liberal form) produces grossly immoral attitudes and acts (Gal 5:19ff+). The flesh is the proud and unsubmissive root of depravity in every human heart which exalts itself subtly through proud, self-reliant morality, or flaunts itself blatantly through self-assertive, authority-despising immorality. ([Walk by the Spirit!](#))

**John Stott** explains that "Every time we allow our mind to harbor a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain an impure fancy, wallow in self-pity, we are sowing to the flesh. Every time we linger in bad company whose insidious influence we know we cannot resist, every time we lie in bed when we ought to be up and praying, every time we read pornographic literature, every time we take a risk that strains our self-control we are sowing, sowing, sowing, to the flesh." ([Stott, J. R. W. The message of Galatians](#))

**Reap** (2325) ([therizo](#) from **théros** = summer, harvest time ~ time of harvests) conveys the picture of cutting ripe grain and gathering the bundles together. To reap, to harvest, harvest, reaping.

**Corruption** - decomposition or rotting of an organism and the accompanying stench! The utter depravity of the fallen flesh and the resultant moral decomposition of the world opposed to God is driven by its sinful lusts or evil desires.

**Corruption** (5356) ([phthora](#) from **phtheiro** = to shrivel or wither, spoil, ruin, deprave, corrupt, defile, to destroy by means of corrupting, to spoil as does milk. Ethically **phtheiro** was the opposite of [sozo](#)) refers to a state of ruin or destruction with the picture of deterioration, dissolution, disintegration, ruin, perishing, decay or rotting like organic matter (breakdown of organic matter). **Phthora** was sometimes used of decaying food, which turns from that which is beneficial to that which is harmful.

**But** - Term of contrast. And what a glorious contrast it is.

Believers who choose  
to sow to the flesh reap temporal corruption!

Non-believers have no choice but  
to sow to the flesh and reap eternal corruption!



**The one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life**- Spiritual sowing does not result in saving one's soul, but does show one's soul to be saved.

**To the Spirit** (pneuma) - Almost all commentators agree this is *pneuma* with a capital "S", the Holy Spirit and not the human spirit, for only the Holy Spirit could bring about supernatural results (eternal life) (cp Jn 6:63, Ro 8:6+).

**Eternal life** is not so much about time (eternity is timeless) but is about a quality of life and while it will not be fully realized until Heaven, this quality of life is available now to every believer in Jesus Christ. If you are a believer, you are already experiencing a foretaste of eternal life! In short, eternal life speaks of both the present possession and the future hope (absolute certainty of future good) of all believers

See **John Piper's** discussion of ["Eternal Life"](#) in the comments on Galatians 6:9-10.

**Life** (2222) (**zoe**) in the present context refers to **supernatural life** in contrast to a life subject to eternal death (Jn 3:36). This quality of life speaks of fullness of life which alone belongs to God the Giver of life and is available to His children now (Ro 6:4+, Ep 4:18+) as well as in eternity future (Mk 10:30, Titus 1:2+). As Wuest says zoe speaks of "the life which God gives to the believing sinner, a vital, animating, spiritual, ethical dynamic which transforms his inner **being** and as a result, his **behavior**."

**J C Ryle** soberly reminds us...Our state in the unseen world of eternity depends entirely on what we are in time. The life that we live upon earth is short at the very best, and soon gone. "We spend our days as a tale that is told." (Ps 90:9.) "What is our life? It is a vapor—so soon passes it away, and we are gone." (Jas 4:14) The life that is before us when we leave this world is an endless eternity, a sea without a bottom, and an ocean without a shore....In that world time shall be no more. But short as our life is here, and endless as it will be hereafter, it is a tremendous thought that eternity hinges upon time. Our lot after death depends, humanly speaking, on what we are while we are alive....How are you using your TIME? Life is short and very uncertain. You never know what a day may bring forth. Business and pleasure, money-getting and money-spending, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage—all, all will soon be over and done with forever. And you, what are you doing for your immortal soul? Are you wasting time, or turning it to good account? Are you preparing to meet God? (Except from [Thoughts on Immortality](#))

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[Adoniram Judson](#) (bio) missionary to Burma alluded to the eternal impact of sowing and reaping when he wrote that...

A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated through eternity... the same may be said of each day. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever... each day will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny... How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness... ! It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, resolve to send the day into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more day is irrevocably gone, indelibly marked.

---

**Galatians 6:8 Spiritual Sowing** - Devotional by C H Spurgeon -- Sowing looks like a losing business, for we put good corn into the ground never to see it anymore. Sowing to the Spirit seems a very fanciful, dreamy business; for we deny ourselves and apparently get nothing for it. Yet if we sow to the Spirit by studying to live unto God, seeking to obey the will of God, and laying ourselves out to promote His honor, we shall not sow in vain. Life shall be our reward, even everlasting life. This we enjoy here as we enter into the knowledge of God, communion with God, and enjoyment of God. This life flows on like an ever-deepening, ever-widening river till it bears us to the ocean of infinite felicity, where the life of God is ours forever and ever. Let us not this day sow to our flesh, for the harvest will be corruption, since flesh always tends that way; but with holy self-conquest let us live for the highest, purest, and most spiritual ends, seeking to honor our most holy LORD by obeying His most gracious Spirit. What a harvest will that be when we reap life everlasting! What sheaves of endless bliss will be reaped! What a festival will that harvest be! LORD, make us such reapers, for thy Son's sake.

---

## **Galatians 6:8 The Effects of Selfishness**

Genesis 27:30-37

Isaac is suddenly awakened to his failure to heed God's plan.

When Isaac learned that the last son to appear to him was actually Esau, he "trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed" (Gen. 27:33).

The key to Isaac's faith is that after he realized what he had done, he emphasized that the blessing would remain Jacob's--"and he shall be blessed."

Although we can never thwart God's plan, we can reap bitter results by sowing to the flesh. God's Word says that "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. 6:8).

Although Isaac did not upset the plan of God, he reaped serious results from what he had sown. Jacob had to flee from home as a result of his conniving. Rebekah never saw Jacob again because she died before he returned.

Even though Isaac lived another 43 years after the incident of the blessing, nothing else is recorded about him except his death. After sending Jacob away, Isaac disappeared from the biblical scene.

About 30 years later Jacob saw his father again, but his mother had already died. The entire family was affected because they had sown to the flesh. They had sought their selfish desires rather than seeking to please God.

"In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves" (2 Tim. 3:1,2).

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**Now—Or Later-** The principle that we reap what we sow is taught and illustrated throughout the Bible. The effects of our choices may be in the here and now, or they may be experienced in the hereafter, when we stand before God.

From the perspective of eternity, it is far better to reap the consequences of sin now in this lifetime. That's because there is still time for repentance and restoration.

In Judges 1, we learn that the Canaanite king Adoni-Bezek was among the more fortunate in this respect. In keeping with the cruelty of his day, he had cut off the thumbs and big toes of 70 captured kings. But then the tables were turned. The Israelites captured Adoni-Bezek and cut off his big toes and thumbs. The wicked scoundrel, though, had enough sense to admit that God was causing him to reap what he had sown (v.7). We are not told whether he truly repented, but we can consider him fortunate to have had the opportunity to do so.

If you see yourself reaping the consequences of your sins, stop the self-destructive cycle. Make the most of the rest of your life by running back to the open arms of the Lord. He longs to forgive you and lead you to a way of life that reaps His blessing and reward. -

- Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

## THINKING IT OVER

- What is society reaping today?
- What am I personally reaping?
- What do I need to stop sowing? Start sowing?

Present choices determine future rewards.

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**Which Way Am I Growing?** - Some folks grow old gracefully, while others become grouchy and ill-tempered. It's important to know which way we're growing, because we're all growing older. People don't get irritable and short-tempered merely because they're getting older. Aging doesn't have to make us hypercritical and cranky. No, it's more likely that we've become what we've been becoming all along.

Paul wrote: "He who sows to his flesh will ... reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will ... reap everlasting life" (Gal. 6:8). Those who pander to self-interest and think only of themselves are sowing seeds that will produce a harvest of misery in themselves and in others. On the other hand, those who love God and care for others are sowing seeds that, in time, will yield a harvest of joy.

**C. S. Lewis** put it this way: Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before.

We can choose to submit our wills to God each day, asking Him to give us strength to live for Him and for others. As He works in us, we will grow in grace and in kindness.

So the question we need to ask ourselves is: Which way am I growing? -- Dave Roper ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Surer than autumn's harvests  
Are harvests of thought and deed;  
Like those that our hands have planted,  
The yield will be like the seed. —Harris

The seeds we sow today  
determine the kind of fruit we'll reap tomorrow.

---

**We Reap What We Sow** - Many of us are deeply troubled by the injustices we see in life. Unscrupulous, dishonest, God-denying people are often the ones who prosper the most. But you can be sure of this: "God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7). This principle is illustrated in The Gray and Adams Commentary.

"The Emperor Charlemagne wanted to have a magnificent bell cast for the church he had built. An artist named Tancho was employed by the church to make it. He was furnished, at his own request, with a great quantity of copper, and a hundred pounds of silver for the purpose. He kept the silver for his own personal use, however, and substituted in its place a quantity of highly purified tin. When the work was completed, he presented the bell to the Emperor, who had it suspended in the church tower. The people, however, were unable to ring it. So Tancho himself was called in to help. But he pulled so hard that its tongue fell down and killed him."

That bell maker's death reminds me of the words of Psalm 7:16, "His trouble shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown." Sooner or later we will reap what we sow. We'll have nothing to fear if we sow what is good. -- Richard De Haan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

We're always sowing seeds in life  
In everything we do and say,  
And we will surely reap the fruit  
Of what we're planting every day. —Hess

---

**The Pathetic Pelican** - Pelicans, with their huge beaks, are strange-looking birds. But I saw one that was especially weird. Its beak was crisscrossed, as if someone had pulled the upper and lower parts in opposite directions. He was a pathetic sight! Remembering that pelicans zoom headfirst from a considerable height into schools of fish to obtain their meals, I wondered if this particular bird had seen such a tempting catch that he dove into water that was too shallow for him and hit bottom. I don't know if this is what happened, but it made me think about the consequences and sometimes permanent effects of bad choices.

Many people today carry with them the scars of sin. Although it is true that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9), physical and emotional problems often remain. Those who live a reckless and unrestrained life may bear the marks of their destructive lifestyle to their dying day, even though in later years they are marvelously saved. When you're tempted to sin, remember the pelican with the mangled beak. God will forgive you when you confess, but the consequences may last a lifetime. --Richard De Haan ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The bounty of God's matchless grace  
Is greater than our vilest deeds,  
Yet from the evil that we sow  
There may remain a crop of weeds.  
—DJD

**One reason for doing the right thing today is tomorrow.**

---

**Connected Actions**— by My son Steve was running the best cross-country races of his life. Just a high-school freshman, he earned a spot on the varsity team. That's when Steve decided he wanted to go even faster—but not on foot. So he spent a Saturday racing a dirt-track motorcycle. All went well until he misjudged a jump and ended up with his leg under a Yamaha. Nothing was broken, but having a banged-up calf muscle took a toll on his cross-country season. His times got worse, and he missed making the varsity team for the state finals. Steve learned an important lesson: All of our actions are connected. Each action affects other areas of our lives. Sometimes we try to keep parts of our lives separate from our faith in Christ. One example is thinking that watching immorality on TV does not affect our walk with God. But the Bible says, "He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow" (Proverbs 22:8), and "He who sows to his flesh will ... reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will ... reap everlasting life" (Galatians 6:8). All elements in life are inter-related. We must make sure that each thought, each action, and each word flows from a heart of Godliness—so that everything we do is for God's glory, honor, and praise. --Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Surer than autumn's harvests  
Are harvests of thought and deed;  
Like those that our hearts have planted,  
The yield will be like the seed.  
—Harris

### **The best reason for doing what's right today is tomorrow.**

---

**Poor Trade-Offs**— Life is full of trade-offs. Today's poor choices are a down payment on tomorrow's problems. It's all a part of living with the law of God that says we reap what we sow (Gal 6:7).

That was true of a 30-year-old Mississippi resident. A conviction for felony drunk driving resulted in his getting a 15-year prison sentence. The judge then suspended 14 years of the sentence if the man would honor the terms of a 1-year house arrest.

The trade-off was simple: Stay home and out of trouble for 1 year instead of going to prison for 15. But the man didn't like being cooped up, so he went fishing—driving with a suspended license to get there. He was arrested and the judge threw him in prison. The fishing trip cost him many years of freedom.

What bad trade-offs do we make? Do we reject God's mercy so we can enjoy sin's season of pleasure? In the Bible, we see some examples. Moses traded the Promised Land for an outburst of anger (Num. 20:7-13). David traded his reputation for a night of passion (2Sa 11:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6ff). Ananias and Sapphira traded life for some extra money (Acts 5:1-11).

Are you facing temptation today? Don't give in. Cling to Jesus. Obey His commands. Never exchange fellowship with Him for anything. It's always a poor trade-off. --Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

It's wise to flee when tempted—  
A fool is one who'd stay;  
For those who toy with evil  
Soon learn it doesn't pay.  
—DJD

### **In the heat of temptation, don't lose your cool**

**Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.**

Wuest Let us not slacken our exertions by reason of the weariness that comes with prolonged effort in habitually doing that which is good. For in a season which in its character is appropriate, we shall reap if we do not become enfeebled through exhaustion and faint. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

Phillips -Let us not grow tired of doing good, for, unless we throw in our hand, the ultimate harvest is assured.

Amplified - And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.

NET Galatians 6:9 So we must not grow weary in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not give up.

GNT Galatians 6:9 τ ὁ καλὸν ποιοῦντες μὴ γκῆκται, καὶ ὁ θεὸς σομεν μὴ κλυμενοι.

NLT Galatians 6:9 So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

KJV Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

ESV Galatians 6:9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

ASV Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

CSB Galatians 6:9 So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up.

NIV Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

NKJ Galatians 6:9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

NRS Galatians 6:9 So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up.

YLT Galatians 6:9 and in the doing good we may not be faint-hearted, for at the proper time we shall reap -- not desponding;

NAB Galatians 6:9 Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up.

NJB Galatians 6:9 And let us never slacken in doing good; for if we do not give up, we shall have our harvest in due time.

GWN Galatians 6:9 We can't allow ourselves to get tired of living the right way. Certainly, each of us will receive everlasting life at the proper time, if we don't give up.

BBE Galatians 6:9 And let us not get tired of well-doing; for at the right time we will get in the grain, if we do not give way to weariness.

- **Let us not lose heart:** Mal 1:13 1Co 15:58 2Th 3:13 Heb 12:3
- **in doing good:** Ro 2:7 1Pe 2:15 3:17 4:19
- **for in due time we will reap:** Lev 26:4 De 11:14 Ps 104:27 145:15 Jas 5:7
- **if we do not grow weary:** Isa 40:30,31 Zep 3:16 \*marg: Mt 24:13 Lu 18:1 2Co 4:1,16 Eph 3:13 Heb 3:6,14 10:35-39 Heb 12:3,5 Rev 2:3,7,10,11,17,26-29 3:5,6,12,13 3:21,22
- [Galatians 6:9 Weariness in Well Doing - Great Texts of the Bible](#)
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Click here for much more in depth discussion of Galatians 6:9](#) - there is some repetition of that material on this page

## PERSEVERE IN DOING GOOD

**Let us not lose heart in doing good** - How can one persevere in doing good? There is only one way and that is by continually relying on the Spirit, not on self. Allow the Spirit to produce **good** in and through your life.

**Lose heart** (1573) ([ekkakeo](#) [equivalent to egkakeo, enkakeo] from **ek** = out of or intensifies meaning + **kakós** = bad) means to strictly speaking means to act or behave badly in some circumstance. **Ekkakeo** was used of the farmer who was tempted to slacken his exertions because he had become so weary as a result of his prolonged effort. **Ekkakeo** means to lose one's motivation in continuing a particular activity. **Ekkakeo** means to be fainthearted or to faint or despond in view of trial or difficulty and it is always used with the negative particle. It means to lose one's motivation to accomplish some valid goal and so to become discouraged and give up. **Ekkakeo** conveys the idea of becoming exhausted and giving up and thus is the opposite of being "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1Co 15:58<sup>+</sup>).

**Good** deeds are **God** deeds, deeds prepared by, initiated by and empowered by the Spirit of Christ, Who lives in us. As such these "supernaturally" energized deeds are designed to glorify our Father (Mt 5:16<sup>+</sup>).

**Good** (2570) ([kalos](#)) describes that which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit with a basic meaning healthy, sound or fit. **Kalos** is intrinsically good with emphasis on that which is beautiful (Lk 21:5<sup>+</sup>), handsome, excellent, surpassing, precious, commendable, admirable. In classic Greek **kalos** was originally used to describe that which outwardly beautiful.

We're always sowing seeds in life  
By everything we do and say,  
So let's make sure the fruit we reap  
Comes from the **good** we do each day.  
—Hess

**For in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary - Due time** - The appointed season. The proper season. The due season. Proper time. Fruit is reaped in a season that follows the sowing, but it is ultimately the time of God's appointment which "is neither to be hastened nor delayed by the act of any of His creatures." (Vine)

This encouraging word about a "payday someday" brings to mind John Wesley's exhortation to "Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

**Time** (season, opportunity,) (2540)(**kairos**) means a point of time or period of time, time, period, frequently with the implication of being especially fit for something and without emphasis on precise chronology. It means a moment or period as especially appropriate the right, proper, favorable time (at the right time). A season. A point of time. A moment. An opportunity. Something that lasts for a season and so is transient, temporary or enduring only for a specific period of time.

#### Related Resources:

- [Redeem the Time](#)
- [Redeem the Time \(blog\)](#)
- [Ephesians 5:16 Commentary](#)

**Grow weary** (1590)(**ekluo** from **ek** = out or intensifier + **luo** = to loose) means literally to loosen out and to to untie, to dissolve, to release, to set free. To be unstrung as a bow string that has become unstrung and so weakened (and unusable for its intended purpose!) To be loosened or relaxed, like the limbs of the weary. **Ekluo** was used to describe reapers who had been overcome by heat and toil.

**Morris** comments that **grow weary** is relax noting that "The Christian must not relax in his ministry of seed-sowing until the Lord comes (Jas 5:7,8).

Here's a good song by **Robin Mark** to play in light of the length of eternity and the brevity of our life...

#### **When It's All Been Said and Done**

When It's All Been Said and Done  
There is just one thing that matters.  
Did I do my best to live for Truth?  
Did I live my life for You?

When It's All Been Said and Done  
All my treasures will mean nothing.  
Only what I've done for love's reward,  
Will stand the test of time.

Lord Your mercy is so great  
That You look beyond our weakness  
And find purest gold in miry clay  
Making sinners into saints

I will always sing Your praise  
Here on earth and ever after  
For You've shown me Heaven's my true home  
When it's all been said and done  
You're my life when life is gone  
(Repeat)

Lord I'll live my life for You

---

**Never Give Up!** — As Hitler was mounting his attack against England during World War II, Winston Churchill was asked to speak to a group of discouraged Londoners. He uttered an eight-word encouragement: "Never give up! Never, never, never give up!"

There will be times when you'll be discouraged in your Christian walk, but you must never, never, never give up. If nothing else, your struggle against sin will cause you to turn to God again and again and cling to Him in your desperation.

In his book *The Fight*, John White writes,



"It is the man or woman who gets up and fights again that is the true warrior ... Strengthen yourself with a powerful draught of the wine of Romans 8:1, 2, 3, 4. Then get back into the fight before your muscles get stiff!"

What's required is dogged endurance, keeping at the task of obedience through the ebbs and flows, ups and downs, victories and losses in life. It is trying again, while knowing that God is working in you to accomplish His purposes (Philippians 1:6; 2:13). It is persistently pursuing God's will for your life till you stand before Him and your work is done.

God is wonderfully persistent too. He will never, never, never give up on you! — by David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O Lord, You are faithful and always will be,  
You never give up on working with me;  
So as I am striving to serve You each day,  
Help me to follow Your will and Your way.  
—Fitzhugh

Perseverance can tip the scales from failure to success.

---

**Don't Be Discouraged** — "Why are you throwing away those nice potatoes, Grandpa?" asked my young grandson. I was planting potatoes in my garden, and he thought it was a waste to bury them. So I had an opportunity to explain to him that only as we give the seed away can we receive the harvest.

A few days later, my grandson was in the garden again, looking at the ground. He complained, "Grandpa, they're not coming up." So I spoke to him about patience.

We too can become impatient when our service for the Lord doesn't appear to bear fruit. Sometimes we may feel like giving up because we do not see immediate results.

A dying soldier asked a chaplain to write to his former Sunday school teacher: "Tell her that I'm a Christian because of what she taught me in Sunday school." He sent the message and received the following reply: "Last month I resigned my Sunday school class, for I felt my teaching had been fruitless. And then came the message from my former pupil. May God forgive me for my impatience and lack of faith. I will ask my pastor to let me teach again, and I promise by God's grace not to quit."

Let's faithfully serve the Lord—depending on His power and strength—and leave the results to Him.— by M. R. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Day by day perform your mission,  
With Christ's help keep at your tasks;  
Have no fear that God will chide you,  
Faithfulness is all He asks! —HGB

Discouragement is one of the devil's most effective weapons.

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**The Joy of Harvest**— It is one of those rare, beautiful autumn days as I am writing this article. I am sitting on a cement block in my shirt sleeves, admiring the labor of my hands. I have just picked 10 bushels of Red Delicious apples from my two small trees.

I think ahead to the winter evening when I will sit before the fireplace with a tray of these delicious fruits at my elbow. But then my mind recalls all the past hard work it took to produce these apples.

I recall how I hung on my ladder with pruning tools and trimmed those trees in freezing weather. I remember spraying those trees to ward off insects and disease. I murmured to myself, "Is it really worth all this work?" Today I have the answer in 10 bushels of almost perfect fruit. Yes, it was worth it all.

For the Christian, today is the sowing, growing, and pruning time. We find ourselves wondering about the difficulties we must face as we serve the Lord. But the prospect of the future urges us on. It is the promise of harvest that brightens the way and makes the burdens lighter.

Are you bowed down and discouraged? Then look ahead. Keep your eye on the future and the joy of the harvest (Gal. 6:9). — M. R. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The joy to come with harvest grain  
That follows days of toil and strain  
Renews our will to persevere  
In serving Christ when days grow drear.  
—DJD

A fruitful harvest requires faithful service.

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**GOD'S MYSTERIOUS WAYS** - After years of service in South Africa, the famous missionary Robert Moffat returned to Scotland to recruit helpers. When he arrived at the church one cold wintry night, he was dismayed that only a small group had come out to hear him. What bothered him even more was that the only people in attendance were ladies. Although he was grateful for their interest, he had hoped to challenge men. He had chosen as his text [Proverbs 8:4](#), "Unto you, O men, I call."

In his discouragement he almost failed to notice one small boy in the loft pumping the bellows of the organ. Moffat felt frustrated as he gave the message, for he realized that very few women could be expected to undergo the rigorous life in undeveloped jungles. But God works in mysterious ways. Although no one volunteered that evening, the young fellow assisting the organist was deeply moved by the challenge. As a result, he promised God he would follow in the footsteps of this pioneer missionary. And he remained true to his vow. When he grew up, he went and ministered to the unreached tribes of Africa. His name was **David Livingstone!**

Moffat never ceased to wonder that his appeal which he had intended for men had stirred a young boy, who eventually became a mighty power for God. - H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**THE THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM** - In due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart (Galatians 6:9).

In a manufacturing town in Scotland, a young lady began teaching a Sunday school class of poverty-stricken boys. The most unpromising youngster was a boy named Bob. After the first two or three Sundays, he did not return. So the teacher went to look for him. Although the superintendent had given Bob some new clothes, they were already worn and dirty when the teacher found him. He was given another new suit, and he came back to Sunday school. But soon he quit again, and the teacher went out once more to find him. When she did, she discovered that the second set of clothes had gone the way of the first.

"I am completely discouraged about Bob," she told the superintendent.

"I guess we must give up on him."

"Please don't do that," he pleaded. "I believe there is still hope. Try him one more time."

They gave Bob a third suit of clothes, and this time he began to attend faithfully. It wasn't long until he became a Christian and eventually even taught in that same Sunday school.

Who was that obstinate, ragged boy who for a time seemed so unreachable? None other than Robert Morrison, who later became the first Protestant missionary to China. He translated the Bible into Chinese and brought the Word of God to teeming millions.

**A. B. Simpson** said, "God has hidden every precious thing in such a way that it is a reward to the diligent, a prize to the earnest, but a disappointment to the slothful."

In service for Christ, keep "doing good." **Perseverance wins!** - H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**Galatians 6:10** So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Wuest So then, in like manner, let us be having opportunity, let us be working that which is good to all, but especially to those of the household of the Faith. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#))

Phillips - Let us then do good to all men as opportunity offers, especially to those who belong to the Christian

household.

Amplified - So then, as occasion and opportunity open up to us, let us do good morally] to all people [not only being useful or profitable to them, but also doing what is for their spiritual good and advantage]. Be mindful to be a blessing, especially to those of the household of faith [those who belong to God's family with you, the believers].

NET Galatians 6:10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who belong to the family of faith.

GNT Galatians 6:10 ρα ο ν ς και ρ ν χομεν, ργαζ μεθα τ γαθ ν πρ ς π ντας, μ λιστα δ πρ ς το ς ο κε ους τ ς π στεως.

NLT Galatians 6:10 Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone-- especially to those in the family of faith.

KJV Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

ESV Galatians 6:10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

ASV Galatians 6:10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith.

CSB Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, we must work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.

NIV Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

NKJ Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

NRS Galatians 6:10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

YLT Galatians 6:10 therefore, then, as we have opportunity, may we work the good to all, and especially unto those of the household of the faith.

NAB Galatians 6:10 So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all, but especially to those who belong to the family of the faith.

NJB Galatians 6:10 So then, as long as we have the opportunity let all our actions be for the good of everybody, and especially of those who belong to the household of the faith.

GWN Galatians 6:10 Whenever we have the opportunity, we have to do what is good for everyone, especially for the family of believers.

BBE Galatians 6:10 So then, as we have the chance, let us do good to all men, and specially to those who are of the family of the faith.

- **So then, while we have opportunity:** Ec 9:10 Joh 9:4 12:35 Eph 5:16 Php 4:10 Col 4:5 \*Gr: Tit 2:14
- **let us do good to all people:** Ps 37:3,27 Ec 3:12 Mt 5:43 Mk 3:4 Lu 6:35 1Th 5:15 1Ti 6:17,18 Tit 3:8 Heb 13:16 3Jn 1:11
- **especially to those who are of the household of the faith:** Mt 10:25 12:50 25:40 Eph 2:19 3:15 Heb 3:6 6:10 1Jn 3:13-19 1Jn 5:1 3Jn 1:5-8
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Click here for much more in depth discussion of Galatians 6:10](#) - there may be some repetition of that material on this page

## WHILE WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY

**So then, while we have opportunity** - Notice the time sensitive word "**while**" which is defined "as a period of indeterminate length (usually short) marked by some action or condition." The point is that we don't know how long we will have opportunity to do good, but we do know that when we breath our last breath, that time is over forever. God has set boundaries around our lives, and

our **opportunity** (a state of affairs or combination of circumstances favorable to some end) for service exists only within those boundaries. We are to make the most of our time on this evil earth in fulfilling God's purposes, lining up every opportunity for useful worship and service. As discussed below the English word **opportunity** comes from the Latin and means "toward the port." It suggests a ship taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor. The brevity of life is a strong argument for making the best use of every **opportunity** God gives us.

If you are continually filled with and walking by God's Spirit (Eph 5:18+, Gal 5:16+), He will enable you to be on "high alert" for spiritual opportunities which you can seize before they are gone. What opportunities are passing before you today? How will you respond? Walk wisely. Be filled with the Spirit. Redeem the time! We don't want to be like Mark Twain who said "I was seldom able to see an opportunity until it had ceased to be one." It takes only a moment to be kind, but the result can last forever

**Alexander Graham Bell** said that "When one door closes, another one opens, but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us."

**ILLUSTRATION** - A farmer's clock ran amuck one morning and struck seventeen. The man of the house jumped up and ran all over the place, saying, "Get up, it's later than it ever has been before!" It is later than it ever has been by God's eternal timepiece. It is later than you think.

We do not know how long we have  
Till time for us is past,  
So let us live as if this day  
Is going to be our last.  
—D. De Haan

To spend time wisely, invest it in eternity.

**Opportunity** (same word translated "**time**" in Gal 6:9) ([2540](#)) see preceding note on [kairos](#). Paul uses **kairos** to exhort the saints at Ephesus to make "make the most of your time, because the days are evil. (Eph 5:16+) Our goal as believers is to enter into those works that He has already prepared for us, for those are the only eternally lasting and "good" works. The idea of **kairos** is that God gives each believer opportunities - each new day brings its opened doors, its vast potential. It behooves believers to live in such a way that we are sensitive to when God gives us one of those "**kairos**" opportunities, because when it passes, it is gone. We can achieve our potential in His service only as we utilize those opportunities He has given us. If this admonition was urgent during Paul's day, how much more urgent today!

**Billy Graham** once said that "Life is a glorious **opportunity**, if it is used to condition us for eternity. If we fail in this, though we succeed in everything else, our life will have been a failure." (Let us do good to all people - Read Billy Graham's "missed opportunity" with President John F Kennedy - [Billy Graham](#))

The following quote from **Napoleon** illustrates the idea inherent in **kairos**: "There is in the midst of every great battle a ten to fifteen minute period that is the crucial point. Take that period and you win the battle; lose it and you will be defeated."

**William Law** (1686-1761) offers an interesting, practical insight on **opportunity**, encouraging believers to "Receive every inward and outward trouble, every disappointment, pain, uneasiness, temptation, darkness, and desolation, with both thy hands, as a **true opportunity** and blessed occasion of dying to self (Mk 8:34), and entering into a fuller fellowship with thy self-denying, suffering Savior (Php 3:10+). Look at no inward or outward trouble in any other view; reject every other thought about it, and then every kind of trial and distress will become the blessed day of thy prosperity. That state is best, which exerciseth the highest faith in and fullest resignation to God."

**Chuck Swindoll** put it this way - We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations.

**L P Jacks** - The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; the optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.

**John Ruskin** (1819–1900) - Sojourn in every place as if you meant to spend your life there, never omitting an opportunity of doing a kindness, speaking a true word, or making a friend.

**Let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith**- Paul includes himself in this exhortation ("let us"), even in light of all the good he had done. He knew the eternal value of the good we do in this life. Our good deeds on earth do not earn any favor with God, but in His amazing, magnanimous grace, in Heaven and forever God will reward us for those deeds. O, how we need to live each day as if we truly believed this were true, for IT IS!

**Do (ergazomai)** is in the [present tense](#) and so calls for continuous activity to accomplish or bring about some **good** through work. This will require dependence on the Holy Spirit in Whom Paul had just commanded them to continually walk (Gal 5:16) and be led by

(Gal 5:18). Good works cannot be produced by self-effort or self-reliance but only by the good Spirit working in us to initiate and enable those good works. So the order is - First, **BE** filled, **BE** walking by the Spirit. Second, **DO** the good works.

**Let us do** (Accomplish) (2038)(**ergazomai** from **ergon** = work) means to engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort. To work effectively. The NT uses **ergazomai** in a literal (to do manual labor) and figurative (especially spiritual - see below) sense. To labor, do work. **Ergazomai** speaks of "an action as something that stands in contrast to inactivity or talk." (Richards) **Ergazomai** is often used to describe work in a spiritual sense, implying supernatural work, work that God does, work that God (His Spirit indwelling believers) energizes in and through His children, work that lasts for all eternity! (Jn 5:17, Jn 6:27, Jn 9:4)

**ILLUSTRATION**: Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel awoke one morning and read his own obituary in the local newspaper. It read, "Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, who died yesterday, devised a way for more people to be killed in a war than ever before, and he died a very rich man." It was Alfred's older brother who had died; a newspaper reporter had bungled the epitaph. But that account had a tremendous impact on Nobel, who decided he wanted to be remembered for something different. As a result, he initiated the Nobel Prize to reward individuals who foster peace. He said, "Every man ought to have the chance to correct his epitaph in midstream and write a new one."

**C. T. Studd** emphasized the importance of making your one life count for the Lord when he wrote....

Two little lines I heard one day,  
Traveling along life's busy way;  
Bringing conviction to my heart,  
And from my mind would not depart;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

Only one life, yes only one,  
Soon will its fleeting hours be done;  
Then, in 'that day' my Lord to meet,  
And stand before His Judgement seat;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

Only one life, the still small voice,  
Gently pleads for a better choice  
Bidding me selfish aims to leave,  
And to God's holy will to cleave;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

Only one life, a few brief years,  
Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;  
Each with its days I must fulfill,  
Living for self or in His will;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

When this bright world would tempt me sore,  
When Satan would a victory score;  
When self would seek to have its way,  
Then help me Lord with joy to say;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

Give me Father, a purpose deep,  
In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;  
Faithful and true what e'er the strife,  
Pleasing Thee in my daily life;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**

**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

Oh let my love with fervor burn,  
And from the world now let me turn;  
Living for Thee, and Thee alone,  
Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

Only one life, yes only one,  
Now let me say, "Thy will be done";  
And when at last I'll hear the call,  
I know I'll say "twas worth it all";  
**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last."**

**Only one life, 'twill soon be past,**  
**Only what's done for Christ will last.**

And when I am dying, how happy I'll be,  
If the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee."

---

Kent Hughes says that believers "ought to be like the little boy whose family clock malfunctioned and struck 15x so that he rushed wide-eyed to his mother crying, "Mommy, it's later than it's ever been before!" What sanctifying logic! We should also keep in mind that if Christ does not return in our time, He will certainly come individually for us in death. Each ache, pain, gray hair, new wrinkle or funeral is another reminder that it is later than it has ever been before. It is time to love our neighbors as ourselves. It's later than you think. Redeem the time!...May God help us to love with a sense of urgency and selflessness. Let us cultivate a sense of debt. Just as when we owe someone money and our debt is the first thing we think of when we see him, so may it be with our debt of love (see Ro 13:8, 9-note, Ro 13:10, 11-note). Let us enlarge our definition of neighbor as, "My neighbor is not necessarily someone like me. It is any person God has (Ed: sovereignly, providentially, not accidentally) put in my way whom I can help." Let us cultivate a sense of the time—"It is later than it has ever been before."

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**Ob Portu** - In the days before modern harbors, a ship had to wait for the flood tide before it could make it to port. The term for this situation in Latin was ob portu, that is, a ship standing over off a port, waiting for the moment when it could ride the turn of the tide to harbor.

THOUGHT: What a great picture of a believer waiting for others who are passing by, intentionally [as led by the Spirit] watching for and seizing opportunities to do good! Lord give us eyes to see those "golden opportunities" You have placed in our path that we might be like ships ob portu, seizing the moment for Your glory. Amen)

The English word opportunity is derived from this original meaning. The captain and the crew were ready and waiting for that one moment for they knew that if they missed it, they would have to wait for another tide to come in. Shakespeare turned this background of the exact meaning of opportunity into one of his most famous passages. It's from Julius Caesar, Act 4, Scene 3:

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat;  
And we must take the current when it serves,  
Or lose our ventures.

---

**TICK, TICK, TICK** - Do you have a clock or watch available with a secondhand on it? Stop and follow that hand as it ticks away 1 minute. Those seconds, of course, are the way we measure time, and time is the very essence of our lives. By the time you reach the age of 75, the clocks and watches of this world will have ticked away a total of nearly 2.5 billion seconds.

Bernard Berenson, an internationally famous art critic, had a zest for life. Even when he was in ill health, he cherished every moment. Shortly before he died at age 94, he said to a friend, "I would willingly stand at street corners, hat in hand, asking



passersby to drop their unused minutes into it." Oh, that we would learn to appreciate the value of time!

We certainly don't want to be so time-conscious that we become driven workaholics, neglecting our families, never relaxing with our friends, too busy to smell the roses or admire a sunset. Yet Paul urged us to redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15-16), and Moses prayed, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

Let's ask the Lord to help us appreciate the value of time. May we wisely invest our seconds, minutes, hours, and days, realizing that beyond time lies eternity.

**Galatians 6:11** **See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.**

NET Galatians 6:11 See what big letters I make as I write to you with my own hand!

GNT Galatians 6:11 δετε πηλ κοις μ ν γρ μμασιν γραφα τ μ χειρ .

NLT Galatians 6:11 NOTICE WHAT LARGE LETTERS I USE AS I WRITE THESE CLOSING WORDS IN MY OWN HANDWRITING.

KJV Galatians 6:11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

ESV Galatians 6:11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

ASV Galatians 6:11 See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand.

CSB Galatians 6:11 Look at what large letters I use as I write to you in my own handwriting.

NIV Galatians 6:11 See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!

NKJ Galatians 6:11 See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!

NRS Galatians 6:11 See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand!

YLT Galatians 6:11 Ye see in how large letters I have written to you with my own hand;

NAB Galatians 6:11 See with what large letters I am writing to you in my own hand!

NJB Galatians 6:11 Notice what large letters I have used in writing to you with my own hand.

GWN Galatians 6:11 Look at how large the letters in these words are because I'm writing this myself.

BBE Galatians 6:11 See the size of the handwriting which I myself have made use of in writing to you.

- **I am writing to you with my own hand:** Ro 16:22 1Co 16:21-23
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LARGE LETTERS

**Longenecker** notes that "the subscription [Gal 6:11-18] provides important clues for understanding the issues discussed throughout Galatians, particularly those having to do with the judaizing threat brought into the churches by certain legalistically oriented Jewish Christians, for it not only summarizes the main points dealt with earlier in the letter but also allows us to cut through all of the verbage and see matters in their essence as Paul saw them." ([Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 41, Galatians](#))

We know one of Paul's main purposes for writing this letter was to warn the Galatians of the danger of falling from grace if they listened to the Judaizers. Now in this final section it seems that he himself may have taken up the pen so that he could (1) authenticate the letter (cf similar idea in 1Cor 16:21; Col 4:18; 2 Thess 3:17) and (2) to graphically call their attention to his main points. Imagine reading this letter and from Galatians 6:11-18 every word was "large" and/or in capital letters. That would certainly get the reader's attention!

**See** ([aorist imperative](#)) **with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand** - We cannot be dogmatic but the **large letters** may reflect poor eyesight which might be what he alludes to in Gal 4:13, 15+. These large letters could have been all capital letters (see NLT rendition below) Some think that the previous part of this letter was dictated by Paul and only here did he take up the pen and personally write down letters. We cannot state with certainty and so will have to wait until Heaven to ask Paul what this statement means.

**NLT** has "NOTICE WHAT LARGE LETTERS I USE AS I WRITE THESE CLOSING WORDS IN MY OWN HANDWRITING."

**MacArthur** on the phrase **with my own hand** - Whatever else it may indicate, with my own hand shows that Paul normally dictated his letters to a scribe, or amanuensis, who did the actual writing. It was his custom, however, to write a short salutation in his own handwriting (see 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17) in order to prove the genuineness of the letter. During the time of the early church, many forged documents were circulated in the name of the apostles in order to gain credibility. Paul referred to that practice of deception when he cautioned the Thessalonian believers not to "be quickly shaken from [their] composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from [him], to the effect that the day of the Lord [had] come" (2 Thess. 2:2). ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

Some like **Robertson** are dogmatic - Paul now takes the pen from the amanuensis (cf. Romans 16:22) and writes the rest of the Epistle (Galatians 6:11-18) himself instead of the mere farewell greeting (2 Thes. 3:17; 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18). ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Writing** (1125)(**grapho** from root **graph-** = primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; **English** = graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John ), paper, etc.

**Wiersbe** asks "Why did Paul write this paragraph, and why did he use such large letters?" Wiersbe goes on to suggest that "The Holy Spirit inspired him to add these closing words to give one more contrast between the legalists and the Spirit-led Christians, to show that the Spirit-led believer lives for the glory of God, not for the praise of man. And he wrote in large letters for emphasis: **"DON'T MISS THIS!"**" ([Commentary](#))

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### **Galatians 6:11-18 Boasting That Brings Blessing!**

It is remarkable to realize that the crucifixion is a way of life, not just a way of death. Christ's crucifixion was not the end of His redemptive work, for He arose from the grave and provided us with the resurrection life.

Romans 6:7 says, "But he that is dead [has died] is freed from sin." This means that the person who has died is free from the claims, power, slavery and allurements of sin.

The basis for Paul's glorying is the cross of Christ. The Judaizers had sought their own glory, but this led only to failure. The kind of self-life they lived through imposing rules and regulations ended in accomplishments that produced self-glory.

But all of these self-accomplishments were reached in the sphere of the flesh nature and therefore ended in pride.

This has always been a danger facing Christians, and it is no less today. There is too much Christian life and testimony on a fleshly level.

Paul's boast and joy and delight was in the One whom the world had crucified. God set His hand of approval on His Son, who was crucified, by raising Him from the dead.

What is your boast today?

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24).

**Galatians 6:12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.**

NET Galatians 6:12 Those who want to make a good showing in external matters are trying to force you to be circumcised. They do so only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.

GNT Galatians 6:12 σοι θ λουσιν ε προσωπ σαι ν σαρκ , ο τοι ναγκ ζουσιν μ ς περι μνεσθαι, μ νον να τ σταυρ το Χριστο μ δι κωνται.

NLT Galatians 6:12 Those who are trying to force you to be circumcised want to look good to others. They don't want to be persecuted for teaching that the cross of Christ alone can save.

KJV Galatians 6:12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

ESV Galatians 6:12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

ASV Galatians 6:12 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

CSB Galatians 6:12 Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh are the ones who would compel you to be circumcised-- but only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.

NIV Galatians 6:12 Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.

NKJ Galatians 6:12 As 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.

NRS Galatians 6:12 It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised-- only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

YLT Galatians 6:12 as many as are willing to make a good appearance in the flesh, these constrain you to be circumcised -- only that for the cross of the Christ they may not be persecuted,

NAB Galatians 6:12 It is those who want to make a good appearance in the flesh who are trying to compel you to have yourselves circumcised, only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

NJB Galatians 6:12 It is those who want to cut a figure by human standards who force circumcision on you, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

GWN Galatians 6:12 These people who want to make a big deal out of a physical thing are trying to force you to be circumcised. Their only aim is to avoid persecution because of the cross of Christ.

BBE Galatians 6:12 Those who have the desire to seem important in the flesh, put force on you to undergo circumcision; only that they may not be attacked because of the cross of Christ.

- **Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh** Ga 6:13 Mt 6:2,5,16 23:5,28 Lu 16:15 20:47 Joh 7:18 2Co 10:12 2Co 11:13 Php 1:15 2:4 Col 2:23
- **try to compel you to be circumcised** Ga 2:3,14 Ac 15:1,5
- **simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ** Ga 5:11 Php 3:18
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE JUDAIZERS' SELFISH MOTIVES

**Ronald Fung** comments that "Before concluding his letter Paul returns once more to the antithesis of **cross** and **circumcision**, setting them forth this time as representing respectively the true and the false ground of boasting, and thus carrying a stage further his polemic against the Judaizers and their way of legal observance (cf. Gal 5:2-12)." ([The Epistle to the Galatians](#))

**Boice** comments that "The somewhat abrupt ending has the effect of leaving the great issue of the letter—faith or works—sharply before the Galatians." ([Galatians/Ephesians - EBC - 1976](#))

**MacArthur** writes that "Most of the letter is spent condemning the **false teachings** of the Judaizers. Now Paul also condemns their **motives** for teaching their legalistic perversion of the gospel. He declares that they were motivated by religious pride, by cowardice, and by hypocrisy....(In Gal 6:12) They were not concerned about pleasing God by inward righteousness but about impressing other men by outward legalism." ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)) (Bold added)

**Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised-** The Judaizers were interested in the external showing and thus sought to strongly pressure (even force) the Galatians to carry out physical circumcision. As Campbells says they were "only men-pleasers (cf Gal 1:10+)" Of course, as Paul explained in this letter, this was not merely a "neutral" act (simply removal of the foreskin), but was meant to be a work that would assure that they were saved. And so Paul warned strongly against circumcision

Behold I, Paul, say to you that **if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you**. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that **he is under obligation to keep the whole Law**. **4 You have been severed from Christ**, you who are seeking to be justified by law; **you have fallen from grace**. (Gal 5:2-4+)

The Judaizers were like their legalistic predecessors, the scribes and Pharisees, who would "travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte," and when they succeeded they would make him "twice as much a son of hell as" themselves (Matt. 23:15).

**Desire** (2309)(**thelo**) primarily refers to exercising one's will with the underlying sense of to be willing, to desire, to want or to wish. **Vine** says "**Thelo**" expresses not simply a desire, but a determined and constant exercise of the will," which would be an excellent description of the Judaizers who incessantly (desire is in the [present tense](#) = continually) were trying to negate the truth of the Cross of Christ.

**Gilbrant** explains that the Judaizers' "concern was to "make a good showing" (euprosōpēsai) for themselves. They differed from their fellow Jews only in that they had accepted Jesus as the promised Messiah, but failed to understand His true mission and its saving significance. Seemingly they wished to remain in good standing with the main-line Jewish community. For them to be able to boast that they had persuaded Jewish and Gentile Christians to return to the way of the Law would give them a favorable reputation in Jerusalem. Then they would not face the disfavor and wrath of the Jewish opposition." (Complete Biblical Library Commentary - Galatians)

**Good showing** (Only NT use)(2146)(**euprosōpéō** from **e ú** = well + **prósōpon** = a face, appearance) means to make a fair appearance, make a good showing or impression, stand well before others, appear plausible (Ge 12:11). The word conveys overtones of insincerity. The idea of this word in context is that the opponents of the Cross (and Paul) in Galatia were concerned about making an external, natural showing. Paul's concern was of course just the opposite, for it was the Spirit's internal, supernatural work in his converts that was important to him (cf. Gal 4:19; Gal 5:16ff.). Paul's caricature of the Judaizers emphasizes the contrast between the Judaizer's outward appearance and inward Spirit energized reality.

**F F Bruce** - "Whereas Paul was concerned about the Spirit's inward work in his converts, so that Christ should be 'formed' in them (cf. Gal 4:19), the Judaizers' concern was for an external mark, a mark produced in the 'flesh' of those whom they could win over to their side." ([The Epistle to the Galatians](#) - NICNT)

**Don Anderson** comments that "It is more comfortable and convenient to go this way rather than to suffer in picking up the cross and following Christ." ([Notes](#))

**Compel** ([present tense](#) = continually) (315)(**anagkazo** from **anagke** - compelling need requiring immediate action, a pressing situation) refers to an inner or an outward compulsion (coercion) for someone to act in a certain manner, in this case undergo circumcision (anagkazo used in Gal 2:14+), and to do so with a sense of urgency (as a pressing necessity). **Anagkazo** was used in surgery of force to reduce dislocations, etc.

**Simply so that they will not be persecuted for the Cross of Christ**- **Lightfoot** explains the persecution is "For professing the Cross of Christ." **Fung** explains that in this context the **Cross of Christ** "stands for the whole doctrine of justification by faith alone that Paul had been defending in this epistle." ([Galatians](#)) This doctrine is offensive to men's fallen flesh and pride who think they can do something on their own to approach God and be righteous before Him. The Cross has always been an offense to religions of works, "to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness." (1 Cor 1:23) And so these Judaizers were in essence cowards! Proud cowards! To identify with the Cross (then and now) invites persecution and these Judaizers wanted no part of that persecution. They were unwilling to pay this high cost. Little wonder that Jesus called on those who truly desired to be His disciples to count the cost...

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? 26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. (Luke 9:23-26+, cf Lk 14:26-27+, Mt 10:38-39; Mt 16:23-26, Mk 8:34-38, Jn 12:25)

**MacArthur** comments that the Judaizers "were not willing to pay the price of persecution in order to be identified with Jesus Christ. They would use His name and attend His church only if there was no offense to those around them. Most of such offense could be avoided if they denied the meaning of Christ's death....They recognized Jesus as the Messiah and proclaimed allegiance to Him, but they had no part in Him because they refused to receive His finished work on the cross on their behalf." ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Boice** explains the reason the **Cross** brings persecution - The difficulty is the cross, because the cross speaks of the necessity of a divine death as the only solution to the sin of man. To have the cross is to have three disquieting and humiliating doctrines: (1) man is a sinner; (2) his sin brings him under the curse of God, which curse Christ bore; and (3) nothing man can do can earn salvation, for if this were possible, the cross would have been unnecessary. These doctrines humble men. Consequently, men hate the cross and actively persecute those who proclaim it. ([Galatians/Ephesians - EBC - 1976](#))

**Gromacki** - "If the Judaizers had disavowed the necessity of circumcision, they would have been ostracized by the Jewish communities. They would have been excommunicated from the synagogues, exploited financially, and probably harmed physically. The Judaizers knew that, thus they were afraid to take a stand for justification by faith alone. They were more closely identified with the Pharisees and the priests than they were with the apostles." ([Stand Fast in Liberty : An Exposition of Galatians](#))

**MacArthur on the cross of Christ** -From the first century, **the cross** has been the recognized insignia of Christianity. During the Roman persecutions, the fish became a common sign, but only among Christians themselves as a secret means of identifying one another. The only sign that has continuously and universally represented the Christian faith is **the cross**. Even secular Roman historians, including Tacitus in the first century and Suetonius in the second century, commonly referred to Christians as the followers of a criminal crucified under Pontius Pilate....The book of Galatians has been called "**The Crucifixion Epistle**," not only because it directly mentions the cross or crucifixion some seven times (Gal 2:20; 3:1; 5:11, 24; 6:12, 14 [twice]) but because God's redemptive grace, the theme of the epistle, became effective for men only through the cross of Christ. The sign of the cross points to grace. ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Cross** (4716) (**stauros** from **histemi** = to stand) was an upright stake, especially a pointed one and was a well-known instrument of most cruel and agonizing torture known to the Persians (Ezra 6:11; Esther 7:10); and the Carthaginians. Those who were crucified were considered the vilest, guiltiest criminals, particularly the basest slaves, robbers, and insurrectionists. Persons sentenced to be crucified were first scourged and then made to bear their own cross to the place of execution. A label or title was usually placed on the chest of or over the criminal. Crucifixion was at once an execution, a pillory, and an instrument of torture.

**Gilbrant on stauros** - In secular Greek stauros denotes a "pole," or a "pile," such as is used in foundations. The term is also used of a "fence, stake," or a "tent peg"; however, it also refers to a "cross" upon which criminals were executed (cf. Liddell-Scott). (Ibid)

**Zodhiates** explains the antagonism against the Cross - When we read of the antagonism to the cross of Christ, we must understand it as antagonism to a redemption which was accomplished by the deepest humiliation, not by the display of power and glory (Gal. 6:14; Phil. 2:5-8). Where other NT authors (and Paul elsewhere) employ the word **blood** (háima <G129>) as a symbol for Christ's sacrificial death, Paul often uses the word **cross**. Although both terms refer to Christ's death, each emphasizes a particular aspect regarding it. Christ's **blood** represents His death as sacrifice and connects it with the OT sacrifices. The **cross** of Christ represents His death as suffering and connects it with the curse of sin. The cross shows this peculiar manner of His death as that which entailed suffering, shame, rejection, and humiliation. In Col. 1:20, Paul reaches a high point in his cross-theology by combining these two words and saying that God has "made peace through the blood of His cross" ([The Complete Word Study Dictionary](#))

**Galatians 6:13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh.**

NET Galatians 6:13 For those who are circumcised do not obey the law themselves, but they want you to be circumcised so that they can boast about your flesh.

GNT Galatians 6:13 ο δ γ ρ ο περιτεμν μενοι α το ν μον φυλ σσουσιν αλ θ λουσιν μ ζ περιτ μνεσθαι, να ν τ μετ ρ σαρκ καυχ σωνται.

NLT Galatians 6:13 And even those who advocate circumcision don't keep the whole law themselves. They only want you to be circumcised so they can boast about it and claim you as their disciples.

KJV Galatians 6:13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

ESV Galatians 6:13 For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

ASV Galatians 6:13 For not even they who receive circumcision do themselves keep the law; but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

CSB Galatians 6:13 For even the circumcised don't keep the law themselves; however, they want you to be circumcised in order to boast about your flesh.

NIV Galatians 6:13 Not even those who are circumcised obey the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh.

NKJ Galatians 6:13 For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh.

NRS Galatians 6:13 Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh.

YLT Galatians 6:13 for neither do those circumcised themselves keep the law, but they wish you to be circumcised, that in your flesh they may glory.

NAB Galatians 6:13 Not even those having themselves circumcised observe the law themselves; they only want you to be circumcised so that they may boast of your flesh.

NJB Galatians 6:13 Even though they are circumcised they still do not keep the Law themselves; they want you to be circumcised only so that they can boast of your outward appearance.

GWN Galatians 6:13 It's clear that not even those who had themselves circumcised did this to follow Jewish laws. Yet, they want you to be circumcised so that they can brag about what was done to your body.

BBE Galatians 6:13 Because even those who undergo circumcision do not themselves keep the law; but they would have you undergo circumcision, so that they may have glory in your flesh.

- **For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves** Mt 23:3,15,23 Ro 2:17-24 3:9-19 2Pe 2:19
- **so that they may boast in your flesh** 1Co 3:21 5:6 2Co 11:18
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE HYPOCRISY OF THEIR WORKS BASED RELIGION!

**MacArthur** links their cowardice in Gal 6:12 with their hypocrisy in this passage explaining that "Hypocrisy is inseparable from cowardice, because if a person were not afraid of what other people might say or do, he would have no reason for pretending to be something he is not." ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves**- There were physically circumcised, but that gave them no power against the powerful lusts of the flesh. And they clearly were not interesting in spiritual state of the Galatians. As **Vos** says "They were not concerned about the welfare of believers or the glory of God but only about their own safety and reputation."

Paul could also be saying that the Judaizers were not even "good Jews" for they did not seek to observe the Mosaic Law. **Hansen** adds that "Their own inconsistency in following **the Law** demonstrated that devotion to **the Law** was not their basic motivation." ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#) - IVP Series)

**But they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh**- The idea is that the Judaizers could boast in and point to these "converts" to circumcision as evidence of their zeal for the Law. But even their motivation was fleshy -- that they might boast. They were like the Native Americans who would [collect scalps](#) on their belt to boast in their fighting prowess.

**MacArthur** - They were greatly concerned about making proselytes to their perverted form of the gospel, which was symbolized not by baptism but circumcision. (Ibid)

**Donald Campbell** writes that "The legalists knew the offense of the Cross would be softened if they openly proclaimed justification by faith and works (i.e., circumcision) and if they could claim conversions to that position in Galatia." ([BKC](#))

**Boice** on **they may boast in your flesh** - This means that they wanted to boast in the number of circumcisions, much as David had boasted in the two hundred foreskins of the Philistines. They were trophy hunters and wanted to be able to report on mass "conversions" in Galatia. The humbling parallel would be in the tendency to take pride in counting the number of "decisions for Christ" or "baptisms" today. ([Galatians/Ephesians - EBC - 1976](#))

**Bartlett** says "greed for domination as well as fear of persecution motivated these proponents of a works- righteousness. They who reject the freedom of grace for themselves are all too prone to move heaven and earth to bring others under the bondage of works. They launch attacks of withering scorn against those who take a stand for the Gospel of free grace that they themselves lack the courage to take. Let them beware, for laughter at the Cross converts it from a vehicle of mercy into an instrument of judgment." ([Commentary](#))

Galatians 6:13-14 give us the motives of the false teachers.

- "to make a fair show in the flesh." - Religious Pride
- "to escape persecution." - Cowards
- "glory in the flesh"



**Galatians 6:14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

NET Galatians 6:14 But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

GNT Galatians 6:14 μο ὃ μ γ νοιτο καυχ σθαι ε μ ν τ σταυρ το κυρ ου μ ν ησο Χριστο , δι ο μο κ σμος στα ρωται κ γ κ σμ .

NLT Galatians 6:14 As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world's interest in me has also died.

KJV Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

ESV Galatians 6:14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

ASV Galatians 6:14 But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

CSB Galatians 6:14 But as for me, I will never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The world has been crucified to me through the cross, and I to the world.

NIV Galatians 6:14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

NKJ Galatians 6:14 But 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.

NRS Galatians 6:14 May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

YLT Galatians 6:14 And for me, let it not be -- to glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which to me the world hath been crucified, and I to the world;

NAB Galatians 6:14 But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

NJB Galatians 6:14 But as for me, it is out of the question that I should boast at all, except of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

GWN Galatians 6:14 But it's unthinkable that I could ever brag about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. By his cross my relationship to the world and its relationship to me have been crucified.

BBE Galatians 6:14 But far be it from me to have glory in anything, but only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which this world has come to an end on the cross for me, and I for it.

- **But may it never be:** Ro 3:4-6 Php 3:3,7,8
- **that I would boast:** 2Ki 14:9-11 Job 31:24,25 Ps 49:6 52:1 Jer 9:23,24 Eze 28:2 Da 4:30,31 5:20,21 1Co 1:29-31 3:21 2Co 11:12 12:10,11
- **except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;** Isa 45:24,25 Ro 1:16 1Co 1:23 2:2 Php 3:3 \*Gr: Php 3:7-11
- **through which the world has been crucified to me:** Ga 1:4 Gal 2:20 Gal 5:24 Ac 20:23,24 Ro 6:6 1Co 15:58 2Co 5:14-16 Php 1:20,21 3:8,9 Col 3:1-3 1Jn 2:15-17 5:4,5
- [Galatians 6:14 Glorifying in the Cross - Great Texts of the Bible](#)
- [Galatians 6:14 Sharing in the Atonement](#) - Oswald Chambers
- [Galatians 6:14 The Secret of Spiritual Consistency](#) - Oswald Chambers
- [Galatians 6:14 The Focal Point of Spiritual Power](#) - Oswald Chambers
- [Galatians 6:14 The Consecration of Spiritual Power](#) - Oswald Chambers
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Click here for much more in depth discussion of Galatians 6:14](#) - there may be some repetition of that material on this page

## Related Passages:

1 John 5:4-5+ (BELIEVERS HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD) For whatever is born (perfect tense - past completed, enduring state) of God **overcomes** ([nikao](#) - present tense - continually) the world; and this is the victory that has **overcome** ([nikao](#) - aorist) the world—our faith. 5 Who is the one who **overcomes** ([nikao](#) - present tense - continually) the world, but he who believes (present tense - continually) that Jesus is the Son of God?

Galatians 2:20+ "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

## BOASTING IN THE CROSS

**But (de)** introduces a sharp contrast (see importance of identifying [contrasts](#)) between those who boast in the things which the flesh can accomplish, in context specifically circumcision as a human work necessary to effect one's salvation and the "trophy" who fall prey to this false teaching and undergo circumcision.

**McGee** says: Between Paul and the world there was a cross. That should be the position of every believer today. That will have more to do with shaping your conduct than anything else. You will not boast about the fact that you are keeping the Sermon on the Mount, or that you belong to a certain church, or that you are a church officer, or a preacher, or a Sunday school teacher. You will not be able to boast of anything. You will just glory in the Cross and the One who died there. ([Galatians 6](#))

**Donald Campbell** notes that "The **contrast** (Gal 6:13 **so that they may boast in your flesh**) is vivid as Paul declared his boasting to be in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the Judaizers the Cross was an object of shame; for Paul it was the object of glorying. They gloried in the flesh; he gloried in the Savior. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**May it never be ("God forbid"** Gal 6:14KJV, "**May it not happen to me**") (me genoito) is the strongest way to express a negative in Greek and is a predominantly Pauline phrase (14/15 uses by Paul - Luke 20:16; Rom 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11; 1 Cor 6:15; Gal 2:17; 3:21; 6:14)

As **Spurgeon** says "With that **"God forbid,"** ("May it never be") Paul makes a clean sweep of every other ground of boasting, and casts himself upon the one only chosen object of his soul's glorying. And yet, if you will think of it, Paul had, after the fashion of other men, many things in which he might have gloried.

In a parallel passage Paul lists those things he once boasted in but to which he has not in essence been crucified...

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, (Php 3:7-8+)

**Wiersbe** - Jesus Christ is mentioned at least forty-five times in the Galatian letters, which means that one third of the verses contain some reference to Him. The person of Jesus Christ captivated Paul, and it was Christ who made the cross glorious to him. In his early years as a Jewish rabbi, Paul had much to glory in (Gal. 1:13-14; Phil 3:1-10); but after he met Christ, all his self-glory turned to mere refuse. The legalists did not glory in the cross of Christ because they did not glory in Christ. ([Commentary](#))

**That I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ-** The Judaizers were boasting over fleshly works, but Paul counters by saying the only thing in which to boast is the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ. As **Tozer** said "We must do something about the cross and one of two things only we can do—flee it or die upon it."

**Eadie** says: The Saviour is named "our Lord Jesus Christ"—the full name adding solemnity to the adjuration."

**Spurgeon** on "**our Lord Jesus Christ.**" -- Every word tends to set forth the excellence of His person, the majesty of His character, and the interest which all the saints have in Him. It was a cross, but it was the **cross of our Lord**: let us worship Him! It was the **cross of our Lord Jesus the Saviour**: let us love Him! It was the **cross of our Jesus Christ the anointed Messiah**: let us reverence Him! Let us sit at His feet and learn of Him! Each one may say, "It was the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ"; but it sweetens the whole matter, and gives a largeness to it when we say, "It was the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."...**In the cross of Christ we glory**, because we regard it as a matchless exhibition of the attributes of God. We see there the love of God desiring a way by which He might save mankind, aided by His wisdom, so that a plan is perfected by which the deed can be done without violation of truth and justice. In the cross we see a strange conjunction of what once appeared to be two opposite qualities—justice and mercy. We see how God is supremely just; as just as if He had no mercy, and yet infinitely merciful in the gift of His Son. Mercy and justice

in fact become counsel upon the same side, and irresistibly plead for the acquittal of the believing sinner....**We glory in it**, next, as the manifestation of the love of Jesus. He was loving inasmuch as He came to earth at all; loving in feeding the hungry, in healing the sick, in raising the dead. He was loving in His whole life; He was embodied charity, the Prince of philanthropists, the King of kindly souls. But oh, His death!—His cruel and shameful death—bearing, as we believe He did, the wrath due to sin, subjecting Himself to the curse, though in Him was no sin—this shows the love of Christ at its highest altitude, and therefore do we glory in it, and will never be ashamed to do so....**We glory in the cross**, moreover, because it is the putting away of sin. There was no other way of making an end of sin, and making reconciliation for iniquity. To forgive the transgressions without exacting the penalty would have been contrary to all threatenings of God. It would not have appeased the claims of justice, nor satisfied the conscience of the sinner. No peace of mind can be enjoyed without pardon, and conscience declares that no pardon can be obtained without an atonement.

**Anders** says "In contrast to the Judaizers, Paul had pure motives. Paul's motive was to brag, not about himself or his merits, but about **the cross of our Lord Christ**. The Judaizers gloried in the flesh (circumcision), but Paul gloried in Christ." ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

**Boast** (exult, glory) (2744) (**kauchaomai** akin to **aucheo** = boast + **euchomai** = pray to God <> **auchen** = neck which vain persons are apt to carry in proud manner) means to boast over a privilege or possession. The idea is to take pride in something (in a bad sense - Ro 2:23<sup>+</sup>, in a good or legitimate sense - Ro 5:2<sup>+</sup>, Ro 5:3<sup>+</sup>; Ro 5:11<sup>+</sup>) Paul glories and rejoices in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (cf. Ro 8:1-3; 1 Cor. 2:2; 1 Pet. 2:24)

**Listen** to the Kathryn Scott's incredibly beautiful rendition of Isaac Watt's classic hymn as you meditate on the power of the cross to separate you once and for all time from enslavement to this present evil world which is passing away...

#### [When I Survey the Wondrous Cross](#)

by Isaac Watts

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of CHRIST, my GOD;  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small:  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

**Ironsides** says "When he said these words he was not thinking just of the wooden instrument on which Jesus died, and he certainly was not thinking of a cross on a steeple of a church, or on an altar of a church, nor yet of a cross dangling from a chain at the waist or throat, or worn as an ornament. When he wrote of "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," he was thinking of all that is involved in the crucifixion of the blessed Saviour on that tree. The cross of Christ is the measure of man's hatred to God." ([Galatians 6 Commentary](#))

**Lovett** says: CROSS. Whereas the Judaizers gloried in circumcision (because it enabled them to acknowledge Christ yet escape the stigma of His cross), Paul gloried in the cross. He counted it an honor to bear the stigma of Christ. Humanly, he enjoyed rank among the Jews, was likely the best educated man of his day, and bore the title of apostle. But all these he regarded as mere toys of the earth compared to the towering majesty of the cross. The cross was the dividing point of his life. Not only is time divided into B.C. and A.D., but so is the Christian. The cross, like a huge surgical knife, slices a man's life into two parts: that which is yet a part of the world (old nature) and that which lives in the Spirit (new nature). Calvary is the great spiritual watershed of one's life. ([Lovett's lights on Galatians](#))

**F F Bruce** - "It is difficult after sixteen centuries and more during which the **cross** has been a sacred symbol, to realize the unspeakable horror and loathing which the very mention or thought of the cross provoked in Paul's day. The word *crux* was

unmentionable in polite Roman society....even when one was being condemned to death by crucifixion the sentence used an archaic formula which served as a sort of euphemism...."But Paul, Roman citizen by birth and religious Jew by upbringing, not only dismisses as the merest refuse (skubala, Phil. 3:8) those things in which he had once taken a proper pride but embraces as the most worthwhile goal in life the knowledge of the crucified Christ and boasts in his cross-a shocking paradox indeed." ([The Epistle to the Galatians](#))

**Cross** (4716) (**stauros** from **histemi** = to stand) was an an upright stake, especially a pointed one. Thayer adds the **stauros** was a well-known instrument of most cruel and ignominious punishment, borrowed by the Greeks and Romans from the Phoenicians; to it were affixed among the Romans, down to the time of Constantine the Great, the guiltiest criminals, particularly the basest slaves, robbers, the authors and abettors of insurrections, and occasionally in the provinces, at the arbitrary pleasure of the governors, upright and peaceable men also, and even Roman citizens themselves. This word originally was used of wood or timber. In later Greek it came to mean a tree and was used of the cross by Peter. In the NT, the cross speaks of the atonement necessitated by man's sin.

**Martin Luther** - The cross of Christ runs through the whole of Scripture.

**J. C. Ryle** - Take away the cross of Christ from the Bible and it is a dark book.

**Oswald Chambers** made the interesting statement that "Every doctrine that is not embedded in the cross of Jesus will lead astray."

**Holwick** - First Century had even greater problems with cross than us. 1) Polite Roman society would never mention the word 'cross.' a) Instrument not just of death, but torture. b) Citizens could not be crucified - reason Paul beheaded. 2) Jews had further stumbling block that a crucified person is cursed by God, according to OT.

In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.  
John Bowring (1825)

Paul considered the world as good as dead and he himself as good as dead to the world. And in (1 Cor 11:1+) he commanded "Be imitators of me." How are you doing beloved? Would your daily choices say the world is dead to you and you to the world? I fear many genuine believers are playing with the world thinking they have one foot in the world and one foot in Christianity. Jesus however was clear about this when He declared

"(ABSOLUTELY) No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You (ABSOLUTELY) cannot serve God and wealth. (Mt 6:24+)

**Bartlett** says "Here we have one of the greatest personal testimonies to be found on the pages of the New Testament. The very wording of this statement by the apostle suggests that there are many things other than the cross of Christ in which men commonly glory, and in which, from a purely human standpoint, he himself might be expected to glory. May all of us learn to glory, not in the toys of earth, but in the cross of Christ; not in the allurements of the world, but in the atonement of the Lord; not even in what we do for Christ, but in what He does for us. Well may each one of us ask prayerfully in the presence of GOD, "**Do I glory in the Cross of CHRIST?**" We do not glory in the Cross for which we are not willing to suffer, if need be; nor can we truly suffer for the Cross in which we do not glory. We must know what the Cross has done for us personally to glory in it intelligently. Conquest by the Cross is prerequisite to conquest in it. So far as its power in our lives is concerned, we cease to own the Cross we fear to own. One of the consequences of fearing to take a stand for the Cross will be to lose the joy of the Cross (cf 1 Cor 1:18). May we never lose sight of the fact that our victory in the LORD has come by way of the tragedy of the Cross. Calvary is the great spiritual watershed of all time. Rejection of the Cross spells eternal tragedy; acceptance of the Cross means eternal victory. Calvary makes all the difference between tragedy and victory....There is need for fuller instruction in the meaning of the Cross, that it may become a greater force in the lives of Christians. A strengthened grasp of the Cross will issue in a stiffened stand for the Cross. The world will lose its hold on us when we get a real hold on the Cross. The more we find of the treasures of the LORD, the less will we be drawn to the pleasures of the world, until we can say with the apostle that we have been crucified to the world, and the world to us. ([Commentary](#))

**De Haan** says: Paul wraps up his argument with a picture of three crucifixions in this verse: 1. The crucifixion of Christ—the basis. 2. The crucifixion of the world—the result. 3. The crucifixion of self—the victory. Our salvation rests on the crucifixion of Christ. Our position resting on this foundation is guaranteed by the world being crucified to us, and victory comes when we are crucified unto the world. The Cross is the place of death. By the Cross of Christ, we are reckoned to be dead: 1. To the law. 2. To the world. 3. To self ([Studies in Galatians](#))

**Through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world**- The world is the godless system head by Satan and

opposed to God and to His children (believers). The great news in this passage is that we have died to the siren seductions of this passing word (1 Jn 2:17). Paul says the world has been crucified to me and uses the **perfect tense** which signifies past completed action (the day my co-crucifixion with Christ became my reality by grace through faith) with present ongoing result or effect (I continue to be like a dead man to the world's allurements). The **perfect tense** signifies that the believer's eternal state is that of one crucified with Christ, forever in union with Him (covenant oneness), the One Who is now and forever our life (Col 3:4-note).

**MacArthur**- The world is spiritually dead to believers, and they are dead to the world. (Ibid)

**Zodhiates** says that what Paul is saying is that "his regard for his crucified Savior was so great that the world had no more charm for him than the corpse of a crucified malefactor would have had, nor did he take any more delight in worldly things than a person expiring on the cross would do in the objects around him."([Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**John Piper** writes - That is why Galatians 2:20+ and Galatians 6:14 are in the Bible. God is teaching us what happened to us, so that we can know ourselves, and know his way of working with us, and exult in him and in his Son and in the cross as we ought...**when you put your trust in Christ, your bondage to the world and its overpowering lure is broken. You are a corpse to the world, and the world is a corpse to you. Or to put it positively, according to verse Ga 6:15, you are a "new creation." The old "you" is dead. A new "you" is alive. And the new you is the you of faith.** And what faith does is boast not in the world, but in Christ, especially Christ crucified. This is how you become so cross-centered that you say with Paul, "I will not boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The world is no longer our treasure. It's not the source of our life or our satisfaction or our joy. Christ is. ([Don't Waste Your Life - Online](#)) (Bolding added)

**Norman Harrison** observes that "God's one way of defeating the world is to crucify it, and with it the "I" to whom the world makes its appeal. As the flesh was crucified jointly with Christ, so likewise the world that works hand in glove with the flesh for my undoing. God's great antithesis is carrying through to care for every point of practical difficulty. I and the world must be separated; so I and the world are set on opposite and opposing sides. If I am on His Side I am not on the world's side. If I am on the world's side, giving my allegiance to the world, I am no longer on His Side; I have denied the cross and the Christ **by which** and **by whom** -- both translations are equally permissible -- the separation was effected. I am back on Our Side; there is no middle ground. ("[I CRUCIFIED VERSUS THE WORLD - GALATIANS 6:14-15](#))

**World** ([2889](#)) (**kosmos** related to the verb **kosmeo** = to order or adorn, to put in order [Mt 25:7 = "trimmed"], to adorn literally [1Ti 2:9], to adorn figuratively [Titus 2:9+]) means first of all something that is well-arranged, that which has order or something arranged harmoniously. **Kosmos** refers to a system where order prevails. In this context (as with many if not most of the NT uses), **kosmos** takes on a more negative meaning. In this sense **kosmos** is like the Greek word for **flesh (sarx)**, which can be a neutral word, but which many times in the NT takes on an evil connotation.

**Wuest** - **Kosmos** refers to an ordered system. Here it is the ordered system of which Satan is the head, his fallen angels and demons are his emissaries, and the unsaved of the human race are his subjects, together with those purposes, pursuits, pleasures, practices, and places where God is not wanted. Much in this world-system is religious, cultured, refined, and intellectual. But it is anti-God and anti-Christ...The Germans have a word for **kosmos** (world of men who are living alienated and apart from God) the **zeitgeist** or **spirit of the age**. This masquerade costume which saints sometimes put on, hides the Lord Jesus living in the heart of the Christian, and is an opaque covering through which the Holy Spirit cannot radiate the beauty of the Lord Jesus. The world says to that kind of a saint, "The modernism of your appearance nullifies the fundamentalism of your doctrine." ([Galatians Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

## THE CROSS AND OVERCOMING

(from Standard Bearer, March, 1976)

The world that crucified my Lord  
    makes overtures to me  
And offers pleasures and rewards  
    if I will faithless be.  
But when in Jesus' death I died  
    The world to me was crucified.

The world that crowned my Lord with thorns  
    would crown me with success  
If I would walk with one who scorns  
    the crown of righteousness.  
But I will never cast away the crown  
    I hope for "in that day."

The world that set my Lord at naught  
would bid me make a name  
By selling what His life-blood bought  
for wealth and ease and fame.  
But I of these desire no part;  
My name is written on His heart.

The world that pierced His hands and feet  
and smote my Saviour's side,  
Would tempt me with some vain conceit  
to pander to my pride.  
But all earth's vanities are dross  
To those who glory in the Cross.

**Has been crucified** (4717) (**stauroo** from **stauros** = cross, in turn from **histemi** = to stand) means literally to nail or fasten to a cross and so to crucify -- literal death by nailing to and hanging from a cross (a stake).

**I to the world** - Dead to me and I to it! Paul in a sense saw the world as if it were nailed to a cross and consequently he considered the world as good as dead and he as good as dead to the world. You can take all the world but let me have the Cross of Christ...**Just give me Jesus...**

In the morning when I rise,  
Give me Jesus.  
You can have all this world.  
Give me Jesus.  
([Play this song - one of my all time favorites](#))

#### **Galatians 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.**

Amplified - For neither is circumcision [now] of any importance, nor uncircumcision, but [only] a new creation [the result of a new birth and a new nature in Christ Jesus, the Messiah].

Phillips - But in Christ it is not circumcision or uncircumcision that counts but the power of new birth.

NET Galatians 6:15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that matters is a new creation!

GNT Galatians 6:15 ο τε γ ρ περιτομ τ σπιν ο τε κροβυστ α λλ καιν κτ σις.

NLT Galatians 6:15 It doesn't matter whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creation.

KJV Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

ESV Galatians 6:15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

ASV Galatians 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

CSB Galatians 6:15 For both circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing; what matters instead is a new creation.

NIV Galatians 6:15 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

NKJ Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

NRS Galatians 6:15 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything!

YLT Galatians 6:15 for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation;



NAB Galatians 6:15 For neither does circumcision mean anything, nor does uncircumcision, but only a new creation.

NJB Galatians 6:15 It is not being circumcised or uncircumcised that matters; but what matters is a new creation.

GWN Galatians 6:15 Certainly, it doesn't matter whether a person is circumcised or not. Rather, what matters is being a new creation.

BBE Galatians 6:15 For having circumcision is nothing, and not having circumcision is nothing, but only a new order of existence.

- **For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision:** Ga 5:6 Ro 8:1 2Co 5:17 1Co 7:19
- **but a new creation.:** 2Co 5:17 Eph 2:10 4:24 Col 3:10,11 Rev 21:5
- [See comments on the New Birth](#) in John 3:3
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE ONLY THING THAT COUNTS THE NEW BIRTH, A NEW CREATION

**For (gar)** is a term of explanation - What is Paul explaining? **Wuest** says "In this verse, Paul gives **his reason for glorying in the Cross of Christ**. It is because, while circumcision is of no avail to the Jew, nor the lack of circumcision of any avail to the Gentile, yet the Cross has power to make of believing Jew and Gentile a new creation which results in a radical transformation of character. ([Galatians Commentary - Verse by Verse](#))

**Neither is circumcision (peritome) anything, nor uncircumcision (akrobustia)** - These works (or non-works) do not matter. It is not by observing the Law in any form. Ultimately it is faith in Christ which makes a person a new creation in Him. That is all that really counts.

Compare the parallel passage

For in Christ Jesus **neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything**, but faith working through love. (Gal 5:6+)

**Lightfoot** - In Christ Jesus old things have passed away. Circumcision is not and uncircumcision is not. All eternal distinctions have vanished. The new spiritual creation is all in all.'

**Campbell** - In view of the Cross of Christ and a believer's new position with respect to the world, no outward religious symbol or lack of it means anything as a way of salvation (cf. 5:6). The only thing that matters is to be a part of the new creation by the new birth (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Constable** - The Cross was a symbol of shame. Because of the Cross the world system had lost its appeal to Paul, and he had lost his appeal to the world. Now circumcision was unimportant. Only being a new creation in Christ mattered. ([Constable's Expository Notes - Galatians](#))

**But a new creation** - Believers are a brand new people in Christ (see verse below). "The power of the Cross makes the believer a **new creation** in Jesus Christ." (MacArthur) [See comments on the New Birth](#)

The parallel passage is 2 Cor 5:17<sup>±</sup> = "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new (kainos)** creature; the old things passed away; behold, **new things (kainos)** have come."

**Max Lucado** - Paul sums up his timeless message to the Galatians in Gal 6:15: "It is not important if a man is circumcised or uncircumcised. The important thing is being the new people God has made" (NCV). While few modern believers struggle with the issue of circumcision, we constantly battle other legalistic pressures. Always there is the temptation to fall back into a rule-keeping mind-set—that subtle, insidious way of thinking that says, "I must follow certain religious rules if I want God's approval." To this Paul says, "No! The spiritual life that pleases God (and satisfies our own souls) is being the new creatures that God has made us to be" (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). We live by grace. We grow by following the leading of God's Spirit, who lives in us. True spirituality isn't imposed from without; it bubbles up and overflows from within

**Machen** says "In the closing section, Paul lays the alternative once more before his readers. The Judaizers have worldly aims, they boast of worldly advantages; but the true Christian boasts of nothing but the cross. Christianity, as here portrayed, is not the gentle, easy-going doctrine that is being mistaken for it today. It is no light thing to say, "The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto

the world." But the result is **a new creature!**" ([Notes on Galatians](#))

**New** (2537) (**kainos**) is an adjective which refers to that which is new kind (unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of). It relates to being not previously present.

**Creation** (2937) (**ktisis**) refers to bringing something into existence which has not existed before (cf the [New Birth](#)). The act of causing to exist that which did not exist before, e.g., God's act of bringing the universe into existence (He 11:3<sup>+</sup>). It is notable that **ktisis** always occurs in the New Testament in connection with God's creative activities (1 Pe 2:13<sup>+</sup>).

#### **Galatians 6:16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.**

NET Galatians 6:16 And all who will behave in accordance with this rule, peace and mercy be on them, and on the Israel of God.

GNT Galatians 6:16 καὶ σοὶ τὸν νῦν τοῦ στοιχῶσιν, εἰρήνη καὶ ἔλεος καὶ τὸ πᾶν ὁ ἀγαθὸς θεός.

NLT Galatians 6:16 May God's peace and mercy be upon all who live by this principle; they are the new people of God.

KJV Galatians 6:16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

ESV Galatians 6:16 And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

ASV Galatians 6:16 And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

CSB Galatians 6:16 May peace come to all those who follow this standard, and mercy to the Israel of God!

NIV Galatians 6:16 Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God.

NKJ Galatians 6:16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

NRS Galatians 6:16 As for those who will follow this rule-- peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

YLT Galatians 6:16 and as many as by this rule do walk -- peace upon them, and kindness, and on the Israel of God!

NAB Galatians 6:16 Peace and mercy be to all who follow this rule and to the Israel of God.

NJB Galatians 6:16 Peace and mercy to all who follow this as their rule and to the Israel of God.

GWN Galatians 6:16 Peace and mercy will come to rest on all those who conform to this principle. They are the Israel of God.

BBE Galatians 6:16 And on all who are guided by this rule be peace and mercy, and on the Israel of God.

- **And those who will walk by this rule:** Ga 5:16,25 Ps 125:4,5 Php 3:16
- **peace and mercy be upon them:** Ga 1:3 Nu 6:23-27 1Ch 12:18 Ps 125:5 Joh 14:27 16:33 Ro 1:7 Php 4:7
- **and upon the Israel of God.:** Ga 3:7-9,29 Ps 73:1 Isa 45:25 Ho 1:10 Joh 1:47 Ro 2:28,29 4:12 Ro 9:6-8 Php 3:3 1Pe 2:5-9
- [Galatians 6:16 The Israel of God, the term "Israel" in the New Testament](#) - Arnold Fruchtenbaum
- [Galatians 6:16 Is the Church Israel? Listen to Mp3](#) - Andy Woods
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **FAITH ALONE BRINGS PEACE AND MERCY**

**And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them** - What rule? The message of salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ alone. Only those who receive and believe the Gospel will be **those who will** be at **peace** with God (cf Ro 5:1<sup>+</sup>) and experience His saving **mercy**.

**Walk** (follow, keep in step, live) (4748) (**stoicheo** from **stoichos** = row, line, rank; see word study of **stoicheio**) is literally to walk in line, walk in a straight line, proceed in a row, to follow in someone's footsteps. To keep in rank and file. To march in in file or in battle order. **BDAG** writes that **stoicheo** means "to be in line with a person or thing considered as standard for one's conduct." Figuratively it means to behave properly, to conduct one's life, to live in conformity with some presumed standard or set of customs (cf Acts 21:24+; Php 3:16+). To live in harmony or agreement with, to live in conformity with (eg, with the Spirit, as in Galatians 5:25+).

**Walk by this rule** - "In Gal. 6:16, those who "walk by this **rule** (**kanōn**)" are those who make what is stated in Gal. 6:14, 15 their guiding line in the matter of salvation through faith in Christ alone, apart from works, whether following the principle themselves or teaching it to others." (Vine)

**MacArthur** explains "To walk by this rule is to accept the gospel of divine accomplishment through Christ's sacrifice on the cross and to walk by faith in the power of His Spirit, rather than by sight in the power of the flesh (cf. Gal 5:16-17; 2 Cor. 5:7)." ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Morris** observes the irony that Paul now says **by this rule** "for he has been opposing people who subjected believers to **strict rules**. But **rule** points us to the authentic way, the one right path on which to walk." ([Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom](#))

**Timothy George** makes an interesting observation that "This conditional blessing at the end of the letter stands in marked contrast to the conditional curse with which Paul opened his epistle (Galatians 1:6-9+)." ([Galatians: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**Rule** (2583) (**kanon** from **kane** = reed) refers to anything straight that is used to examine or measure other things. In Gal 6:16 it refers to a rule involving a standard for conduct. In 2 Cor 10:16 the idea of **kanon** is an area of activity which could be defined either geographically or functionally. **BDAG** - (1) A means to determine the quality of something (rule, standard) (Gal 6:16). (2) Set of directions or formulation for an activity (assignment, formulation as for public service). (3) In the second century in the Christian church **kanon** came to stand for revealed truth, rule of faith (See [How and when canon of the Bible was put together](#)).

**W E Vine** on **kanon** - originally denoted "a straight rod," used as a ruler or measuring instrument, or, in rare instances, "the beam of a balance," the secondary notion being either (a) of keeping anything straight, as of a rod used in weaving, or (b) of testing straightness, as a carpenter's rule; hence its metaphorical use to express what serves "to measure or determine" anything. By a common transition in the meaning of words, "that which measures," was used for "what was measured;" thus a certain space at Olympia was called a **kanōn**. So in music, a canon is a composition in which a given melody is the model for the formation of all the parts. In general the word thus came to serve for anything regulating the actions of men, as a standard or principle. In 2 Cor. 10:13, 15, 16, it is translated "province," RV (AV, "rule" and "line of things;" marg., "line;" RV marg., "limit" or "measuring rod.") Here it signifies the limits of the responsibility in gospel service as measured and appointed by God."

**Kanon** - rule(1), sphere(3) - 2 Co. 10:13; 2 Co. 10:15; 2 Co. 10:16; Gal. 6:16

**Peace** (1515) (**eirene** from verb **eiro** = to join or bind together that which has been separated) literally pictures the binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided and thus setting at one again, a meaning convey by the common expression of one "having it all together". It follows that peace is the opposite of division or dissension. Peace as a state of concord and harmony is the opposite of war. In this passage Paul is referring to the ultimate **peace**, that state of reconciliation with God, which comes about in the heart of a sinner when they place their faith in the Gospel of Christ. Paul begin his letter to the Galatians with the **benediction** "Grace to you and **peace** (**eirene**) from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal 1:3+)

**Mercy** (1656) (**eleos**) is the outward manifestation of pity and assumes **need** on the part of those who are recipients of the mercy and sufficient **resources** to meet the need on the part of those who show it. The idea of **mercy** is to show kindness or concern for someone in serious need (like sinners without Christ) or to give help to the wretched, to relieve the miserable. **Wuest** adds that **eleos** is "God's "kindness and goodwill toward the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them" **Grace** meets man's need in respect to his guilt and lost condition; **mercy**, with reference to his suffering as a result of that sin."

**And upon the Israel of God** - In context of this letter, there were many Jews (**the Israel**) but they were not truly **of God**, but were false teachers, enemies of the Cross. There would not receive mercy but would receive their due compensation for leading others astray from grace to Law.

**Donald Campbell** on **Israel of God** - While some believe that "Israel of God" is the church, the evidence does not support such a conclusion. First, the repetition of the preposition ("upon" or "to") indicates two groups are in view. Second, all the 65 other occurrences of the term "Israel" in the New Testament refer to Jews. It would thus be strange for Paul to use "Israel" here to mean Gentile Christians. Third, Paul elsewhere referred to two kinds of Israelites— believing Jews and unbelieving Jews (cf. Rom. 9:6). Lest it be thought that Paul is anti-Semitic, he demonstrated by means of this benediction his deep love and concern for true Israel, that is, Jews who had come to Christ. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Thomas Constable on Israel of God** - Especially he wished this for the "**Israel of God**." This unusual title refers to saved Jews. It describes a second group in the verse, not the same group. Note the repetition of "upon" that makes this distinction. Also "Israel" always refers to physical Jews everywhere else in the New Testament (65 times). Furthermore it would be natural for Paul to single out Christian Jews for special mention since in this epistle he sounded almost anti-Semitic. Therefore it is better to take this phrase in its regular usage rather than as a unique designation for the church as a whole, as many non-dispensationalists do. ([Constable's Expository Notes - Galatians](#))

**MacArthur** says "**The Israel of God** refers to Jewish believers in Jesus Christ, to those who are spiritual as well as physical descendants of Abraham (Gal. 3:7) and are heirs of promise rather than of law (v. 18). They are the real Jews, the true Israel of faith, like those referred to in Romans 2:28-29 and 9:6-7." ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

The phrase **Israel of God** is not a reference to the Church. That is not a literal interpretation and does not fit with the context. And a small point is that of the 77 uses of the word "**Israel**" in the New Testament, every other one refers to the literal nation of Israel. It is patently absurd to now state this one use of "**Israel**" does not mean Israel.

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum** - "The conclusion is that the church is never called a '**spiritual Israel**' or a '**new Israel**.' The term Israel is either used of the nation or the people as a whole, or of the believing remnant within. It is never used of the church in general or of Gentile believers in particular. In fact, even after the Cross there remains a threefold distinction. First, there is a distinction between Israel and the Gentiles as in 1Corinthians 10:32 and Ep 2:11, [12-notes](#). Second, there is a distinction between Israel and the church in 1 Corinthians 10:32. Third, there is a distinction between Jewish believers (the Israel of God) and Gentile believers in Ro 9:6 ([note](#)) and Galatians 6:16." ([Constable's Expository Notes - Galatians](#))

**Arnold Fruchtenbaum** in the **Chafer Theological Journal** ([Online reference - see page 14](#))

Galatians 6:16 is the only passage adduced by all Covenant Theologians ([see discussion of this approach to Biblical interpretation](#)) as evidence that the Church is the spiritual Israel, or that Gentile believers become spiritual Jews. The verse does not prove any such thing. The passage reads: And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. The Book of Galatians is concerned with Gentiles attempting to attain assurance of salvation through the law. The ones deceiving them were Judaizers, who were Jews demanding adherence to the Law of Moses. To them, a Gentile had to convert to Judaism before he qualified for salvation through Christ. In Gal 6:15, Paul states that salvation is by faith, resulting in the one new man. He also mentions two elements: circumcision and uncircumcision. This refers to two groups of people: Jews and Gentiles, two groups already mentioned by these very terms in Gal 2:7, 8, 9. In Gal 6:16, Paul pronounces a blessing on members of the two groups who would follow this rule of salvation through faith alone. The first group is the them, the uncircumcision, the Gentile Christians to whom and of whom he devotes most of the epistle. The second group is the Israel of God. These are the circumcision, the Jewish believers who, in contrast with the Judaizers, followed the rule of salvation by grace through faith alone. **Covenant Theologians** here ignore the primary meaning of *kai* (**and**) which separates the two groups and instead insist on a secondary or lesser meaning (**even**) in order to blur distinctions within the body of Christ. Thus, the only support of the theory that that the Church is spiritual Israel (or that Gentile believers become spiritual Jews) is a secondary meaning of one word, *kai*. The secondary meaning hardly applies in this verse containing a blessing for both Jewish and Gentile believers. This kind of circular reasoning persists, despite the remarkable absence of scriptural support. ([Israelology Part 2 of 6](#) - page 14)

Here is **Dr S Lewis Johnson's** abstract summary from his paper [Paul and the Israel of God](#) ...

Persistent efforts to explain "the Israel of God" in Gal 6:16 as a reference to the church defy overwhelming grammatical, exegetical, and theological evidence that the expression refers to ethnic Israel. Among contemporary interpreters, three views of the phrase's meaning emerge: (1) "The Israel of God" is the church; (2) "The Israel of God" is the remnant of Israelites in the church; and (3) "The Israel of God" is the future redeemed nation. View 1 suffers from the grammatical and syntactical weakness of endorsing the meaning of the Greek particle *kai* as "namely," a rare usage of that word. Exegetically, View 1 is also weak in choosing to define "Israel" as the church, a usage that appears nowhere else in biblical literature. View 1 also is lacking theologically because the name "Israel" is not applied to the church at any time in history until A.D. 160. Views 2 and 3 coincide grammatically and syntactically, exegetically, and theologically in positive support for those views by taking *kai* in its frequent continuative or copulative sense and by understanding "Israel" as a reference to ethnic Israel. View 3 shows its exegetical superiority to View 2 through the six points of Peter Richardson, which develop the ethnic nature of "Israel," and by recalling Paul's eschatological outlook for ethnic Israel in Rom 11:26. Theologically, View 3 jibes with Paul's teaching about two kinds of Israelites, the

believing ones and the unbelieving ones. Those who persist in advocating View 1 present a classic case in tendentious exegesis.

#### Related Resources:

- [Galatians 6:16 - The Israel of God](#)
- [Paul and the Israel of God](#) - S Lewis Johnson - 15 page paper
- [What is replacement theology / supersessionism?](#)
- [Replacement Theology - What we should know - part 1](#) - Gabe Morris
- [Replacement Theology - What we should know-part 2](#) - Gabe Morris
- [Replacement Theology - The Evils of](#) - Dr David Reagan
- [What is spiritual Israel?](#)
- [What is New Israel?](#)
- [Table Comparing/contrasting Israel & Church](#)
- [How is the Term "Israel" Used in the New Testament?](#)
- [Is the Church Israel? Audio & Slide Show](#)
- [Does the Church Fulfill Israel's Program? - 3 Part Article - John Walvoord](#)
- [Eschatological Problems V: Is the Church the Israel of God? - John Walvoord](#)
- [Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged - Barry Horner](#)
- [Romans 11 Does God Have a Future for Israel? Gil Rugh \(46 page booklet\)](#)
- [The Jewish Problem - small book by Jewish believer David Baron \(written in 1891-interesting!\)](#)
- [Tony Garland's 15 Hour Course on Romans 9-11 - What is God's Plan for Israel?](#)
- [Why Israel Can't Be Ignored - Discovery Series](#)

**Galatians 6:17 From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.**

NET Galatians 6:17 From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear the marks of Jesus on my body.

GNT Galatians 6:17 Το λοιπο κ πους μοι μηδε ς παρεχ τω· γ γ ρ τ στ γματα το ησο ν τ σματ μου βαστ ζω.

NLT Galatians 6:17 From now on, don't let anyone trouble me with these things. For I bear on my body the scars that show I belong to Jesus.

KJV Galatians 6:17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

ESV Galatians 6:17 From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

ASV Galatians 6:17 Henceforth, let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

CSB Galatians 6:17 From now on, let no one cause me trouble, because I bear on my body scars for the cause of Jesus.

NIV Galatians 6:17 Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

NKJ Galatians 6:17 From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

NRS Galatians 6:17 From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.

YLT Galatians 6:17 Henceforth, let no one give me trouble, for I the scars of the Lord Jesus in my body do bear.

NAB Galatians 6:17 From now on, let no one make troubles for me; for I bear the marks of Jesus on my body.

NJB Galatians 6:17 After this, let no one trouble me; I carry branded on my body the marks of Jesus.

GWN Galatians 6:17 From now on, don't make any trouble for me! After all, I carry the scars of Jesus on my body.

BBE Galatians 6:17 From this time on let no man be a trouble to me; because my body is marked with the marks of Jesus.

- **From now on let no one cause trouble for me:** Ga 1:7 5:12 Jos 7:25 Ac 15:24 Heb 12:15

- **for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.:** Ga 5:11 2Co 1:5 4:10 11:23-25 Col 1:24
- [Galatians 6:17 The Marks of Jesus - Great Texts of the Bible](#)
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

From now on **let no one cause trouble for me** - **Let no one cause** is a command in the [present imperative](#) calling for these legalistic individuals to cease trying to inject Law and works into his Christian lives, lives that can only be lived successfully by grace and the Spirit of grace (Heb 10:29). These men are still very active in churches today!!!

**THOUGHT** - How are you doing? Is there someone in your life trying to coerce you into "doing this" or "not do that" claiming that these are things you **MUST** do or not do in order to be "spiritual?" Paul would say "Don't let them trouble you!"

**Campbell** - "Paul's calling as an apostle and the message he preached had been challenged by the Judaizers. He asked for an end to such trouble." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Let...cause** (bother, show)(3930)([parecho](#) from **para** = near, beside + **echo** = hold) basically (literally) means to hold beside, to hold out toward someone, to present, offer. to cause someone to experience something.

**Trouble** (2873)([kopos](#) from **kopto** = chop, hew, cut down, strike; figuratively to lament apparently from idea of striking one's breast; [kopiao](#)) is strictly a smiting as a sign of sorrow, then sorrow itself. **Kopos** thus describes a state of discomfort or distress, trouble, difficulty, transferring the sense of the primary meaning which is beating. Indeed, Paul had experienced literal "trouble" (or smiting)!

**For** - Paul is explaining why the legalists should stop bothering him. **Lenski** adds "With **for** he assigns as the reason for thus calling the troubles from this quarter ended the fact that he is carrying in his body the scars that were inflicted by the Jews who hated him for successfully promulgating the great canon just stated in Gal 6:15....Let the Galatians think of these scars in Paul's body and then they will stand as firmly as he does." ([The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians](#))

Paul may also be making some allusion to the words of Jesus when He first chose Paul...

But the Lord said to him (Ananias), "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, **to bear** ([bastazo](#) = same verb Paul uses here of bearing brand marks of Jesus!) My Name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; (Acts 9:15+)

Paul's testimony also reminds us of Peter in Acts

They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then released them. So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, **rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His Name** (Acts 5:41+)

**I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus** - This was Paul's final proof to his critics that he belonged Jesus and that he was a authentic apostle of Christ (cf Gal 1:1+). Paul was a slave of Christ and not a slave of the Law! Slaves have the names or the stamps of their owners on their bodies. Paul's Master was Jesus and Paul was His slave as he repeated declared (Ro 1:1, 2 Cor 4:5, Gal 1:10, Phil 1:1, Titus 1:1, cf James in James 1:1, Peter in 2 Pe 1:1, Jude in Jude 1:1, John and all believers in Rev 1:1) Paul had often been beaten for the sake of Christ, even in Galatia itself (Acts 14:19+). Imagine some of the readers who were in Lystra on that fateful day when Paul was literally stoned for the sake of Jesus! The **brand-marks** which Paul bore in his body should not be confused with those of the so called Christian mystics who claimed to have the stigmata of the crucifixion in their own bodies in a later era.

There is also a sweet irony in Paul's **brand-marks** for they spoke far more eloquently than the mark of circumcision that the Judaizers sought to impose on the Galatians.

**Max Anders** - These marks are Paul's way of saying, "Here me well. I've earned the right to be heard, respected, and obeyed." ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

**Vine** on the **brand-marks** - And he bears them not as a reproach is borne, but as a banner is carried by a standard bearer, with exulting pride that the honour has been conferred upon him.

**Donald Campbell** - These "marks" (stigmata) meant signs of ownership such as were branded on slaves and cattle. Paul referred to the scars on his body, which were caused by persecution for Christ's sake (cf. 1 Cor. 4:11; 2 Cor. 4:10-11; 6:5, 9; 11:24-25), because they demonstrated he was a slave of Christ and not just a people pleaser. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** - Every blow that Paul received was really a blow against Jesus, his Master and Savior. "The sufferings of Christ



are ours in abundance,” he told the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:5). The apostle was “always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also [might] be manifested in [his] body” (2 Cor 4:10+). To the Colossian church he wrote, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions” (Col. 1:24+). Whenever a Christian is persecuted for his faith, it is really Christ who is being persecuted through him. When Paul was on the way to Damascus to arrest and imprison Christians there, the Lord said to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4+)(**ED: RELATED STUDY - DOES JESUS DEFEND HIS COVENANT PARTNERS?**). Because Satan and his world system can no longer afflict Christ directly, they afflict Him indirectly by persecuting the church, His Body. ([Galatians MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Baxter** - There were five classes of persons who were branded, i.e. slaves (as a mark of ownership), soldiers (as a mark of allegiance), devotees (as a mark of consecration), criminals (as a mark of exposure), and the abhorred (as a mark of reproach). The “marks” of the Lord Jesus in the body of Paul were all these five in one!...A second reason why Paul mentions these brand-marks here is found in his emphasis on the fact that they are “the brand-marks of the Lord Jesus.” He is drawing a contrast between the marks of Jesus, and the mark of Moses (circumcision: see verses 12-15). Circumcision is the mark of Moses and speaks of servitude to a legal system. “The marks of the Lord Jesus” are those of a glad, free, voluntary self-sacrificing service....And what do these brand-marks of Paul say to ourselves? They say three things: first, let us never be ashamed of bearing suffering or reproach for Jesus’ sake; second, let us not be afraid of bearing such marks on our bodies; and, third, let it be our daily prayer that we may bear the marks of the Lord Jesus on our character.

Captain beloved, battle-wounds were Thine,  
Let me not wonder if some hurt be mine;  
Rather, O Lord, let my deep wonder be  
That I may share a battle-wound with Thee.

#### **Related Resource:**

- Discussion of Relationship of Covenant to Scar
- Covenant - Sealed With a Scar

**Bear** (carry, endure, support, tolerate)([941](#))(**bastazo** from **basis** = foot) generally means to take up and hold (Jn 10:31), to support as a burden. Used of Jesus bearing His Cross in John 19:17. Metaphorically **bastazo** means to bear, support, endure, i.e., labors, sufferings (Mt. 20:12, Rev. 2:3), bear patiently (Ro 15:1; Gal. 6:2; Rev. 2:2). Paul uses **bastazo** 4 times in Galatians all in this last section - Gal. 5:10; Gal 6:2, Gal 6:5, Gal 6:17

**Lovett** points out: Paul suffered fiercely to bring Christ to the Gentiles. The Judaizers were usually not far behind him stirring up trouble and seeking to nullify his ministry. Consequently he had been “thrice beaten,” and lines showed in his body where he had 200 stripes laid on him per the custom in Jewish synagogues, plus his scars from stonings. He says those marks in his body prove he is a true slave of the Lord Jesus. The word brand-marks (Greek: stigmata) has reference to masters branding their slaves, a custom of the time. Paul begs his readers not to add to his afflictions by continuing to listen to the persecution-shunning false teachers. How those marks in Paul’s body condemn the luxury and ease of fashionable Christianity. It is still true today, “if a man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he will suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). ([Lovett’s lights on Galatians](#))

**Wiersbe** says: There was a time when Paul was proud of his mark of circumcision (Phil. 3:4- 6), but after he became a believer, he became a “marked man” in a different way. He now glorified in the scars he had received and in the suffering he had endured in the service of Jesus Christ. ([Commentary](#))

#### **[Before the Throne of God Above](#)**

Charitie Bancroft, 1863, Vocal by Selah

Before the throne of God above  
I have a strong and perfect plea  
A great High Priest whose name is love  
Who ever lives and pleads for me  
My name is graven on His hands  
My name is written on His heart  
I know that while in heav’n He stands  
No tongue can bid me thence depart  
No tongue can bid me thence depart

When Satan tempts me to despair

And tells me of the guilt within  
Upward I look and see Him there  
Who made an end of all my sin  
Because the sinless Savior died  
My sinful soul is counted free  
For God the Just is satisfied  
To look on Him and pardon me  
To look on Him and pardon me

Behold Him there, the risen Lamb  
My perfect, spotless Righteousness  
The great unchangeable I AM  
The King of glory and of grace  
One with Himself, I cannot die  
My soul is purchased by His blood  
My life is hid with Christ on high  
With Christ my Savior and my God

One with Himself, I cannot die  
My soul is purchased by His blood  
My life is hid with Christ on high  
With Christ my Savior and my God  
With Christ my Savior and my God  
With Christ my Savior and my God

**Brand-marks** (4742) (**stigma** from **stizo** = make a puncture or mark, to brand) refers to a mark or brand. Literally it was what is pricked in or branded as a mark of ownership on the body of a soldier, servant, religious devotee, etc. It was a permanent mark or scar on the body, especially the type of 'brand' used to mark ownership of slaves. **BDAG** adds that "religious tattooing also played a prominent role in antiquity: stigmata hiera or stigmatophorein - in honor of the goddess.

**Thayer** says "According to ancient oriental usage, slaves and soldiers bore the name or stamp of their master or commander branded or pricked (cut) into their bodies to indicate what master or general they belonged to, and there were even some devotees who stamped themselves in this way with the token of their gods...Paul Paul in Gal. 6:17 says he bears branded on his body, are the traces left there by the perils, hardships, imprisonments, scourgings, endured by him for the cause of Christ, and which mark him as Christ's faithful and approved votary, servant, soldier."

**THOUGHT** - Do you have any "stigmata" (primarily figuratively speaking) signifying that you belong to Jesus?

**Ironsides** - Someone has said, "When we get home to heaven God is not going to look us over for medals but for scars." I wonder whether we have received any scars for Jesus' sake. Many of them are not physical scars, they are scars of the heart, but it is a great thing to have the brand-marks of the Lord Jesus.

**Gilbrant** has a lengthy note on **stigmata** - A **stigma** is a mark or tattoo pricked or branded upon the body as a means of identification (cf. Liddell-Scott). The idea of a mark or brand on the body for identification is almost as old as civilization. The ancient Babylonians and Egyptians marked **cattle** with a symbol identifying ownership. **Slaves** also bore a physical mark signifying their status and the name of their owner. Later marks were placed on those who, by reason of some unacceptable social behavior, were considered unworthy of social freedom. Among those so marked were rebellious concubines, sons who mistreated their widowed mothers, or adopted sons who denied their fathers. In a less negative sense, Egyptians marked themselves with symbols denoting membership in a particular tribe or religious cult. A man so marked was acknowledged as a servant of his chosen deity and thereby protected by the god (Betz, "stigma," Kittel, 7:660). **The Greeks and Romans adopted the practice of marking domestic animals and slaves but expanded it to include criminals and soldiers as well. At first the mark on humans was a sign of dishonor.** A slave was marked for running away, stealing, or failing in his duties. A soldier was marked for cowardice or disrespect to a superior. The mark labeled him as "good for nothing." Many attempted, by various means, to remove the mark, but to no avail. It usually persisted for life. **In later times, new recruits in the Roman army received a tattoo (usually in their palms) of an abbreviation of their emperor's name.** The Septuagint uses the word stigma only once, in Song of Solomon 1:11. Here it refers not to a mark on the skin but to a tiny ball or point on a piece of jewelry (ibid.). Though the word stigma, in its accustomed meaning, is not found in the Old Testament, the idea of identification marks in the body was not unknown among the Jews. In the Mosaic ordinances concerning slavery (Ex 21:1-6) a man bore the mark of a pierced ear to denote his deliberate, free choice of lifelong servitude. A Hebrew could be held as a slave only for a maximum of 6 years for a debt that he could not pay. In the seventh year his debt was paid, and he was free. If, during his period of servitude, he married one of his master's female slaves, she could not go free with him

when he was released. If he chose to remain with his master and his wife and children, he would publicly renounce his freedom before the council of elders and allow his earlobe to be pierced as a sign of his voluntary life of slavery (ED: NOTE THE SPILLAGE OF BLOOD - THIS WAS ANALOGOUS TO MAKING A BINDING BLOOD COVENANT). The Levitical code prohibited the Jews from cutting or otherwise disfiguring their bodies as a sign of grief for the dead, after the custom of their heathen neighbors (Leviticus 19:28). However, they did adopt the practice and continued it until the captivity (ibid., 7:660f.). (See Jeremiah 16:6; 41:4,5.) **Stigma appears only once in the New Testament.** Paul wrote to the Galatians (6:17). He doubtless was thinking of the prevailing custom of branding one's body with the identifying mark of ownership (as a slave) or of devotion to deity (as a worshiper), but the marks that he bore were not self-inflicted tattoos or mutilations. They were the marks of physical suffering, torture, persecution, and privation he had endured for Christ. According to Christian tradition, certain holy men—noted for their piety, self-denial, and humility—are said to have borne the physical marks of Jesus' cross (also known as the stigmata): nail prints in their hands and feet, wounds in their sides, or marks duplicating the crown of thorns or scourging. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes about 300 such occurrences. Many of those reputed to have borne these marks were later canonized or beatified by the church as saints (ibid., 7:664) (ED: CLEARLY PAUL WOULD NOT CONDONE THIS LATTER HUMAN PRACTICE! A BELIEVER IN ONE SENSE NEEDS NO MARK FOR ONCE HE ENTERS THE NEW COVENANT IN CHRIST'S BLOOD, HE BECOMES A SLAVE FOR LIFE TO CHRIST AND IS NO LONGER HIS OWN - cf 1 Cor 6:19-20, Titus 2:14, 1 Pe 2:9). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Paul had suffered much for the cause of Christ and he had marks to show for it. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28

Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as if insane) I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches.

**Bartlett** - In the church of today, it is to be feared, there are too many **battle-scared** soldiers and too few **battle-scarred** soldiers of the cross. Too few are prepared to stand for the Master at all cost. Something is seriously wrong if we are ashamed to own Him who owns us. The Lord's ownership precludes the world's ownership of us.

It was [Amy Carmichael](#) who wrote the piercing (pun intended) words in the form of a question....

### Hast Thou No Scar?

Hast thou no scar?  
No hidden scar on foot, or side, or hand?  
I hear thee sung throughout the land,  
I hear them hail thy shining star,  
Hast thou no scar? no scar? Hast thou no wound?

et I was wounded by the archers, spent,  
Leaned Me against a tree; and rent  
By ravening beasts 'round Me, I swooned:  
Hast thou no wound? no wound?

No wound? no scar?  
Yet, as the Master shall the servant be,  
And pierced the feet that follow Me;  
But whole? can he have followed far  
Who has no wound nor scar?

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**John Butler - Marks of Faith** Galatians 6:17 "From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:17).

Paul wanted to put to a stop the constant challenge about his commitment to Jesus Christ. It had become a distraction to him and took too much of his time defending his commitment. This statement is a great challenge to all believers—do we bear scars for the Savior?

### FIRST—THE PROBLEM

"From henceforth let no man trouble me." Paul's ministry was being constantly challenged by those who opposed him and were working havoc among the Galatians. When the enemy does not have a good argument in the issue at hand, he often changes tactics and attacks the person's claims who is giving them an undisputable argument. Paul was battling the people who wanted to make the law part of salvation. His arguments were very effective so his enemy changed tactics and began to challenge the sincerity of Paul's commitment to Christ. Paul had proof of his commitment and said that this should stop the argument about his sincerity.

## **SECOND—THE PROOF**

"For I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Paul's physical body bore evidence of his commitment to Christ. We note a few of the marks. His marks were not a tattoo of Jesus on his arm.

- Paul bore the marks of stonings. At Lystra he was stoned so badly that it was thought he was dead (Acts 14:19). That had to leave some ugly marks on his body. Why was he stoned. Because of his preaching Jesus Christ.
- Paul bore the marks of stripes. At Philippi Paul was beaten with "many stripes" (Acts 16:23). These stripes would leave long scars upon his body. Why the stripes? Because he preached Jesus Christ.
- Paul bore the marks of stocks. At Philippi he was thrown in prison and his feet put in stocks (Acts 26:24). This would leave marks on his feet and legs. Why was he put in stocks in prison? Because he preached Jesus Christ.
- Paul bore the marks of slander. "The word for "mark" is the Greek word from which we get the English word 'stigma.' One of the meanings of stigma is infamy and disgrace. These marks on Paul's body were not glory marks. They were marks that brought a disgrace to him. Paul received no honor from men to suffer for Christ. Rather every mark on the body for Christ was a disgrace to the person. But Paul bore those marks with honor. There are marks on people's bodies today, such as tattoos, that disgrace them. There is the mark of smoking—the nicotine stain on the fingers, the aging of a women's face, and the disfigured face from operations for cancer. These marks are a disgrace for sin, for it tells what a profligate life they have lived or are living. What marks are on you today. Are they the tattoos of the world or the marks of Christ. It makes a difference with God

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## **Adrian Rogers - Branded for Christ SCRIPTURE TEXT: GALATIANS 6:17**

### Introduction

Would you take God's Word, please, tonight, and turn to Galatians, chapter 6. Thank you, Ken, for that music, and thank you for leading us. I don't think that you could have sung a song that would have been more apropos for the message tonight than the one that you just sang. Galatians 6:17: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:17). "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." I want to speak to you, tonight, on this subject: "Branded for Christ"—"Branded for Christ," or perhaps I might say, "The Marks of the Master."

Some years ago, somebody came up with this question: "If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" That's a good question, isn't it? Let me ask you, again: If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Now, the Apostle Paul was being accused. He was not being accused of being a Christian; he was really being accused of not being a Christian, or at least they were accusing him of not being an apostle, not being a God-called man, and not being worthy of apostleship and leadership. And, he was being accused by some people that we will call Judaizers, and they were saying that Paul was not really a true preacher, and not really an apostle. They were saying that if Paul were truly an apostle, then he would have everybody follow the Jewish laws of circumcision, and all of these other things.

And so, they were criticizing Paul, and they were persecuting Paul.

Now, the verse that I've just read to you is Paul's answer to them—these people who were bothering him, these people who were pestering him. And, I want you to listen to his answer again: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Now, what did Paul mean by that? Paul had scars on his body; he had literal disfigurements. He had been wounded; he had been bruised; he had been broken; he had been bloodied; he had been stoned; and he had been mutilated, and his body literally had scars on it. And, he said, "These scars are my defense"—"Let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

There are three things I want you to notice tonight about the marks of the Master.

### **I. The Making of Those Marks**

First of all, I want you to notice what I'm going to call the making of those marks. How did Paul get these scars? I remind you now that Paul is not using figurative language; he's using literal language. Paul suffered. You know, in Romans 8, he talks about the things that cannot separate us from the love of God, and he says that famine, and peril, and nakedness, and sword, and tribulation, and distress, and persecution—he says that these things can't separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:35). Now, friend, Paul

was not talking in the abstract. The way that Paul knew that those things could not separate him from the love of God is that he had endured all of those things. Paul had endured famine, and peril, and nakedness, and sword, and tribulation, and distress, and persecution. He knew first-hand that those things that had happened to him could not separate him from the love of God.

If you don't mind turning in your Bible, then I want you to turn—just put your bookmark there, in Galatians, chapter 6—and turn to an astounding passage in 2 Corinthians. You just have to turn left a little place, and you'll find it—2 Corinthians 11:24. I tell you, folks, I didn't want to preach this sermon tonight. I'm going to tell you a secret: I prepared it for this morning, but I wasn't ready to preach it this morning. And, I had to pray about it to preach it tonight, because what I'm going to say to you tonight just humiliates me; it makes me ashamed to even say that I'm a Christian, when I think about this little man named Paul.

Notice what he said of what he endured for Christ. Now, here are others who were saying they were ministers of Christ. Let's go back to verse 23. There were people who were troubling Paul at Corinth, the same as there were in Galatia. He said: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure,"—he was talking about stripes on his back—"in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft" (2 Corinthians 11:23). As a matter of fact, there's some good evidence that Paul may have been stoned to death—that he may have died, and that God raised him from the dead. The next chapter speaks of that when Paul said, "I knew a man in Christ who went into the third Heaven." He said, "Whether I was in the body or out of the body, I don't know. Whether I died and had gone to Heaven, or whether I was just in a trance or a vision, I really don't know" (2 Corinthians 12:2). Paul may have died, and God brought him back to life—I don't know. But, he mentions: "in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one." That is, he had 39 stripes laid on his back. Now often, men would die from this kind of a scourging. "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned,"—I mean, they took huge boulders. This was the capital punishment that the Jews used. He was stoned; he was left for dead. As far as they were concerned, they said, "We finished this guy;" but God brought him back—"thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;"—that is, for 24 hours he was floating around out there in the ocean, not knowing whether or not he would ever reach shore—"in journeys often, in perils of waters,"—the word perils means "dangers"—"in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). Now, you understand what Paul meant when he said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:17).

Leonard Ravenhill wrote about the Apostle Paul, and this is what he said: He said, "Look closely at Paul—at that cadaverous countenance, that scarred body, that stooped figure of a man chastened by hunger, kept down by fasting, and ploughed with the lictor's lash; that little body, brutally stoned at Lystra and starved in many places; that skin, pickled for thirty-six hours in the Mediterranean Sea! And add to this list danger upon danger, and then multiply it with loneliness; finally, count in the 199 stripes, 3 shipwrecks, 3 beatings with rods, a stoning, a prison record, and deaths so many that count is lost."

When I think about that, and I think how little I've suffered for Jesus, folks, it shames me. And, when I remember that Paul said that all who "live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12), I wonder why some of us seem to get off so easy. I wonder why some of us are so slick and well fed, and why we have it so easy, and why we mumble and complain, sometimes, when we do. Oh, we sing these songs, folks, if we could ever think about the lies we tell in our song service: "Faith of our fathers, holy faith," in prison dark, and in dungeon; "Faith of our fathers, living still... we will be true"—O God—"to thee till death;" and some folks don't even get back Sunday night.

I heard of a boy who was talking to his girlfriend on the phone, and he told her, "I love you more than life itself." He said, "You are so precious to me." He said, "I worship the ground you walk on." He said, "I would fight wild beasts to be at your side." He said, "I would walk barefoot on hot coals to be near you." He said, "I would wade through a swamp of crocodiles to hold your hand." And then, later on, he said, "And sweetheart, if it's not raining, then I am coming over to see you Saturday night." And, so many of us are that way, you know—we talk, but talk is so cheap.

And, these people who were criticizing Paul, they talked, but they did not suffer for Christ. The making of those marks—they were literal, physical disfigurements upon the body of this man. He had been beaten, brutalized, and mutilated for Jesus Christ.

## II. The Meaning of Those Marks

Now, the second thing I want you to notice—not only the making of those marks, but I want you to notice with me the meaning of these marks. Because, the Apostle Paul, when he said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ," could have chosen one word to mean marks, which is a normal word for scars or disfigurement.

But, he chose a special word; he chose the Greek word **stigmata**. "I bear in my body the stigmata of Jesus Christ." And, when he used that word, he showed us that he was making a play on words. Not only was he talking about a literal mark, but now, he's also using the word figuratively. And, the word stigmata is the plural for the word for "a brand"—very much as if one would brand cattle like they do out west, and here in Tennessee, and other places. And, he's talking about some sort of a brand-mark that was put in

the flesh of some animal or, sometimes, a person. Now, in Paul's day stigmata were used for several things.

### A. A Mark of Ownership

First of all, it was a mark of ownership. A slave would be branded by his master. Slaves were like cattle—just like cattle and other things. And so, the master would say that "this is my slave," and he would take a branding iron, and he would burn his name into the slave. "This is my piece of property; he will not be able to get this mark off of his body." And, when Paul said, "I bear the stigmata of the Lord Jesus Christ," what he was saying is, "I am His slave. I have been branded for Christ. I'm not my own. I am bought with a price." And, Paul spoke of himself over and over again as the bondsman of Jesus Christ.

Now, I had to ask myself this question as I prepared this sermon; and, since I've asked myself this question, and had to deal with God about it, I'm going to do something to you—not for you—to you: I'm going to ask you the same question: Are you a bondsman to Jesus Christ? Have you been branded for Christ? Now, talk is cheap, folks. Are you His slave? You know, there are folks who waltz down to church on Sunday morning, and join a church like they're doing God a wild favor—like we are a prize package, and He's so lucky to get us. **Are you a slave of Jesus Christ?** The Apostle Paul said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. I am branded for Christ. I am a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ."

### B. A Mark of Allegiance

But, not only was it used as a sign of ownership; it was also used as a mark of allegiance. Back in this day, stigmata were also used by soldiers. Soldiers would tattoo themselves—brand themselves—with the name of their general. For example, Alexander the Great, who conquered the known world and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, had his soldiers that wore his stigmata, that wore his mark, and they had the alpha for Alexander—the A tattooed upon their hand—which said, "I belong to Alexander. I owe my allegiance to my captain. I am in his army."

The Apostle Paul surely must have had that in mind also, when he chose this special word stigmata to say, "I bear in my body the brand mark of the Lord Jesus, because not only am I His slave; I'm also His soldier. I know how to endure hardness. I know how to bear hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." And, the Apostle Paul said, in 2 Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7, cf 2 Ti 2:3-4). And, Paul, as I've said, was faithful to the faith, to the fight, and to the finish.

### C. A Mark of Religious Belief

But now, again, the word stigmata was used, not only for slaves, and not only for soldiers, but it was also used as a mark for people who were followers of a particular religion. Now today, to show that we're followers of a particular religion, we may wear a gold cross around our neck, or we may wear a Jesus first lapel pin. I'm not opposed to any of that; I think that's fine. But, in Paul's day, the different religions would often have themselves branded in the temple to show that they were devoted to that particular God. They would use the mark, the sign, the symbol, the crest, or whatever it was, of that religion. Now, what Paul was saying, I believe, is this: "that I am the slave of Jesus Christ. I am a soldier of Jesus Christ, and I am devoted to Jesus Christ. I love Him. I am a deputy of the Lord Jesus Christ."

### D. A Mark of Shame

But, I want to tell you a fourth way that the stigmata were used in this day: They were also used as a mark of shame. Criminals were often branded with stigmata. Have you ever heard the word **stigma**? We get the word stigma from the word stigmata. That is, a person has a stigma upon them; he has a mark on him. He has a mark of shame. If a person was a criminal, for example, if a person were like some of the well-known criminals in our day, one of the ways they would identify him—if they ever did release him out of prison—was that they would brand him. He would wear that brand everywhere he went. And, it would be a mark of shame, and it would be a warning to other people: "This man wears the brand." It was a mark of warning, and a mark of shame.

Do you remember back in the Old Testament when **Cain slew Abel**? Well, you don't remember; you weren't there. Do you remember reading about it? A little boy asked his grandma—he said, "Grandma, were you on the ark?" She said, "Why, no." He said, "Why didn't you drown?" When Cain slew Abel, the Bible says that God put a mark upon him; it was a mark of shame. And, what Paul is saying is this: "Look," he said, "I bear these marks. I bear this stigma. I don't mind you knowing that I'm a **slave** of Jesus Christ. I don't mind you knowing that I'm a **soldier** for Jesus Christ. I don't mind you knowing that **my love** belongs to Jesus Christ. And, I don't mind you knowing that, whatever **shame** Jesus bears, I am willing to bear that shame." Today, we're interested in medals. Paul was interested in scars.

## III. The Message of Those Marks

Now, the third and final thing I want to talk to you about, after the making of the mark, the making of those scars—they were literal; and the meaning—Paul used a special word to attach a special meaning; now, thirdly and finally, think with me about the message



of those marks. **What does that mean to me?** Well, I'll tell you what it meant to me, as I thought on this and pondered.

### A. An Encouragement to Faithfulness

First of all, it was an encouragement unto me to be faithful, to never be ashamed to suffer for Jesus, to never to be ashamed to stand for the Lord Jesus Christ, and not to whimper if I do have to suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice what the Apostle Paul said in verse 14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14). Now, Paul gloried in those marks. He wasn't ashamed to be branded for Christ. He gloried in the fact that he could suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ. Everybody glories in something. You glory in your grandchildren or your musical ability; you glory in your possessions, your gun collection, your automobile, or your flower garden—everybody has something that he wants to glory in.

Paul had so much that he could glory in. He could have gloried in his education. He had an equivalency of a double PhD. He sat at the feet of one of the greatest teachers in the world at that time: the learned Dr. Gamaliel. Paul could have gloried in his aristocracy, his religion, or his background, for he was a royal blueblood; he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Paul could have gloried in his preaching. I don't suppose that there's ever been a greater preacher than the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul was known in Hell for his preaching; the demons mentioned his name in the same sentence with Jesus: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know" (Acts 19:15). The demons in Hell knew of the power that this Apostle Paul had. He could have gloried in his achievements, being a great missionary and a great church planter. Did you know that the Apostle Paul wrote at least half of the books of the New Testament? If you count the Book of Hebrews, it's more than half of the books in the New Testament. He had so much to glory in; but, he never mentions any of that. He doesn't brag about any of that. He says, "God forbid that I should glory in anything except the cross of Jesus Christ, by which I'm crucified to this world, and this world is crucified to me" (Galatians 6:14). And, when I read that, I said, "O God, help me so that those marks might mean to me—as Adrian—as they meant to Paul, who was faithful." You need to be faithful, and don't worry if you suffer for Jesus.

Let me give a verse; put it in your margin—John 15:18. Jesus Christ said: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before he hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (John 15:18-21).

You know, I used to wonder when the persecution for Jesus would begin. When I was a younger preacher, I used to preach about how we ought bear persecution for Jesus; but I always felt a little sheepish about it, because I didn't have much of it. I'm getting some, I know what it is; and I'm still ashamed to even talk about persecution, because, as the writer of Hebrews says: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood" (Hebrews 12:4). I don't know that I've ever really shed a drop of blood for Jesus.

You know, I've been cussed and discussed a little, and I've been ridiculed a little. And frankly, folks, it makes me feel a whole lot better, because I got to thinking about what the Bible means when it says, "Beware when all men speak well of you" (Luke 6:26), and, I got to thinking about what Jesus meant when He said, "The world hates Me, and it's going to hate you" (John 15:18). "The servant is not better than its master" (John 15:20). And, I think what Paul is saying is this: "I bear these marks as stigmata. I have been branded for the Lord Jesus."

Back in medieval times—as they say, "when knights were bold"—they had warrior kings—kings, like the romanticized stories of King Arthur. And, those warrior kings would lead the knights into battle, and those knights would want to stand by the king, number one, to protect the king, and, number two, to show their allegiance to the king. And, of course, the king was the center of the battle. And so, the hottest part of the battle would center around the king, and the arrows would fly the thickest around the king—where the king would be. And then, if the battle was a victory, they would come back to the castle, and there would be a sumptuous feast with the smoking meats and the delicacies.

And then, at a particular time, they would discuss the battle. And, the king, who would certainly, surely, be wounded somewhere in the battle, would show his wounds, and would show his scars. And, others who had fought by him and stood by him would also show their scars out of their love for their king—that they had received because they stood by the king, and fought with the king. And at that time, other warriors who had no scars did not count themselves lucky that they had no scars—they hung their heads in humiliation and shame. Could it be that they were not brave enough? Could it be that they were not near enough to the king?

I found these words by Amy Carmichael. Amy Carmichael spent half a century as a missionary for Jesus in India, and here's what she wrote:

No wound? No scar?

Yet, as the Master shall the servant be,  
And pierced are the feet that follow Me.

But thine are whole; can he have followed far  
Who hast no wound or scar?  
(Amy Carmichael)

You see, as the master is, so shall the servant be. And, she also wrote these words:

Captain beloved, battle wounds were Thine,  
Let me not wonder if some hurt be mine.  
Rather, O Lord, let my deep wonder be  
That I may share a battle wound with Thee.  
(Amy Carmichael)

## **B. An Encouragement to Fearlessness**

The Apostle Paul said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:17). What is the meaning of those marks? Number one: an encouragement to faithfulness. Number two: an encouragement to fearlessness. Let's not be afraid to suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ. It is better to be scarred than be scared—than to be scared.

**And, let's make up our minds that this world is not going to love us. We are twice-born people in a world of once-born people. We're going to find ourselves going against the tide most of the time, and we must remember that Jesus Christ described us as salt. And, salt, when it finds a wound, irritates. And, number two: Jesus described us as light, and light discloses. Salt irritates, and light reveals. And, you can understand, therefore, that people are going to be against salt and light in a world of disease and darkness.**

But, let us not be afraid.

Again, somebody has written these words, and we sing these words:

Am I a soldier of the cross,  
A follower of the Lamb,  
And shall I fear to own His cause  
Or blush to speak His name?  
...  
Sure I must fight if I would reign;  
Increase my courage, Lord  
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,  
Supported by Thy word.  
(Isaac Watts)

## **C. An Encouragement to Fruitfulness**

I want to call upon you, as the members of this church, not to be intimidated by the devil, and to let the marks that the Apostle Paul bore in his body—this man, branded for Christ—let it encourage you, number one, to faithfulness; let it encourage you, number two, to fearlessness, and to say, "I will not be ashamed nor afraid of what man can do to me."

Finally, the message of the Maker is, to me, not only an encouragement to faithfulness and fearlessness, but also to fruitfulness. Do you know why Paul was used of God so mightily? He wasn't trying to save his life. He said: "I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31). He remembers the words of the Lord Jesus—Jesus said: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mark 8:35). Jesus said: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).

Do you know something, folks? We don't have to go around baiting persecution, and, if possible, I don't want to be wounded and scarred physically; but, I have to be willing to be, and so do you. We have such a cheap faith—so easy, so air-conditioned, so upholstered, and so streamlined. Do you know what one of our big problems is in the Baptist church, folks? It's to get men to give a dime out of a dollar. Oh, what sacrifice for Jesus! Paul said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"—beaten, shamed, mutilated, and vilified. When we begin to live as Paul lived, we'll see revival, and we'll see fruitfulness in our lives.

There was a man who didn't know whether he wanted to believe in Jesus or not. He wanted to, but he needed some proof—his name was Thomas. Do you know what Thomas said? Thomas said, "Except I see the scars in His hand and in His side, I'll not believe" (John 20:25). Now, he believed that Jesus died, all right; he just wasn't convinced that Jesus arose, and it was those scars that convinced Thomas.

I am wondering if there are not some people who are looking for some scars in our lives to be convinced. Now, they don't have to be

literal scars. There's more than one way to bear a scar. But, you can suffer for Jesus. You don't have to go out and bait suffering. Don't anybody get a martyr complex, and try to get people to persecute you for Jesus Christ. But, I'm saying, dear friend, that, when we get serious about suffering for the Lord Jesus Christ, and we say, "Pentecost at any cost," and when we say with the Apostle Paul, "I'm going for God, no matter what it costs," I believe there shall be in our lives that fruitfulness that Paul had.

## Conclusion

"Well," you say, "my goodness, Preacher, I thought this thing of being a Christian was supposed to be wonderful." Hey folks, don't feel sorry for Paul. Don't feel sorry for Paul. Paul looks down on you, feeling sorry for you. One of these days, you're going to meet Jesus. One of my favorite songs is this:

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus,  
Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ;  
One glimpse of His dear face all sorrow will erase,  
So bravely run the race till we see Christ.  
(Esther Kerr Rusthoi)

I bear in my body little marks of the Lord Jesus-branded for Christ. Let's pray.

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## Galatians 6:17 G Campbell Morgan Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible

Henceforth let no man trouble me ...—Gal 6.17

There is a fine touch of independence in these words, a claim that the writer is exempt from interference, that if any shall break in upon his quietness, the intruder is guilty of misdemeanor. After reading the letter, with its clear logic and its splendid passion, we feel that he has won the right to write thus. And yet it is not upon that ground that he bases his claim. His ground is that he bears branded on his body the stigmata of Jesus! There has been much mystical interpretation of these words of Paul, which may be warranted. I believe that the reference was a very simple and very actual one. In his proclamation of the Gospel committed to him, he had given his physical powers without reserve, and in the process had been actually bruised and broken by the brutality of those who had opposed him. He carried the actual scars of this brutality, and knew actual physical weakness as the result of his devotion. These all were to him the true stigmata of Jesus, sweet and terrible companions of the very wounds of his Lord. Let them appeal to men to recognize his right not to be troubled. And so his appeal finally was to the Gospel which was thus evidenced, as to its compelling and sustaining power, by the very sufferings through which he had passed, of which these scars were the sure signs. It is really a very keen word this. Have we any right to claim exemption from the troubling of men, such as Paul had? What stigmata do we carry about with us that speak of suffering or deprivation, or limitation, resulting from our persistent and passionate devotion to the Gospel of the eternal grace?

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## "Go Get Your Scars!"

It is said that when the knights of King Arthur's court, returned from the field of battle, if they did not bear in their bodies some scar of the battle, they were thrust forth by the king, with the command, "Go, get your scar!" How few of us can say with Jesus' faithful warrior, Paul, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17); "Christ Jesus my Lord... for whom I have suffered the loss of ALL THINGS" (Phil. 3:8). Remember that when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to be judged for the deeds done in the body, Christ is not going to look for medals. He is going to look for SCARS!

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## Tabletalk - Bearing the Marks of Jesus

GALATIANS 6:17–18 "From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen" (vv. 17–18).

Far from a dispassionate treatise on justification, Paul's epistle to the Galatians is among his most personal letters, his deep concern for his audience evident throughout. At many points the apostle's dismay that the Galatians would foolishly abandon his message is clear, revealing that he saw their flirtation with legalism as an affront to him and a danger to their souls (1:6–9; 3:1–3). Moreover, Paul describes the Galatians' affection for him in their willingness to look past his ailments and love him when he first came to them (4:8–20).

In today's passage we find one final confirmation of the apostle's close relationship to the Galatians. Aside from his reference to his readers as his "brothers" in 6:18, Paul also remarks in verse 17 that no one should cause him trouble any longer. This is most likely a reference to the personal vexation that he felt as the Galatians were taking steps away from the gospel of grace to the false

promises of the Judaizers, a gospel that was in fact no good news at all (1:8–9).

The “marks of Jesus” in Paul’s body are the basis for the Galatians to stop heeding the false teachers and thereby cause him trouble no longer (6:17). Remember that the Judaizers’ insistence that the mark of circumcision proves a person’s loyalty to the Jewish Messiah motivated Paul to write Galatians in the first place. Here in verse 17 the apostle employs irony, granting in a sense his enemies’ point that bodily marks can show forth true discipleship. Yet circumcision is not the sign of commitment to Jesus but the scars of persecution for the cross of Christ. Paul does not invest these marks with absolute significance for salvation; unlike the Judaizers, he does not say that one must be physically marred to be justified. But he is pointing out that true disciples show forth their love for the Master in their willingness to suffer all manner of hardships for the truth of gospel (see also 2 Cor. 11:16–12:10). They do not substitute human effort for God’s grace and then claim to be Christians while following a false gospel.

Divine grace is the note that closes this epistle (Gal. 6:18). May we never compromise this grace, which declares there is but one God (3:20), one gospel (1:6–7), one holy people (3:29; 6:16), and one new creation in Christ (v. 15). X

CORAM DEO Living before the face of God

Not all of us live in cultures or societies where physical harm is an inevitable part of faithfulness to Christ Jesus. **Yet all of us should bear some kind of marks that testifies to our faithfulness to the Lord, whether they are insults from coworkers or professors, loss of a job, the sacrifice of worldly goods for the sake of gospel ministry, or other such things. What are the marks you bear that testify to your faithfulness to our Lord and Savior?**

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Hastings - Great Texts - THE MARKS OF JESUS

From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.—Gal. 6:17.

THE Apostle was growing an old man. He was stamped and marked by life. The wounds of his conflicts, the furrows of his years, were on him. And all these wounds and furrows had come to him since the great change of his life. They were closely bound up with the service of his Master. Every scar must still have quivered with the earnestness of the words of Christian loyalty which brought the blow that made it. See what he calls these scars, then. “I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.” He had a figure in his mind. He was thinking of the way in which a master branded his slaves. Burnt into their very flesh, they carried the initial of their master’s name, or some other sign that they belonged to him, that they were not their own. That mark on the slave’s body kept any other but his own master from touching him or compelling his labour. It was the sign at once of his servitude to one master and of his freedom from all others. St. Paul says that these marks in his flesh, which signify his servitude to Jesus, are the witnesses of his freedom from every other service. Since he is responsible to his Master, he is responsible to no one else.

¶ **The stigmata are the marks of ownership branded on the Apostle’s body.** These stigmata were used:

- (1) In the case of domestic slaves. With these, however, branding was not usual, at least among the Greeks and Romans, except to mark out such as had attempted to escape or had otherwise misconducted themselves, hence called “stigmatized (literati),” and such brands were held to be a badge of disgrace.
- (2) Slaves attached to some temple or persons devoted to the service of some deity were so branded.
- (3) Captives were so treated in very rare cases.
- (4) Soldiers sometimes branded the name of their commander on some part of their body.

The metaphor here is most appropriate, if referred to the second of these classes. Such a practice at all events cannot have been unknown in a country which was the home of the worship of Cybele. A temple slave is mentioned in a Galatian inscription. The brands of which the Apostle speaks were doubtless the permanent marks which he bore of persecution undergone in the service of Christ.

¶ In the Roman Empire when a slave ran away, if he was caught, his owner might have him stripped, the irons heated, and the letters “FVG.” (fugitivus) branded upon him. Perhaps the owner’s initials might be burnt on the slave, too. The practice long survived in France, where convicts were branded “V” (voleur), or “TF” (travail forcé), and people took their children to see it done as a lesson in virtue. The historian, Herodotus, tells us that in Egypt, if a slave were dissatisfied with his master, he might go to the temple of Herakles and take on him the stigmata of the god, and be free for ever of his master and belong to the god. Such marks were indelible.

¶ The branding was a mark of shame. No man was branded of his own free will—apart from slaves taking on them such a brand as that of Herakles, which was to exchange one servitude for another. To be the slave of Jesus Christ had not been Paul’s intention. The shame of bearing Christ’s name—of being “made as the filth

of the world, the off-scouring of all things" (1 Cor. 4:13)—the loss of home and family and friendships, of everything (Phil. 3:8)—the squalid life of privation, insult, persecution and danger—humiliation from beginning to end—no man would have chosen it, and Paul did not choose it. It was a vocation: "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, I am entrusted with a stewardship" (1 Cor. 9:16, 17). A steward was very often a slave, if not always. Paul is at the beck and call of another whom he never chose to make his Master. He must have no will of his own. "Go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6),—so far was he from choosing a vocation, he has to wait for his orders.

The two responsibilities go together—the servant is responsible to the Master, and the Master to the servant. The very stigmata themselves become so many promises. The body is marked all over with signs of the Master's use, as a favourite book, which a man reads often, shows most signs of wear—pencilled in here and there, crushed, worn and shabby, and in all these things identified with the reader who cannot do without it. The battered body and the tried and weary spirit are reminders themselves to Paul that "Christ liveth in me."

## I OUTWARD MARKS

Every Christian man or woman ought to bear in his or her body, in a plain, literal sense, the tokens that he or she belongs to Jesus Christ. You ask how? "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." There are things in our physical nature that we have to suppress; that we have always to regulate and coerce; that we have sometimes entirely to cast away and do without, if we mean to be Jesus Christ's at all. The old law of self-denial, of subduing the animal nature, its passions, appetites, desires, is as true and as needful to-day as it ever was; and for us all it is essential to the loftiness and purity of our Christian life that our animal nature and our fleshly constitution should be well kept down under heel and subdued. If we are not living a life of self-denial, if we are not crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, if we are not "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Christ may be manifested in our body," what tokens are there that we are Christ's slaves at all?

¶ The marks of Christ are brands burnt into the very body, so no outward thing will satisfy; nothing that your hands have done, nothing that the world can measure, for it is beneath all the dress and apparel of a so-called religious life, of which the world takes cognizance. They are part and parcel of yourself, so they can be nothing which can be taken up and laid down at will. They are inseparable, like flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone. You may be stripped of all else, like a body washed ashore, but by these shall it be known whether you are Christ's or no.

¶ At the Cross, Bunyan tells us, Christian received four gifts from the angels—peace, new raiment, a mark, and a sealed roll. The **mark**, like the raiment, has to do with the outward appearance, but it is more intimately connected with the individuality of the man than the new garments. It seems to stand for something distinguishable by others, which is in a stricter sense ourselves than even our character is—a subtle change wrought upon the very personality by the Cross of Christ, as the marks of the Cross were printed upon St. Francis of Assisi in the familiar incident of the stigmata. In the Bible there are such references as the mark of Cain; the mark of Ezekiel's man with the slaughter-weapon; the mark of the beast and the mark in the foreheads of the chosen ones, recorded in Revelation. All these illustrate in various ways the subtle change in men, recognizable by others, produced by supreme experiences of good and evil.

1. Here is a man whose restless spirit, whose keen hungry eye, whose hard face, whose metallic voice, tells the story of a sordid soul. Do we need to ask anything about his master? We know, as we listen to him, as we look into his face, that he has a craving for money; that his life is spent in following the god of gold, and worshipping in the temple of mammon. Mammon is his master, and he bears branded upon his body the "stigmata" of the master he serves. Here is one whose bloated face, feverish lips, and furtive glance tell of sensuality. The vice seems to have petrified on the countenance. Not a finger-touch of God seems to be left there. We know the name of the master that man serves. He bears branded upon his sensual face the marks of the master whose slave he is. The name of his master is lust. Here is another whose mien betokens a lofty indifference and a contemptuous disregard for others, and an unquestioning appropriation of the best of everything. Those haughty looks tell the story of a life completely dominated by pride. Here is another whose face is scarred and marred with anguish. It says, as you look at it, "I am a man who has seen affliction." The furrowed face, wrinkled brow, and sunken cheeks tell of a life that has been trodden by the hoof of sorrow. We know that the man has spent long years in the school of sorrow; he bears on his body the "stigmata" of pain.

¶ We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never so little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, "I won't count this time!" Well! he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering it, and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and

authorities and experts in the practical and scientific, spheres by so many separate acts and hours of work.

¶ In one of Tolstoy's books he represents an ideal Czar who keeps open house and table for all comers. But the guests had to face one condition—each man had to show his hands before sitting down to the feast. Those whose hands were rough and hard with honest toil were welcomed to the best of the board, but those whose hands were soft and white had only the crusts and crumbs. The hands were the index of the soul. The hard rough hands told the story of toil, sacrifice, and suffering, and it was for these the best of the feast was spread.

2. The face of a Christian disciple should testify to the grace of God within. It is a matter of constant observation that strong ruling emotions of heart do come, in time, to stamp themselves upon the countenance. Sometimes we see a face that speaks of beaming kindness, or of sweet, devout, and holy peace. What God wants is that His character should be so stamped upon the lives of all His children that every observer of their daily walk should recognize in them what is really Divine.

¶ After the death of the saintly McCheyne, a letter addressed to him was found in his locked desk, a letter he had shown to no one while he lived. It was from one who wrote to tell him that he had been the means of leading him to Christ, and in it were these words, "It was nothing that you said that first made me wish to be a Christian, it was the beauty of holiness which I saw in your very face."

## II SPIRITUAL MARKS

**1. While it is true that the primary reference of the text is to the scars of old and recent wounds which St. Paul had endured in the service of Christ, these were not the only "marks of Jesus" that he bore.** After all, the true marks of Jesus are not outward but inward, not physical but spiritual. It was the Apostle Paul himself who said, "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And in St. Paul's own case, the wounds he bore, while in some respects the most striking, were not the deepest and most convincing "marks" of Jesus. The final and absolutely decisive proof that St. Paul belonged to Christ was that he had the spirit of Christ and that Christ lived over again in him.

The brand of Christ may be upon the mind and heart as truly as upon the body: on the **mind**, in the effort we make to subdue our natural arrogance and pride into humbleness and faith; on the **heart**, in the loving pity we have for the misfortunes of others. Are our minds no longer conformed to the spirit of the world, but transformed to the image of the Son; so that the mind that was in Christ is the mind that is in us? Are our hearts thus quick to suffer in the suffering of others, as His was, who by force of sympathy bore our grief and carried our sorrows? Therein only can we rest, thus only be at peace about ourselves; and as we pass through the detractions and misunderstandings of this world, and as we journey down the long road whose goal is death, we can learn to say, "Let no man trouble me—let me not even be troubled for myself—I have the marks of Christ, I know whom I have believed, and who shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, my Lord?" To have the marks, the brands, the stigmata, the open proofs of self-surrender and self-sacrifice—that alone counts.

¶ There is a tendency, even in these days, to think Christ's "marks" are external and mechanical. We think sometimes that the "mark" of a Christian is that he observes the Sabbath and attends church services and belongs to some ecclesiastical organization. I do not disparage the Sabbath and church attendance and membership. But these external things are not the "real" marks of Jesus. Did not Jesus Himself say that a man may have all manner of Church guarantees and certificates and be none of His? Did He not say, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." No, it is not the crucifix on the watch-chain, or the "S.A." on the collar, or the name on the church roll that constitutes the marks of Jesus. The marks are inward and spiritual. They are certain features of character, and especially these three, obedience, love, sacrifice. Indeed, our Lord Himself emphasized and underlined these three things as being, above all others, the marks of His servants. First, obedience. "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Secondly, love. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." And thirdly, sacrifice. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Have we got these marks? Is our life characterized by an utter obedience to God, a great passion for souls, a remorseless sacrifice of self? We ask sometimes, "Hath He marks to lead me to Him, if He be my guide?" And we answer, "Yes, He has certain infallible marks: 'In His feet and hands are wound-prints, and His side.' " But there is another question: Have we the marks that single us out as His? Does the world recognize Christ's marks on us? Life always leaves its mark. The life of greed leaves its mark. The life of frivolous self-pleasing leaves its mark. The life of sin leaves its mark. And the life of Christian service leaves its mark. "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." The world, in their courage and devotion and self-sacrifice, saw the "marks of Jesus." But more important still, does Jesus see the "marks"? "The Lord knoweth them that are his." How? By the marks. We read how, in the last great day, there will be a division and a discrimination. The great Shepherd will



then gather and fold His sheep. And that is how He will know them—by the “marks.” Shall we then be amongst the sheep on the right hand? It all comes back to this: Do we bear branded upon us the “marks” of Jesus—the infallible signs and tokens of His service? Do we possess that spirit of obedience to God, and love to men, and utter self-sacrifice which a real surrender of ourselves to Jesus Christ always produces? “For if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

As in the Christ, though men beheld no beauty—  
Only the marks of suffering and care,  
God, from the first, beheld His own bright image  
Rejoicing in the revelation fair.

So, where His children, looking on each other,  
See forms and faces marred by pain and woe,  
God, looking on the depths and not the surface,  
Sees oftentimes His likeness formed below.

**2. The “stigmata,” the marks of Christ their Master, cannot be mistaken** His followers have His marks on their body, as signs that they are members of His Body, in all purity and chastity and holiness, as being “temples of the Holy Ghost.” But they also have His marks on their temper, as those who have taken up their cross and borne it after Him in self-denial and mortification, in patience, in forgiveness, in humility, in cheerfulness; His marks on their soul, as being set free from condemnation by the atoning mercy of the Saviour, as being made partakers of the precious fruits of His sacrifice upon the Cross—the mark of justification, and the mark of sanctification, the imputed righteousness of Christ, the imparted and inherent righteousness wrought in them by the Holy Ghost; His marks on their spirit; being full of all spiritual affections—love, joy, peace, patience amid the trials of earth, longing for the security of Heaven, the present enjoyment of an almost perfect rest in the arms of God; in short, “a life hid with Christ in God.”

I would not miss one sigh or tear,  
Heart-pang, or throbbing brow;  
Sweet was the chastisement severe,  
And sweet its memory now.

Yes! let the fragrant scars abide,  
Love-tokens in Thy stead,  
Faint shadows of the spear-pierced side  
And thorn-encompass'd head.

And such Thy tender force be still,  
When self would swerve or stray,  
Shaping to truth the froward will  
Along Thy narrow way.

Deny me wealth; far, far remove  
The lure of power or name;  
Hope thrives in straits, in weakness love,  
And faith in this world's shame.

### III STIGMATA OF THE SAINTS

1. The Apostle, it may be added, may have used the word “stigmata” with special reference to those marks in the body of his blessed Lord which were in the eyes of faith the symbol of salvation, and which love imagined to be reproduced in the disciple; those marks on which Thomas looked, and cried aloud, “My Lord, and my God.” For in the heat of his love of Christ, and in the certainty of his oneness with Him, what image was more natural than that of his own heart bearing the traces of the wounds of Christ? Such a thought must have passed into the minds of many saints of God; and where legendary fancy has expressed it outwardly, in the figures of holy men receiving actually in their bodies the print of their Saviour's wounds, can we not read in the painter's art the spiritual truth, “I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus”?

¶ St. Francis of Assisi in the year 1224 A.D. received in a trance the wound-prints of the Saviour on his body; and from that time to his death, it is reported, the saint had the physical appearance of one who had suffered crucifixion. Other instances, to the number of eighty, have been recorded in the Roman Catholic Church of the reproduction, in more or less complete form, of the five wounds of Jesus and the agonies of the cross; chiefly in the case of nuns. The last was that of Louise Lateau, who died in Belgium in the year 1883. That such

phenomena have occurred there is no sufficient reason to doubt. It is difficult to assign any limits to the power of the human mind over the body in the way of sympathetic imitation. Since St. Francis' day many Romanist divines have read the Apostle's language in this sense; but the interpretation has followed rather than given rise to this fulfilment. In whatever light these manifestations may be regarded, they are a striking witness to the power of the cross over human nature. Protracted meditation on the sufferings of our Lord, aided by a lively imagination and a susceptible physique, has actually produced a rehearsal of the bodily pangs and the wound-marks of Calvary.

¶ The name of a well-known scientific man having been mentioned, who, forbidden to work, occupies himself in closely watching his own case, Sir James Paget said, "It is a most dangerous thing to do that; people, by dwelling upon symptoms which they have not got, are very apt to produce them." I said: "I have been told that the stigmata might quite well be produced in that way." "Undoubtedly," he replied.

2. There is something far better for us to do than so to contemplate the sufferings of our Lord as depicted by human art, that the stigmata may literally appear on our hands and feet. It is so to contemplate our Lord in the whole spirit of His life and service and sacrifice, and so to come under His influence, that the spirit of His life and cross shall enter into us, and we shall go away from the secret place of contemplation to reproduce His image and likeness in conduct and character—that we, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," may be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

¶ In all art and literature, in every great and new creation, the impulse seems to lie in a new and vivid experience which makes a new knowledge. The man who was branded "FVG.," like the woman in Hawthorne's novel who wore the scarlet letter or the man who did not, knew something of those letters of the alphabet in quite a different way from all the rest. A burning experience and a burning memory indelible from flesh and spirit gave him those. It is somehow so that the poet learns his peculiar alphabet—something is burnt in upon him, perhaps in pain, perhaps in joy, for the joy of insight may go with pain and overwhelm it—and you get a new man, a "God-intoxicated man," like Spinoza, perhaps—or a Jacob Behmen. All knowledge is changed for him; he knew before;—no, he thought he did; but he knows now—not so many things, but the one thing in a new way that alters all. "If any man be in Christ," said Paul, "it is a new creation." All things are made new—they have new values in the new light, and none is ever again what it was before; it cannot be. Life has a new intensity, a new direction a new purpose. It becomes a vocation.

I saw in Siena pictures,  
Wandering wearily;  
I sought not the names of the masters,  
Nor the works men care to see;  
But once in a low-ceiled passage  
I came on a place of gloom,  
Lit here and there with halos  
Like saints within the room.  
The pure, serene, mild colours  
The early artists used  
Had made my heart grow softer,  
And still on peace I mused.  
Sudden I saw the Sufferer,  
And my frame was clenched with pain;  
Perchance no throe so noble  
Visits my soul again.  
Mine were the stripes of the scourging;  
On my thorn-pierced brow blood ran;  
In my breast the deep compassion  
Breaking the heart for man.  
I drooped with heavy eyelids,  
Till evil should have its will;  
On my lips was silence gathered;  
My waiting soul stood still.  
I gazed, nor knew I was gazing;  
I trembled, and woke to know  
Him whom they worship in heaven  
Still walking on earth below.

Once have I borne His sorrows  
Beneath the flail of fate!  
Once in the woe of His passion,  
I felt the soul grow great!  
I turned from my dead Leader;  
I passed the silent door;  
The grey-walled street received me:  
On peace I mused no more.

#### IV CHRIST'S OWNERSHIP

The ownership of Christ is one of the great realities of the Christian life. We speak of Christ as our Saviour, our Friend, our Example, our Teacher, but how seldom do we think and speak of Him as our Owner! And yet He is. We belong not to ourselves, but to Him. Our time, our talents, our money, our business, our home—all that we call our own is not so much ours as His. We were “bought with a price,” and we belong to Him who bought us.

That which is abject degradation when it is rendered to a man, that which is blasphemous presumption when it is required by a man, that which is impossible, in its deepest reality, as between man and man, is possible, is blessed, is joyful and strong when it is required by, and rendered to, Jesus Christ. We are His slaves if we have any living relationship to Him at all. Where, then, in the Christian life, is there a place for self-will; where a place for self-indulgence; where for murmuring or reluctance; where for the assertion of any rights of our own as against that Master? We owe absolute obedience and submission to Jesus Christ. The Christian slavery, with its abject submission, with its utter surrender and suppression of our own will, with its complete yielding up of self to the control of Jesus, who died for us; because it is based upon His surrender of Himself to us, and its inmost essence it is the operation of love, is therefore co-existent with the noblest freedom.

¶ The Hebrews had a scheme of qualified slavery. A man might sell his service for six years, but at the end of that time he was scot-free. On the New Year's morning of the seventh year he was granted his full liberty, and given some grain and oil to begin life with anew. But if on that morning he found himself reluctant to leave all his ties binding him to his master's home, this was the custom among them. He would say to his master, “I don't want to leave you. This is home to me. I love you and the mistress. I love the place. All my ties and affections are here. I want to stay with you always.” His master would say, “Do you mean this?” “Yes,” the man would reply, “I want to belong to you forever.” Then his master would call in the leading men of the village or neighbourhood to witness the occurrence. And he would take his servant out to the door of the home, and standing him up against the door-jamb, **would pierce the lobe of his ear through with an awl.** Then the man became, not his slave, but his **bond-slave**, forever. It was a personal surrender of himself to his master; it was voluntary; it was for love's sake; it was for service; it was after a trial; it was for life. Now, that was what Jesus did. The scar-mark of Jesus' surrender was not in His ear, as with the old Hebrew slave. It was on His cheek, and brow, on His back, in His side and hands and feet. The scar-marks of His surrender were—are—all over His face and form. Everybody who surrenders bears some scar of it because of sin, his own or somebody else's. Referring to the suffering endured in service, Paul tenderly reckons it as a mark of Jesus' ownership—“I bear the scars, the stigmata, of the Lord Jesus.” Even of the Master Himself is this so. And that scarred Jesus, whose body told and tells of His surrender to His Father, comes to us. And with those hands eagerly outstretched, and eyes beaming with the earnestness of His great passion for men, He says, “Yoke up with Me. Let Me have the control of all your splendid powers, in carrying out our Father's will for a world.”

¶ Some scars are ornaments. I do not know a more splendid word in all the supremely splendid Epistles of St. Paul than “I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus.” “Do you see this?” he said, “I was stoned there”; and then he would pull up his sleeve and say, “Do you see that?—it is the mark of the scourge. If you could only see my back, I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus”; he exhibited them as some men parade their degrees. His scars were his crown.

¶ Walk through Greenwich Hospital, or go down to Chelsea and talk to some of the old pensioners. Are they ashamed of their scars? Why, I remember how, a few months back, we had, at one of our meetings, a brother who had served in the Crimean War, and he showed me how a bayonet had gone in here and come out there—how there was a mark in his arm where a ball had gone right through and a scar in his face where the sword had cut. I think he said that he had about twenty scars on him, and his eyes flashed fire as he told the story.

¶ The “marks” of valour that the soldier obtains on the field of battle are invariably a matter of pride to himself and his friends. Lord Raglan's orderly officer, Lieutenant Leslie, was wounded at the battle of Alma. On the evening of that day Lord Raglan said to another officer, “Do you know Tom Leslie's mother? She is a charming

woman. I must write to her. How proud she will be to hear that her son has a bullet in his shoulder!" At the battle of Busaco in Portugal, in 1810, Sir Charles Napier, afterwards the conqueror of Scinde, was shot through the face. His two brothers had been wounded a short time before, and when he wrote to his mother he said, "You have the pride of saying your three sons have been wounded and are all alive. How this would have repaid my father for all his anxieties, and it must do so for you. Why, a Roman matron would not have let people touch her garment in such a case. There is no shame for such wounds. The scars on my face will be as good as medals; better, for they were not gained by hiding behind a wall."

If Thou, my Christ, to-day  
Shouldst speak to me and say,  
"What battles hast thou fought for Me?  
Show Me thy scars; I fain would see  
Love's depth of victory;"

If Thou shouldst speak, my Christ,  
My Leader and my King,  
And bid me lay my wounds in sight,  
The scars borne just for Thee in fight,  
What love-scars could I bring?

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### **Vance Havner - No Offense, No Effect**

God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Galatians 6:14.

We need men of the cross, with the message of the cross bearing the marks of the cross.

Paul was a MAN of the cross. He gloried in it. "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20). With him it was not a theory but an experience. His message was the cross. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). He bore the marks of the cross: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17).

We are hearing a new version of Christianity that avoids all this. It is not foolishness to the world and it is without offense. It involves no crucifixion of self, it presents no bleeding Saviour, it offers medals instead of scars. But if any man or an angel preach a crossless Christ let him be accursed. For such a Christ is without offense and without effect.

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### **Todd Wilson - The Marks of Jesus (Gal 6:17)**

When we're confident in the cross of Christ—even to the point of boasting—we'll start thinking radical thoughts and doing radical things. Practically speaking, we may even be willing to suffer for the good of others, confident that suffering is the proof, rather than the counterevidence, of our life in Christ.

This was Paul's attitude toward suffering. In fact, his final rebuff of his opponents and closing appeal to the Galatians points them to the fact of his suffering as the sign of his authenticity: "From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (Gal 6:17).

But when Paul says he bears on his body the marks of Jesus, what does he have in mind? His male-pattern baldness, crooked nose, or rearing in Tarsus rather than Rome, each of which was evidently true of the Apostle to the Gentiles?

Often we hear people refer to the "crosses" they have to bear—a cranky mother-in-law, a lousy golf swing, or an overbearing boss. But personal disappointments aren't the marks of Jesus. Personal sacrifices that involve suffering are.

The marks of Jesus to which Paul refers are those visible, tangible reminders of how he's suffered with Christ for the advance of the gospel and the good of others. He's referring to the wounds and scars he carries around with him on his body, the ones he has acquired in the service of God's gospel for Gentiles.

**Do we bear the marks of Jesus in our lives, perhaps even on our own bodies? Is our identification with Jesus and service of others so vibrant that it's become costly? If we looked at our recent bank statements, would we see the marks of Jesus? If a friend perused our calendar and the way we prioritize the use of our time, would he see the marks of Jesus? Or if someone talked to our friends and neighbors, would they testify to seeing the suffering Savior in our visage?**

Understand, then, that because the Christian life is sacrificial, it will be painful. If it's not, it probably isn't Christian. Or at least it's not cross-shaped, and thus patterned after Christ's own life. For our Lord's was no safe, sanitized life.

And yet he endured it all—becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross—for our sake and for our salvation.

**Your Biography** When D. L. Moody was moving into old age, he was asked to grant permission for his biography. Moody refused, saying, “A man’s life should never be written while he is living. What is important is how a man ends, not how he begins.” For better or worse, I have failed to follow that dictum. My biography has been published. Yet I agree with Moody that the way our lives end is the crucial test of authentic discipleship. Only if we remain in a steadfast relationship with the Savior can we be confident not merely of entering heaven, but of obtaining the victor’s crown (1 Corinthians 9:25). Paul was concerned about the possibility of being disapproved by his Lord (v.27). He was a redeemed believer who was serving the Lord, yet he feared that his service might prove to be wood, hay, and straw rather than gold, silver, and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3:12-13). What will be the Lord’s appraisal of our lives? Will someone evaluating us be able to say honestly that we continued to bear fruit in old age? (Psalm 92:14). Whatever vocation we pursue, with the help of the Holy Spirit we may be “steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

[Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful,](#)

May the fire of our devotion light their way;

May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe,

And the lives we live inspire them to obey.

—Mohr © 1987 by Jonathan Mark Music and Birdwing Music (ASCAP)

For the ignorant, old age is as winter;

for the learned, it is a harvest.

—Jewish proverb

**Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.**

NET Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

GNT Galatians 6:18 χ ρ ις το κυ ρ ου μ ν η σο Χ ρ ις το μετ το πνε ματος μ ν, δε λ φο · μ ν.

NLT Galatians 6:18 Dear brothers and sisters, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

KJV Galatians 6:18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. <Unto the Galatians written from Rome.>

ESV Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

ASV Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

CSB Galatians 6:18 Brothers, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

NIV Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

NKJ Galatians 6:18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

NRS Galatians 6:18 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

YLT Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with your spirit, brethren! Amen.

NAB Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

NJB Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my brothers. Amen.

GWN Galatians 6:18 May the good will of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters! Amen.

BBE Galatians 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. So be it.

- **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ** Ro 16:20,24 2Co 13:14 2Ti 4:22 Phm 1:25 Rev 22:21 Gal 1:3
- [Galatians 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**A CLOSING PRAYER  
FOR GRACE**

Paul "bookends" the book of Galatians with **grace**.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,(Gal 1:3+)

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen-** Not "the Law of Moses" but **he grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!** How fitting that Paul closes with a prayer for grace in a letter written to counter those men who would seek to "steal" grace from the saints in Galatia by seeking to coerce them to live by the Law. Grace and Law simply do not mix. Where Law (legalism in any of its subtle forms) creeps into the believer's life, that believer will in effect blunt the effect of grace in their life.

**Barclay** - And so after the storm and stress and tensility of the letter there comes the peace of the benediction. Paul has argued and rebuked and cajoled but his last word is GRACE, for him the only word that mattered.

Notice the source of grace is **of our Lord Jesus Christ** In his last words to Timothy Paul commands him

You therefore, my son, **be strong** ([endunamoo](#) in the [present imperative](#) = only possible by continually relying on [the Holy Spirit](#)) in the **grace that is in Christ Jesus** (2 Ti 2:1+)

#### Related Resource:

- Table contrasting Grace and Law

What do we need God's **grace** for? The correct answer is: everything! From birth to regeneration through sanctification, all the way to ultimate glorification—from the cradle to the grave—we are utterly, absolutely, entirely, always dependent on His grace! God's grace is His all-sufficient provision for every need we will ever have.

**Jerry Bridges** adds "Your worst days are never so bad that you're beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you're beyond the need of God's grace."

It is notable that this is the only letter Paul ends with the designation of **brethren**! So while there are no personal commendations, praise or salutations, Paul wants to leave the Galatians not with criticism but with tender encouragement that they are his brothers in Christ. Would this not stimulate them to seek to respond to his persuasive appeal in this letter? That's a good model for all of us to emulate, especially with those with whom we may have had some spiritual disagreements.

As **Lightfoot** says **brethren** is "in an unusual and emphatic position (cp. Philemon 1:7). St Paul's parting word is an expression of tenderness."

**Lovett** says: **BRETHREN**. After sounding his fears for his wayward Galatians, after delivering those scoldings and rebukes, the last thought of his heart is confidence. It was unusual for him to do so, but he put the word "brethren" at the end of his sentence, just before the solemn amen. Perhaps he means to call their attention to the fact that they are still his precious brothers even though he called them "stupid Galatians" earlier. By putting it at the end of the sentence, this would be the final word in their ears . . . "brethren." As twilight closes the hustle and bustle of the day, so Paul closes his letter with a loving expression of brotherhood. His parting word is warm, calculated to woo the emotional Galatians. ([Lovett's lights on Galatians](#))

**Brethren** (80)([adelphos](#) from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) means brother or near kinsman. "Adelphós generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family (Mt. 1:2; Lk 3:1, 19; 6:14); members of the same tribe, countrymen, and so forth (Acts 3:22; 7:23; Ro 9:3). Figuratively, **adelphos** describes members of the Christian community, spiritual brother, fellow Christian, fellow believer (Ro 8:29). Jews used adelphos to describe fellow countrymen (Acts 3:22).

#### Max Anders summarizes the principles in Galatians 6

- Love is bighearted not bigheaded.
- Legalism condemns while grace restores.
- You impress others with what you know. You impact others with how you love.
- Conceit is deceit. The one who toots his horn the loudest is usually in the deepest fog.
- Life is like a boomerang; what you throw is what returns to you.
- You harvest spiritually, mentally, relationally, and physically in direct proportion to what you plant. There are no miracle crops.
- Not only our deeds, but also our motives, are important.
- Spiritual change is an inside job begun with the new birth and sustained by a new power—the Holy Spirit.



- Scars for Christ here on earth produce stars from Christ there in heaven. ([Holman New Testament Commentary - Galatians](#))

**Amen** (281)([amen](#)) is a transliteration from the Hebrew word [amen](#) which in turn is from the Hebrew verb [aman](#) = to be firm, to believe, this word conveying the idea of certainty). **Amen** is transliterated into Latin and English and many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. In fact **amen** has been called the best-known word in human speech. To say "**Amen**" confirms a statement by someone else. Paul ends two other NT letters with "Amen" - Ro 16:27 and 1 Cor 16:24.