

Galatians 6:6-10

Be Generous and Do Good

Before we begin our present study of Galatians I would like to clear up a misconception from the last chapter. When we read Romans 12 we read about using your God-given gift or abilities to serve the church. And we read about those who prophesy or lead or show mercy, and we also read about "ministry."

The word "ministry" is where the confusion came in. When some people read or hear that word "ministry" they think it refers to the preacher. But the Greek word refers to any act of service from sweeping the floor, to building something, to cooking, to working in electronic media, to singing and on and on.

Ministry, here in Romans 12 refers to any and all acts of service done by a Christian. In our culture we tend to want to separate "church" work from other works. But in the Bible all work is to be done for the good of others and for the glory of God. Being a pastor is no more holy work than being a Christian plumber. I hope this clears up the misconception.

Here in Galatians 6 we are still discovering what the fruit of the Spirit looks like in our relationships with one another. Where the power of God's Spirit is at work there will always be love and kindness toward others. We will have a correct and sober view of ourselves knowing that whatever good thing we have materially or spiritually it is all by the grace of God. And we will look at other people as valuable to God and worthy to be served by us.

The fruit of the Spirit is seen in our lives as we love and serve one another. As someone once said, we are born to live and born-again to serve. Our present section of Scripture can be summed up in the phrase "You reap what you sow." This is stated specifically in verse 7 and we will read that verse in a moment.

But this law or principle is woven into all of life. If a farmer wants a harvest, he must plant seeds. If he wants a good harvest, he must plant good seeds. If he wants an abundant harvest, he must sow abundantly. The principle works in every area of life—you reap what you sow. Let's begin in Galatians.

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

If God has blessed you with a preacher and teacher who has taught good, solid teachings from God's Word, you should be glad to do whatever you can to provide what he needs both to survive and thrive. Preaching is a full-time job, or it ought to be. And God has ordained that the pastor teacher of a local church should be sustained, both spiritually and materially by the gracious gifts of those he serves. We are told this elsewhere in Scripture too.

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."
(1 Timothy 5:17, 18)

The pastor who labors in teaching God's Word should be considered worthy of double honor. He should be greatly honored not only in love and respect, but he should be paid generously as well. In 1 Corinthians 9:14, the Bible declares, "...the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel."¹

Now, remember, the theme here is sowing and reaping. Therefore, the believer who is only concerned about what the pastor can give to him and not what her or she can sustain and encourage the pastor, will live a Dead Sea kind of life. Not much lives in the Dead Sea except for some microbial fungi. The Dead Sea receives tons of water, but it never releases any of it and so it is stagnant. How can anyone say that he or she is walking in the Spirit and is kind and loving if that person never thinks about the pastor's needs? Now, watch the connection here between caring for your pastor/teacher and reaping and sowing.

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

The principle or law in verse 7 is so important for us to grasp that it is prefaced with a command and a warning: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked." The possibility of being deceived is mentioned several times in the

¹ On the flip side of the coin, some preachers can misuse their office. This the warning and admonition from Peter in 1 Peter 5:1-4.

New Testament. Jesus warned us that the devil is a liar and the father of lies.² And Ephesians 5:6 tells us not to be deceived by empty words.

So many people are deceived about where and how they are sowing and investing their lives. They sow the seeds of their lives thoughtlessly, not thinking about what they have sown and what they will therefore reap. But though the world and the devil lies and deceives, God is not mocked – you will get what you want, what you have sown, in the end. Men and women can be fooled, but they cannot fool God.

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.
(Galatians 6:8)

There is an old adage that is so true:

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

And it is not that we earn everlasting life by being generous or by investing our time, money and energy in the things of God. But when we sow to the Spirit, learning the Word of God, loving and serving others, we will begin to experience, more and more, the power of the Spirit. And we will get a taste of the life of the age to come.³ There is a similar admonition in 1 Timothy.

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.
(1 Timothy 6:17-19)

² John 8:44

³ Hebrews 6:5a

The phrase “storing up” can be translated as “amassing a treasure.” While “foundation” can refer to a fund or bank account. In other words, do not be too concerned about investing in this world. Invest in good and godly things that will pay off big time in the age to come. Jesus said,

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

If you sow to the flesh you will reap corruption: moth, rust and thieves will deprive you. The world is never enough. And as 1 John 2:15-17 informs us it is passing away. Don't sow to the flesh—sow to the Spirit. Do not deprive good from those to whom it is due. Sowing the right and good seeds, brings about a harvest of good and right things.

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

Don't lose heart as you serve and give. This is a warning given again in 2 Thessalonians 3:13 where we are told “do not grow weary in doing good.” Sometimes people can be difficult, and life can be tough. At times you give and serve and even sacrifice and no one says “Thank you,” At other times noting good seems to result from all that you do. Don't give up. This is when you really need to saturate your mind with the Word of God, so you can walk in the Spirit and produce faithfulness. And we need to remember that even if we are not rewarded now, we will be more than recompensed in the coming kingdom of God. Finally,

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

Our last verse begins with the word “Therefore.” What is the “Therefore” there for? Do not lose heart, in due season you will reap what good you have

sown. So whenever the opportunity to do good comes, and those moments come all the time, do what is good.

Take care of your pastor, love the family of God. Be good and loving and generous to those who are not yet believers. But be especially good to the believers in Christ. To live like this is to live on a higher plain than the Old Testament Law. It is to live by the power of God's Spirit for our good, the good of others and the glory of God. Amen.