

Mon.
25
Feb.

Verse to Learn

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness,
self-control; against such things there is no law.
Galatians 5:22-23



reading



notes



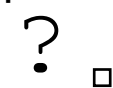
Galatians 4:19-20 - Paul's Love for the Galatians

Paul is here telling the Galatians of the great love and concern he has for them. Their change in attitude towards him hasn't affected how he feels about them. He still has the same respect and love towards them that he had when he was living among them. He isn't like their false teachers, who pretend to love them, but in reality are just looking out for themselves. Paul genuinely cares about what is best for them. They are quick to think of Paul as their enemy, but he assures them that he is their friend, and not just a friend, but a parent. Paul is in anguish that he compares to childbirth. And for what? Why is Paul in such anguish? He is not in anguish over whether or not they love him, he is in anguish to see Christ formed in them, that they might live as Christians, strong in the faith of the Gospel.

Faithful ministers like Paul have a great love for those to whom they minister, and their chief desire is to see men and women come to faith in Christ and grow in that faith. They want to see the congregation be made into the image of Christ, strong and fruitful disciples. To desert or dislike a minister like this is foolish. We also learn from these verses that men do not grow in Christ until they stop trusting in their goodness and rely only upon Christ and His righteousness.

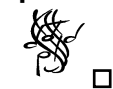
Paul wishes he was with the Galatians. At the minute he doesn't know what to make of them, but if he was with them he might find that things are better with them than he fears, and he might have reason to commend them rather than rebuke them.

questions



1. What does Paul want to see in the Galatians?
2. What does Paul call the Galatians?

praise



Ps. 84:7-12

prayers



1. Give thanks for our minister.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Henry and Elizabeth Irvine.
4. Pray for family matters.

Sat.
1
March

Verse to Learn

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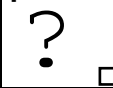
Galatians 6:11-18 - Final Words

Paul closes his letter by emphasising to the Galatians that this is coming from him, not from a secretary. He reminds them what the false teachers are really like. They are not sincere - they just want to make a show, so they will look good, and they're picking and choosing which part of the law they want to follow. They are men who are afraid of suffering. They're teaching that Christians must be circumcised because they are afraid of the Jews, and they don't want to open themselves up to the hassle and trouble Paul has gone through at the hands of the Jews. At the end of the day they just want to brag about how many Galatians are on their side. It's not about Christ, it's about them.

Paul, on the other hand, boasts about Christ and what He has done on the cross. This is the basis of all his hope as a Christian; this is the doctrine which he, as an apostle, is resolved to preach; and whatever trials this might bring upon him, he is ready to deal with them and rejoice in them. The more Christ means to Paul the less the things of the world matter. When it comes to being accepted by God, who we are and what we've done doesn't matter - what matters is our relationship with Christ. Those who are right with God, who are justified by faith in Christ alone, are blessed with peace and mercy and are the true people of God.

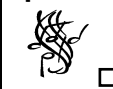
Paul finishes by praying for his Galatian brothers. He asks that they might receive from Christ all that grace which they need to guide them in their way, to strengthen them in their work, to establish them in their faith, and to encourage and comfort them in all the trials of life and death itself. We need nothing more to make us happy than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

questions



1. What does Paul boast about?
2. What does Paul pray for the Galatians?

praise



Ps. 88:1-12

prayers



1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow; that sinners would be converted and Christians grow in their faith.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Yvonne Pettigrew.
4. Pray for family matters.

Fri.
29
Feb.

Verse to Learn

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Galatians 5:22-23



reading



Galatians 6:1-10 - Love of Others

We are taught in these verses to deal gently with those who have succumbed to the temptation to sin. But even though we are to be gentle, we are still to confront them with their sin and seek to bring them to repentance. This is done out of love and with humility, conscious that it is all too easy for us to fall into sin as well.

notes

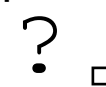


We are to bear each other's burdens, to sympathise with each other's troubles, and seek to comfort and help however we can. It's easy for us to be harsh and critical of others when they sin and to be so puffed up with a sense of our own importance that we are oblivious to their needs. Paul warns us against deceiving ourselves in this way and tells us to test ourselves, what we say and do, by God's Word. In other words, we should look to the log in our own eye, before we start going on so harshly about the speck in someone else's eye. The more we understand ourselves, the less pride we have and the more compassion we show to others. On the day of judgement it's ourselves we will have to answer for - our burden we will have to bear.

Paul makes clear here that some are called to be ministers, and it is the duty of those who are taught the Word to support and provide for the one who teaches them. Paul then warns the Galatians against thinking they can deceive God by saying one thing and doing another.

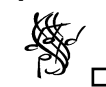
It's really easy to get tired of doing good, especially doing good to others, so Paul tells us to watch against this tendency. The Lord sees all that we do, and He will reward us for loving and serving Him. So, whenever we have an opportunity to do good, especially to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we should take it with both hands.

questions



1. How should we treat someone who has fallen into sin?
2. What opportunities do you have to do good to others?

praise



Ps. 87:all

prayers



1. Pray for opportunities to do good.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Darren and Adam Smith.
4. Pray for family matters.

Tue.
26
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Verse to Learn

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Galatians 5:22-23



reading



Galatians 4:21-31 - Slave and Free

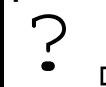
Paul is showing the difference between believers who rest in Christ only and those who say you need to keep the law to be saved. He compares it to the story of Isaac and Ishmael. Hagar represents the law and the slavery that comes with keeping the law. Sarah represents the promise - God's promise of a Saviour and the freedom that comes with trusting in that promise, a freedom open to both Jews and Gentiles. Paul then makes the point that the freedom and growth of the Church under the Gospel is what Isaiah is prophesying about in Isaiah 54:1 Sarah, the free woman, the woman of promise, the woman who represents the Gospel, has more children in the end than those born into the slavery of the law.

notes



Paul now applies this history to the present case of the Galatians. Christians, who have accepted Christ, and rely upon Him, and look for justification and salvation by Him alone, become the spiritual, even if they're not the biological, children of Abraham, and they're entitled to the promised inheritance and its blessings. But Paul warns them that they need to be ready for persecution. Ishmael and his children persecuted Isaac and his children and nothing has changed since then. The children of the world are always going to be opposed to the children of God. Those who try to do things their own way, to save themselves, are never going to like hearing that it's not good enough, and they need a Saviour. Christians should expect to face persecution. But Paul encourages and comforts the Galatians by reminding them that true Christianity lasts forever. They have an eternal inheritance that no amount of persecution can take away.

questions



1. Who do Hagar and Sarah represent?
2. What can Christians expect?
3. What will Christians inherit?

praise



Ps. 85:all

prayers



1. Pray for Christians being persecuted in other countries.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Tim Duguid.
4. Pray for family matters.

Wed.
27
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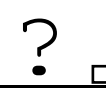
Galatians 5:1-12 - What Hinders Us?

Under the Gospel we are freed from the slavery of the ceremonies of the law and the curse of not keeping the law. We owe this freedom to Jesus Christ. He fulfils the ceremonies and keeps the law perfectly but still becomes a curse for us, so we might be free.

Paul tells the Galatians that if they submit to circumcision, they are contradicting everything Christ has done. If they are going to depend on keeping one part of the law in order to be saved, they are under obligation to keep the whole law perfectly. Paul reminds the Galatians that he and those who are with him are Jews by nature, brought up under the law, but when the Holy Spirit brought them to the knowledge of Christ, they stopped depending on good works, and looked for justification (being made right with God) and salvation only by faith in Him. If they, being Jews, aren't looking to the law to save them, how foolish it is for the Galatians to be trusting in the law. In the eyes of God our good works count for nothing - what matters is what we think of Christ.

Sometimes we need to ask ourselves what's slowing us down in our Christian life. Are there things or people that are hindering us like the Galatians were being hindered? We should evaluate the things that are strong influences in our life and see if they come from the God who calls us. Even the smallest things can often have a leavening effect in our lives. We might think something is just a little sin and in time it can destroy our life. But ultimately Paul, and we, have confidence that Christ is in control of His Church. He protects His people from being led astray through using men like Paul to preach the truth, and He will judge those false teachers.

questions



1. What must the Galatian Christians do if they submit to circumcision?
2. How are we made right with God?
3. What effect can one sin have in our lives?

praise



Ps. 86:1-8

prayers



1. Pray that you would turn from sin in your life.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for William Johnston.
4. Pray for family matters.

Thur.
28
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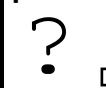


Galatians 5:13-26 - Fruits of the Spirit

Paul is telling the Galatians that serious, practical godliness is the best antidote to false teaching. The freedom we have as Christians is not freedom to sin, and though we should hold on to our Christian freedom, we shouldn't use it as an excuse to fight or quarrel with others - instead we are to show love to our Christian brothers and sisters. This love is an evidence of our faith, and it can help stop the fighting that's all too common amongst believers. Paul warns us that if we don't show love, we'll end up destroying each other. Churches are destroyed far more often by folk from within than by any trouble on the outside.

Within every believer there is a battle going on between their old sinful self and their new self in Christ. The best way to help our new self is to walk in the Spirit, to spend a lot of time on spiritual things, to be reading God's Word, hearing it preached, praying and trusting in Christ, and making the state of our souls our number one priority. Paul then goes on to list the works of the flesh or sins that are to be avoided and fruits of the Spirit that are to be nurtured in our lives. Paul isn't making an exhaustive list of every sin, but he is focusing on ones that are evident to all. The fruits of the Spirit are: love - of God especially and of each other for His sake; joy, a constant delight in God; peace with God and a peaceful attitude and behaviour toward others; patience to put off anger and bear injuries; kindness, a sweet, friendly, and polite attitude that makes us approachable; goodness which shows itself in a readiness to do good to all as we have opportunity; faithfulness where we show justice and honesty in what we say and do to others; gentleness where we are not easily provoked; and self-control where we govern our desires by God's Word.

questions



1. How are we to treat other believers?
2. What are the fruits of the Spirit?

praise



Ps. 86:9-17

prayers



1. Pray that we would show the fruits of the Spirit in our lives.
2. Pray from one of the prayer points in In The Pew.
3. Give thanks for Chrissy Miller.
4. Pray for family matters.