

Topic/Subject: ***Let us not grow weary doing good!***

Scripture: Galatian 6: 1-10 (9-10)

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The Lesson: Let Us Not Grow Weary in Doing Good

Galatians 6: 1-5

Paul knew the problems that arise in any Christian society. The best men slip up. The word Paul uses does not mean a deliberate sin but a slip as might come to a man on an icy road or dangerous path. Now, the danger of those trying to live the Christian life is that they are apt to judge the sins of others harshly. There is an element of hardness in many good men. However, Paul says that if a man makes a slip, the real Christian duty is to get him back on his feet and on the right path.

The word he uses for correction is used for executing a repair and the work of a surgeon in removing some growth from a man's body or setting a broken limb. The whole atmosphere of the word lies not on the punishment but on the cure. The correction is thought of not as a penalty but as an amendment. So Paul says that when he sees a man that has fallen into sin, we will do well to say, "But by the grace of God I go." He rebukes conceit and gives a receipt whereby it may well be avoided. We are to compare our achievement not with the work of our neighbors but with what our best would have been. If we do that, there can never be any cause for conceit.

Paul discusses twice the bearing of burdens.

He means that we must all help, and all be helped every day and every hour. None of us must be too selfish to help, and none of us must be too proud to be helped. You have all noticed how strategically and precisely the stones are placed and fitted together in constructing a building. Take away one stone, and the whole structure could collapse, but if they are held in place and share the weight of the entire building, the building

will continue to stand. It is by being helped that we help, and it is by being comforted that we comfort.

We know that Paul helped those that were feeble-minded supported the weak, and consoled the afflicted. But did he receive comfort and support during his time of need? Absolutely.

So we should no longer say, "Every man for himself, and God for us all," but say, "every man for his neighbor, and God for us all."

Galatians 6: 4

The direct reference is the burden of temptation. Still, the words of Paul allow a more significant interpretation, and we may regard him as implying the burden of personal responsibility here. The text reminds us of the universality of responsibility - Every man or each man. The text reminds us of the individuality of responsibility, each person's burden. There is something singular and unspeakable in each individual. We must help others because we have a burden of our own, is the touching argument that Paul makes. It also implies that we must not neglect our burden.

Galatians 6:5

Individual responsibility, these words embody the most rudimentary and yet one of the weightiest truths of the gospel—the personal commitment of each man to God. Without the distinct perception of our religion and not acted upon, it would be vague and feeble in its practical effect. However, let it be firmly grasped and consistently acted upon, and it will sink into our lives very foundation and shape our whole character and grow.

To this sense of responsibility, two things are requisite.

1. There must be a clear and authoritative definition of duty. This is provided through revelation. It is primarily a disclosure of the character of God and, consequently, of what that character

requires. It lays down firmly the significant landmarks of morality and calls upon us to shape our course accordingly.

2. The second condition of responsibility is the freedom to act upon the directions God has given us. This is not provided through revelation but is an integral part of our nature (God speaking directly to us) which revelation everyone recognizes and appeals.

Galatians 6:9

Paul reminds us of the need for energy, courage, and hope and tells us of the certainty of final victory if we continue, trusting less in self and more in the grace of God. Great power for good is lost by that sort of reserve that leads a man to hide away all that is best in his life and character. There is far more religious feeling than is allowed to appear on the surface, especially amongst men. Paul once said that he bore the marks of Jesus in his body. That may mean that at the time he wrote, he still had the actual scare of scourging and ill-usage in his master's service, but there is another sense, and a genuine one, in which we should all bear about the crucifixion of Jesus. The most helpful influence is the power that is common to all true workers for God. They have imprinted the lesson of Gethsemane and Calvary on their hearts and shone forth in their daily life. The great constraining power of self-sacrifice. Jesus bore us the weariness and heaviness, not only physical suffering which made him rest by the well and sleep in a fishing boat, but he knew the weariness of disappointment, the heaviness of heart which made him weep over Jerusalem.

The question is, what kind of weariness will you have? The fatigue of work well done, which has its reward in rest, or that weariness which comes from the pursuit of vanity? It is obvious to be weary if it brings us to rest beneath the cross and if it makes us listen to the voice of love. But there is the kind of weariness that is hard to bear, a weariness that we can claim the sympathy of God when our efforts for others seem to fail, when the harder we try, the less we seem to succeed.

I am going to close with another form of weariness. That is the disappointment when we find that the evil within us is still strong. That

old temptations still have power to allure and that we still have the root of old sin. We should not expect that an evil habit growing for years can be shaken off at once by one impulsive effort. The New Testament describes the process in which we gain mastery of our sin as "we must crucify our flesh." The process of crucifixion was a slow, lingering and painful death, and we must figure that it will be a long battle to overcome sin.

We have two things on our side, grace and mercy, and when we are victorious and remain faithful till the end, our victory, we will find rest.