

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2017: *The Gospel in Galatians*

Lesson 13 “The Gospel *and the Church*”

Read for this week’s study

Galatians 6:1–10; Matthew 18:15–17; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Romans 15:1; John 13:34; Luke 22:3.

Memory Text

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

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Restoring the Fallen
- III. Beware of Temptation
- IV. Burden Bearing (*Gal. 6:2–5*)
- V. The Law of Christ (*Gal. 6:2–5*)
- VI. Sowing and Reaping (*Gal. 6:6–10*)
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “We [cannot] expect that by some crazy twist of spiritual laws, our selfishness will be rewarded with unselfishness. Paul applies this principle in Galatians 6:1–10. Instead of members ‘biting and devouring one another’ (Galatians 5:15), the church should be a place where the Spirit leads us to put others before ourselves. Understanding that we are saved by grace should make us humble and more patient and compassionate in how we treat others.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. The Scripture passage for this week’s study can naturally be divided into two parts:
6:1-5 – Bearing One Another’s Burdens
6:6-10 – Practical Support in the Church
The lesson deals with the first part under Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday’s sections. It leaves the second part for the Thursday section.
3. Why is it so tempting and easy for us to look down on other Christians? What are the lines of division today and how are they different from Paul’s time?

4. What is Paul's solution to this attitude? How can collaboration and helping one another create the community that God longs for us to have and to be today? What kind of "law" is Paul talking about here?
5. Why is it important to "set right" the people who "trespass"? How can we help others without spoiling it by arrogance? In this section Paul is really contrasting the way a legalist would deal with an erring person, and the way a spiritual person would deal with them. The legalists don't appear to be interested in bearing burdens. Instead, they can easily *add* to the burdens of others (Acts 15:10; Matthew 24:3).
6. What kinds of burdens can we help each other bear and what kinds must we carry on our own (see v. 2. vs. v. 5)? What happens if we confuse them? How can we determine the difference?
7. In what sense is the church like a sport or business team and in what sense is the church different? If we are in competition with each other, we are emulating the life that the Galatians were living and we may risk going downhill as they did.
8. Do you find it easy or difficult to ask people for money for a noble cause? Paul manages to write about money without ever mentioning the word! Clearly the subject must have been as delicate in his world as it is in ours.
9. Do you believe, in the present-day, that the quality of ministry (teaching and preaching that builds up the church) depends on the level of payment that ministers receive? To what extent is it true?
10. The "sowing" and "harvesting" in its original context here refers to financial support of ministry. How is something as mundane as money connected with the "spirit" and/or the "flesh"? How much does your local church spend on solid teaching and preaching (= 'spirit') and how much does it spend on itself and various pleasures of ordinary life (= 'flesh')? It is still true that ministry of the word builds, strengthens people and communities, and spending money and energy on oneself may ultimately bring corruption and decay.
11. Why do we find it so difficult as a church to invest in people? In what sense is money, or material things, to be "sown"?
12. What is the wider meaning of "sowing to the flesh" and "sowing to the spirit" in the context of the rest of letter to the Galatians?
13. What does it mean that "God is not mocked" (v. 7)? Does God execute vengeance on those who turn their noses up at him? In what sense does human behavior function like farming?
14. How can we preserve the enthusiasm for living the life of the Spirit, persevere with patience, not growing tired of doing good, reap the true harvest and be part of God's community that he started by resurrecting Christ from dead?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Recommended Listening: The entire series by Graham Maxwell on the book of Galatians is available at <http://pkp.cc/MMGALATIANS66>

So, filled with the Spirit of love and truth, he says, “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted.” Here we could read on to 5: “Bear one another’s burdens too, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he’s nothing, he deceives himself.” Remember 1 Corinthians 13 uses those very words. A number of times Paul says knowledge puffs up but love builds up. These are familiar words:

For if anyone thinks he is something when he’s nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, not his neighbors’ and then his reason to boast will be in himself, alone, and not in his neighbor. For each man will have to bear his own load [doesn’t that sound like Romans 14? It’s so similar]. As for the man who’s weak in faith, welcome him. But not for arguments over opinions. For example, one believes he may eat anything, while a weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It’s before his own master that he stands or falls.

Then he goes on to talk about disagreement over days, and then comes down to verse 10, and says:

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God. “As I live,” says the Lord, “every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall give praise to God.” So you see, each of us shall give account of himself to God.

Isn’t that just like Galatians 6? “Each man will have to bear his own load.” We carry responsibility for our own behavior. It’s not for us to go around judging other people. I think the message is the same, don’t you? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, Galatians, #5, recorded March, 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/5MMGALATIANS66>

Further Study with Ellen White

Angels are interested in the spiritual welfare of all who are seeking to restore God’s moral image in man; and the earthly family are to connect with the heavenly family in binding up the wounds and bruises that sin has made. Angelic agencies, though invisible, are co-operating with

visible human agencies, forming a relief association with men. The very angels who, when Satan was seeking the supremacy, fought the battle in the heavenly courts and triumphed on the side of God, the very angels who shouted for joy over the creation of our world and its sinless inhabitants, the angels who witnessed the fall of man and his expulsion from his Eden home—these very heavenly messengers are most intensely interested to work in union with the fallen, redeemed race for the salvation of human beings perishing in their sins. {6T 456.2}

Human agencies are the hands of heavenly instrumentalities, for heavenly angels employ human hands in practical ministry. Human agencies as hand helpers are to work out the knowledge and use the facilities of heavenly beings. By uniting with these powers that are omnipotent, we are benefited by their higher education and experience. Thus as we become partakers of the divine nature, and separate selfishness from our lives, special talents for helping one another are granted us. This is heaven's way of administering saving power. {6T 456.3}

It should be our aim to bring all the pleasantness possible into our lives, and to do all the kindness possible to those around us. Kind words are never lost. Jesus records them as if spoken to Himself. Sow the seeds of kindness, of love, and of tenderness, and they will blossom and bear fruit. {OHC 293.5}

It is a wonderful thought that human beings can speak the Word of God, in simple words of comfort and encouragement. The humblest instruments will be used of God to sow the seeds of truth, which may spring up and bear fruit, because the one in whose heart they were sown needed help—a kind thought, a kind word, made effective by the One who has said, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”—Letter 329a, Nov. 16, 1905, to her 19-year-old granddaughter Mabel. {TDG 329.6}

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around. {AA 551.2}

We are to be laborers together with the heavenly angels in presenting Jesus to the world. With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our co-operation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in wholehearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God's love. {DA 297.3}

A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with

whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His word—a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God. {MB 128.3}

The work of Christ is to redeem, to restore, to seek and to save that which was lost. If we are connected with Christ, we also are partakers of the divine nature and are to be laborers together with God. We are to bind up the bruised and wounded soul; and if a brother or a sister has erred, we are not to join with the enemy in destroying and ruining, but to work with Christ to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness. . . . {HP 291.2}

The love of God alone can open and expand the heart, and give to love and sympathy a breadth and height that is without measure. Those who love Jesus will love all the children of God. The sense of personal infirmities and imperfections will lead the human agent to look away from self to Christ; and the Saviour's love will break down every cold, Pharisaical barrier, it will banish all harshness and selfishness, and there will be a blending of soul with soul, even with those who are opposite in temperament. {OHC 183.3}

All whose hearts are in sympathy with the heart of Infinite Love will seek to reclaim, and not to condemn. Christ dwelling in the soul is a spring that never runs dry. Where He abides, there will be an overflowing of beneficence.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 39. (1896)
{Ev 174.3}

God's healing power runs all through nature. If a tree is cut, if a human being is wounded or breaks a bone, nature begins at once to repair the injury. Even before the need exists, the healing agencies are in readiness; and as soon as a part is wounded, every energy is bent to the work of restoration. So it is in the spiritual realm. Before sin created the need, God had provided the remedy. Every soul that yields to temptation is wounded, bruised, by the adversary; but whenever there is sin, there is the Saviour. It is Christ's work "to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. {Ed 113.1}

The closer we keep to Christ, and the more meek and lowly and self-distrustful we are, the firmer will be our hold on Christ, and the greater will be our power, through Christ, to convert sinners; for it is not the human agent that moves the soul. Heavenly intelligences co-operate with the human agent and impress the truth upon the heart. Abiding in Christ we are able to exert an influence over others; but it is because of the presence of Him who says: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20. The power we have to overcome Satan is the result of Christ working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. {6T 399.2}

To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places, by kind words and pleasant looks. These cost those who give them nothing, but they leave behind a fragrance that surrounds the soul. Their effect can never be estimated. Not only are they a

blessing to the receiver, but to the giver; for they react upon him. Genuine love is a precious attribute of heavenly origin, which increases in fragrance in proportion as it is dispensed to others. . . . {5BC 1140.4}

Christ's love is deep and earnest, flowing like an irrepressible stream to all who will accept it. There is no selfishness in His love. If this heaven-born love is an abiding principle in the heart, it will make itself known, not only to those we hold most dear in sacred relationship, but to all with whom we come in contact. It will lead us to bestow little acts of attention, to make concessions, to perform deeds of kindness, to speak tender, true, encouraging words. It will lead us to sympathize with those whose hearts hunger for sympathy (MS 17, 1899). {5BC 1140.5}

True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in the bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another. {5BC 1141.2}

The qualities which it is essential for all to possess are those which marked the completeness of Christ's character—His love, His patience, His unselfishness, and His goodness. These attributes are gained by doing kindly actions with a kindly heart. . . . {5BC 1141.3}

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." This is the fruit that is to be given back to God (MS 133, 1899). {5BC 1141.5}

Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of all the gifts of heaven and to exclude the rest of God's family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth. {9T 190.4}

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life. {9T 191.1}

He passed no human being by as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself, He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every neglect or insult shown by men to their fellow men only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them the children of God. {9T 191.2}