

Context: Chapter 5 ended with lists of the deeds of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Paul concludes by exhorting those who live by the Spirit to walk by the Spirit. In 5:26, he gives us an example of what walking by the Spirit looks like in the church. "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

Chapter 6 is a continuation of Paul demonstrating what walking in the Spirit looks like in the church. What does walking in the Spirit look like? It manifests in a love and care for the brethren and boasting only in the cross.

Galatians 6 - Sowing And Reaping in the Spirit

I. Sowing By Humbly Loving One Another (1-6)

A. Humbly Rebuild the Fallen Brother (1)

1. Restore the Brother Caught in Transgression

- a. Those who are spiritual (i.e. walking by the Spirit) will lift up the brother who is caught in sin
 - i. The idea here is one who has inadvertently fallen into sin
 - ii. The word "restore" here is the same word used for building walls and mending fishing nets – believers are to "rebuild" the one overtaken by a sin
- b. Walking in the Spirit is walking in love for the brothers
 - i. Those who are spiritual are not some special group of Christians – all believers are called to do this
 - ii. All believers should be walking in the Spirit (in this context that means loving and restoring the brethren)

2. Restore the Brother in a Spirit of Meekness

- a. "Meekness" is the same word Paul used in chapter 5 as a fruit of the Spirit – this is the exercise of that fruit
- b. Believers should restore others in Meekness because we are all capable of falling into sin
 - i. We must be humble and "consider ourselves"
 - ii. If we do not "watch ourselves" (i.e. be humble and empathetic), we ourselves could be carried away in temptation
 - iii. Yes...this means you – It is only by God's grace that we walk in the Spirit and do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh

B. Support the Brethren With Empathy (2-6)

1. Believers must Bear One Another's Burdens (2)

- a. Christians cannot “walk in the Spirit” alone – the fruits of the Spirit are demonstrated in interactions among our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - b. If you refuse to invest yourself in the brethren, you are not sowing into the Spirit
 - c. Bearing One Another’s Burdens Fulfills Christ’s Law
 - i. Earlier in the book Paul said that Love fulfills the law
 - ii. Jesus said that Love fulfills all the Law and the Prophets
 - iii. Paul is giving us a picture of what this Love looks like
 - iv. The word “burden” here is *Baros* – it speaks of an oppressive burdensome weight or trouble (this is important because Paul uses a different word in v. 5)
2. Believers Must Humbly and Honestly Assess Themselves (3-5)
- a. Do Not Be Deceived About Your Goodness (3)
 - i. The one who thinks he is “something” is deceiving himself.
 - ii. We must bear one another’s burdens humbly because (“for”) failing to do so is to fall into the sin of pride
 - Paul says here that those who think to proudly of themselves do not see the need to bear one another’s burdens
 - Also those who don’t think they need help bearing burdens exhibit sinful pride
 - Pride always sees the best in ourselves and the worst in others
 - Pride makes us want to “go it alone”
 - b. Honestly Examine Yourself By God’s Standard (4-5)
 - i. Those who refuse to bear one another’s burdens think highly of themselves because they compare their goodness to those who fall into sin
 - ii. We cannot compare ourselves to others – it may make us look good by comparison, but it is not a genuine assessment
 - iii. Only when we examine ourselves by God’s holiness do we see clearly how easy we may fall.
 - iv. We must examine ourselves by God’s standard because we will all carry our own load (“burden”)
 - The word burden here is not the same word as before. It is *phortion*

- Paul is saying that we cannot look upon the sinning brother and think highly of ourselves. When we stand before God, each person will “carry his own load” at the judgment. We will be accountable for what we did against God’s nature, not in comparison to others.
- We should bear one another’s burdens as they walk through this life – knowing that we too will carry our own before God when we stand before Him.

3. Even Believers Being Helped Must Invest in the Brethren (6)

- a. So far, it may seem that the “strong” believers are the ones commanded to bear one another’s burdens.
- b. Even those receiving help with their burdens have a responsibility to love and support other believers
- c. The one who is “being taught” is to share with the one teaching
 - i. NOTE: the word “share” is the verb form of the word the New Testament translate “fellowship”
 - ii. The one being taught is to share and fellowship all good things with those helping him or her

II. All Will Reap What They Sow (7-10)

A. The Law of Sowing and Reaping is Universal (7)

1. Believers are commanded not to deceive themselves – God will not be mocked

- a. Earlier Paul said those who think too highly of themselves deceive themselves.
- b. God will not be found unjust. His justice will not be ridiculed in creation. Man will receive what he desires.

2. Man will Reap Whatever He Sows

- a. Just as a sown seed will only produce a particular plant
- b. A spiritual seed (not talking about T.V. preachers and their “seed money”) will always bring forth spiritual fruit
- c. Earlier Paul described the fruit of the Spirit – the fruit of the Spirit grows as man sows spiritual seed.

3. A Life of Sowing To The Flesh Reaps Damnation (8a)

- a. The habitual practice of following the flesh demonstrates the new birth has not taken place

4. A Life of Sowing To The Spirit Reaps Eternal Life (8b)

B. Because The Law Of Sowing Is Universal Don’t Lose Heart (9-10)

1. We should not lose heart in doing good (9)

- a. Since all will reap what they sow, we should be confident that we will reap from sowing to the Spirit

- b. Even if we don't see the benefit as we deal with people and emotions – we trust in the word of God which promises reward
 - 2. We should take every opportunity to do good (10)
 - a. Because we know we will reap what we sow – we must take every opportunity to sow
 - b. ESPECIALLY to the Brethren. The fruit of the Spirit is produced as we sow into the brethren
- III. The Evidence of Sowing to The Flesh or The Spirit (11-16)
 - A. Paul is Deadly Serious (11)
 - 1. He stops the flow of argument to make sure they know he is writing this with his own hand
 - 2. In the first century, many letters were written by an amanuensis – which is someone who wrote while the author dictated
 - 3. Paul wants them to know he is taking a personal stake in this controversy
 - B. Those Teaching Legalism are Sowing Into the Flesh (12-13)
 - 1. They Teach Falsely In Order to Deny the Cross (12)
 - a. They desire to make a good showing in the flesh
 - b. They try to make righteousness before God something you must “do,” rather than something that Christ did for you.
 - c. They want to get around the stigma and persecution of the cross. They desire to please men rather than God
 - 2. They Don't Keep the Law Themselves (13a)
 - a. They preach the law – but they do not keep it perfectly
 - b. Only perfection can be defined as “keeping the law”
 - c. No one keeps it perfectly – but they see themselves as doing better than others.
 - 3. They Take Pride in Lording Over Others (13b)
 - a. They want the Galatians circumcised so they can “bring them the rest of the way” to God
 - b. They want to boast in their works
 - C. God's People Are Reborn At the Cross (14-16)
 - 1. The Cross Has Accomplished All We Need (14)
 - a. Paul boasts only in the cross
 - i. Although Paul had more reason to boast than any of these other teachers – he only boasts in the cross
 - ii. He knows that Jesus has provided all the righteousness man needs before the Father
 - b. The Cross Did all The Work
 - i. Paul says it is the cross that crucified the world to him and crucified him to the world

- ii. Paul refuses to take any credit for the gospel or the effect it has
 - 2. God's People Walk in the New Birth (15-16)
 - a. The New Birth is the Only "rule" to Follow (15)
 - i. Circumcision or uncircumcision doesn't matter at all – if you are or aren't it doesn't matter
 - ii. The only thing that matters is "are you a new creature" born again by trusting in Christ alone
 - b. True Israel walks by this rule (the new birth) (16)
 - i. Another backhanded slap by Paul to the Judaizers
 - ii. They claimed to be the true Israel and to offer the entrance into the people of God
 - iii. Paul says the "Israel of God" are those who are righteous through the new birth
- IV. Paul's Closing Exhortation (17-18)
 - A. Paul has proven himself a true follower of Christ (17)
 - 1. He won't give the Judaizers the time of day again
 - 2. He bears the marks of Christ in his body
 - a. He has been persecuted for Christ's sake
 - b. He has the proof of his message
 - B. Paul Entreats Those who are Born Again (18)
 - 1. Paul ends by saying "Grace be with your spirit"
 - 2. Grace is the answer to all the questions – those walking in the spirit are those who have the grace of God
 - 3. These are the brethren