

## Galatians, Chapter Six, Lesson Three

SPIRITUAL REWARD Galatians 6:11-18

### STIMULATE

\*\* In our study of Galatians 6:6-10 from last week, verse seven contained three extremely profound truths designed to help us live our life under the control of the Holy Spirit. Do you recall what they were?

- 1) Do not deceive yourself. (cf. V.3)
- 2) GOD IS NOT MOCKED. He is listening to our life! (Remember - Matthew 12:34-37)
- 3) You reap what you sow. Our thoughts and actions have a direct relationship to the outcome of our life...we should be always sowing to the Spirit!

\*\* With those very needful reminders, how long did Paul tell us to do good to all men, especially Christians?

(V.10) "...while we have opportunity..." [kairos] as long as we are alive in Christ we should live our life under the control of the Holy Spirit, doing good to all men.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* Today's study is very dear to my heart, in that we draw to a close the first epistle that we have studied in depth together. As Paul bids farewell to his beloved Galatians he shows us the benefits of living your life under the control of the Holy Spirit. Today we will be answering the question, "Is there a 'Spiritual Reward', here and now, for letting the Spirit of Christ lead us through our day?" One more time then, please join me in Paul's letter to the Galatians, chapter 6, vs.11-18. Let's see what Paul says about our "Spiritual Reward".

Read Passage (V. 11-13) (V. 14-18)

### *Spiritual Reward*

### INVESTIGATE

**V.11** \*\* Why does Paul begin this closing message and salutation by bringing attention to his style of writing?

- 1) As a mark of identification, because of his poor vision. cf. Galatians 4:12-15
- 2) Because of the importance of all that he has been saying. cf. Galatians 1:8-9

\*\* Do you think that Paul is personally involved in this effort to convey Biblical truth to the Galatians?

Absolutely, he is writing to them "with [his] own hand". This phrase is sending his own heart, his very life is being given to the Galatians.

cf. Colossians 4:18, 2Thessalonians 3:17, Philemon 19 with 1Thessalonians 2:8-9

Paul is saying literally "I have written to you with my own hand", this is coming from the depths of my heart, please hear what I am saying.

**V.12** \*\* In one final reference to the Judaizers, how does he describe them?

"Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh..."

**\*\* What does it mean to "make a good showing in the flesh"?**

It is to be externally religious with no internal reality behind it! The Judaizers were disciples of the scribes and Pharisees, and as such were only interested in an external show of religious goodness rather than the internal goodness that comes from a clean heart created by God. Let's look together at what Jesus said about this type of approach to religion.

cf. Matthew 6:1,2,5,16 with 23:27

Now back in Galatians 6:12...

**\*\* How do they try to accomplish this good showing?**

By compelling others "...to be circumcised..."

**\*\* Is their motivation the salvation of men's souls?**

No - it is pure selfishness! They want to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Jesus Christ. The Judaizers knew that if you preached salvation by grace through faith in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary as opposed to salvation by the works of the Law, you would be persecuted by the religious leaders of the day. They were more concerned about themselves than their converts! cf. 1Corinthians 1:22-24

**V.13 \*\* What does Paul use to expose the error of legalism?**

The hypocrisy of the very ones who preach the Law!

"...those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves..."

Remember Matthew 23 - "Woe to you...hypocrites!" Their lifestyle removed all credibility from their message.

**\*\* For Christians, what warning is built into that observation of the Judaizers' life?**

We must not be hypocrites, but live our lives under the control of the Holy Spirit for the sake of the gospel being believed by sinners. cf. 1Corinthians 9:23

**\*\* What is the second selfish reason that the Judaizers wanted their converts to be circumcised?**

"...that they may boast in your flesh."

**\*\* What would that boasting sound like?**

I have taught this one about the Law.  
I have taught this one about God.  
I have had this one circumcised.  
I have taught this one how to please God.  
I have made him to be my disciple.

**\*\* What is the outcome of all of this boasting?**

Jesus said, "...when he becomes [a proselyte], you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves" (Matthew 23:15) It is a total waste of two lives!

**V.14 \*\* How is Paul's view of boasting different?**

He denounces all boasting except for one thing, boasting "...in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ". That was his only "claim to fame". cf. 1Corinthians 2:1-2

\*\* Why should a Christian boast about the cross?

It shows that God did it all, and He is to be glorified for His wonderful plan of redemption. Man had nothing to do with it, in fact we were His enemies at the time! cf. Romans 5:8-10

\*\* Paul is going to list three reasons why a Christian who is under the control of the Holy Spirit should openly boast in the cross. The first one is here in verse 14, do you see it?

1) "...through which [the cross] the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

\*\* What does the term "crucified" represent in Paul's statement?

Death or separation. cf. John 17:15-16, 1John 2:15

**V.15** \*\* In verse 15 Paul gives the second reason for boasting in the cross of Christ, what is it?

2) By the power of the Cross and our faith in Christ, we have been made "a new creation." Paul is saying that the whole message of the Judaizers is a waste of time. You cannot fix the old man, but you must become a new one. Only God, Himself, can accomplish that.

\*\* Can you think of a verse of Scripture that verifies the fact that as a Christian, you have become an entirely new creature?

Yes, all see 2Corinthians 5:17. Paul goes on to describe to the Corinthians what we are to be doing as new creatures and how we became one in verses 20 to 21.

**V.16** \*\* Now, back in Galatians 6:16, what is the third reason for our boasting in the cross?

3) God's peace and mercy are upon those who walk "by this rule".

\*\* How are God's peace and mercy a blessing to us?

Because we are a new creation by the grace of God, we are at "peace" with Him by the virtue of His "mercy".

**Peace** [eirene] - lit. "to join"

**Mercy** [eleos] - lit. "mercy, compassion, pity"

God's love covered our sin with the blood of Jesus Christ, and allowed us to become one with Him. It was the ultimate act of compassion and pity upon souls sick with sin.

cf. Romans 8:6-7, Ephesians 2:1-2

\*\* What does it mean to "walk by this rule"?

Walking "by this rule" means you are a person who acknowledges you were saved according to the true gospel, by grace through faith and thus have become a new creation. Your boasting in the cross is enhanced as you receive the "Spiritual Reward" of God's peace and mercy, here and now in this life!

\*\* Even as he is closing out this wonderful letter, Paul gives an invitation to the gospel in this verse. Do you see it?

"...those who will walk by this rule..." It is a decision of our will to accept God's free gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

\*\* Who could fit that description, if they so desired?

Anyone, even the Judaizers could choose to walk according to the gospel!  
cf. 2Peter 3:9, 1Timothy 2:5-6

\*\* Who is Paul referring to when he mentions the "Israel of God" as recipients of God's peace and mercy?

That phrase refers to Jewish believers in Jesus Christ, to those who are spiritual as well as physical descendants of Abraham. They too have become a new creation. cf. Galatians 3:7 and Romans 2:28-29

To summarize then, we have seen three reasons for the Christian who is under the control of the Holy Spirit to boast in the cross, they are:

- 1) We are separated from the "love of the world".
- 2) We have been made "a new creation".
- 3) We have received the "Spiritual Reward" of having God's peace and mercy placed upon us here and now in this life.

**V.17** \*\* Paul concludes his masterpiece with an unusual warning, what is it?

"From now on let no one cause trouble for me..." Some misguided believers, as well as the Judaizers, were corrupting the churches in Galatia and causing Paul great trouble and heartache. He is saying that he has dealt with the issue of legalism and there should not be any argument left.

\*\* What reason does Paul give for these enemies of the cross to accept his teaching?

"for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus" He is saying that this letter is backed up by a life of commitment and obedience that brought about persecution. cf. 2Corinthians 1:5, Colossians 1:24, 2Timothy 3:12 and Galatians 6:12 (Judaizers' fear of persecution)

**V.18** \*\* Not only do we receive the "Spiritual Reward" of God's peace and mercy when we walk under the control of the Holy Spirit, what further blessing is Paul placing upon us?

The on-going "...grace of our Lord Jesus Christ..!"

\*\* How is that blessing in contrast to the Judaizers' message of legalism?

God's grace, through Jesus Christ, is sufficient for all of our trials (2Corinthians 12:9) and the Law only brings heavy burdens that no human can bear (Acts 15:10).

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* Why were the Judaizers so intent upon getting people to be circumcised instead of gaining salvation by grace through faith?

- 1) They wanted to avoid persecution for the cross.
- 2) They wanted to boast before men.

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* What were the three reasons for a Christian who is under the control of the Holy Spirit to openly boast in the cross?

- 1) We are separated from the "love of the world".
- 2) We have been made "a new creation".
- 3) We have received the "Spiritual Reward" of having God's peace and mercy placed upon us here and now in this life.

## **EVALUATE**

\*\* Is there a "Spiritual Reward" for us here and now in this life, if we will walk under the control of the Holy Spirit?

Absolutely yes! We will experience God's perfect peace and His loving mercy throughout each day of our lives here on earth.

\*\* Are you experiencing that peace, are you sensing His mercy, as you go through each day? No matter what the day holds for us, we need to remember the One who holds us for that day...and always.

If you are not experiencing as much peace and mercy as you would like, you might reconsider what Paul said in verse 16. "Those who will walk by this rule..." Remember, it is a decision of our will to walk in loving obedience to the gospel of Christ.

## **ACTIVATE**

\*\* Our study in this marvelous letter has been filled with many wonderful applications to our daily life in Christ. Even today you have seen the "Spiritual Reward" of letting His Holy Spirit control you. But what about all of the other things you have learned? As an offering of praise and thanksgiving to God, would you make the time to review your notes from this study of Paul's letter to the Galatians and see how your life has changed for the glory of God through the study of His Word?

Closing Prayer