

## SERVE

### Galatians 5 and 6

Seize the opportunity to serve.

Today we have become acquainted with the term “Quid Pro Quo”. We have just witnessed the impeachment trial of a president, based on those three words. But our fallen world has used those three words to define many a relationship. Let’s use the English version of the Latin.

What’s in it for me?

What do I get out of it?

Scratch my back and I’ll do yours.

Treat your neighbor like he treats you.

The last phrase might be the 2020 worldly version of the Golden Rule. But recall that Jesus (and Moses) gave us the “correct” version--”Love your neighbor as you love yourself”.

The church in Galatia had a fair percentage of Gentile believers, who didn’t know much about the Mosaic Law, and some got confused about the role of the Gospel versus the Law. Paul in the letter to the Galatians set the record straight: We are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone, and are saved in order to serve Him.

Freed to serve

Bearing another’s burdens

Work for common good.

Freed to serve Galatians 5: 13-15.

vs 13. In this verse, the Christians in Galatia were shown to be free in their salvation, based on faith in Christ. But they were not given license to ignore the tenets of Godly behavior, as expressed by the Commandments. They were encouraged to serve one another. Paul expressed a similar thought to the Christians in Rome, recall Romans 6: 1-2.

vs 14. Recall that Jesus answered a question given by one of the Pharisees, “which was the greatest of the commandments”? See Matthew 22: 35-40.

vs 15. The words translated “bite” and “devour” refer to the attacks of vipers and wild dogs. Paul was saying that disunity in the church will have the same effect as physical attacks of venomous snakes or packs of wild dogs--destruction. The world today actually has a very descriptive phrase for this, which unfortunately does happen sometimes in His church-- “Circular firing squad”.

Bearing another's burdens Galatians 6: 1-5.

vs 1. This verse parallels the teachings of Jesus. As Christians, we are called to not ignore sin and wrongs within the Church, but are challenged to approach the situation with the goal of restoring the fallen believer. Recall that “gentleness” was one of the fruits of the Spirit. see Galatians 5: 22-23.

vs 2. Paul in this verse encourages the Galatian believers to carry each other's burdens, e.g., financial, health, sin problems, family problems, etc. The greek rendering of “burden” has the idea of a very heavy stone which required carrying over a long distance. “law of Christ”--Remember that Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians to dispell the idea that a person first needed to become a “good jew” before he could become and “Christian”. But this freedom also carries a responsibility--proper balance between Grace and the Law.

vs 3. Paul expresses a similar thought in his letter to the church at Phillipi. recall Phil. 2: 3-4.

vs 4-5. In these verses, Paul challenges the Galatian christians to concentrate on their own, individual status before God, and not compare lives with others. He discourages us from using a “relative” standard rather than an “absolute” one. God does not “grade on the curve”. The word in vs 5 translated “load” is different from the word in vs 2 translated “burden”. Here “load” has the idea of something that can and must be carried by a single individual. Paul expressed a similar idea in 1 Corinthians 3: 13-15.

Work for common good. Galatians 6: 10

First, a look at vs 9. Paul here encourages christians to not get “weary in well doing”. The word translated “weary” has the idea of losing heart or becoming discouraged. We are tempted to get “weary” at times when it seems that our service goes nowhere.

But Paul reminds us that harvest does come, in God's timing. vs 10. Paul gives encouragement to serve others, even if they don't appreciate it. But also, he gives a special encouragement to show concern and service to fellow Christians. Remember that the outward expression of love shown within the family of God is the trademark of Christianity to the world. Recall John 13: 34-35.

That's it for today. God bless.

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