



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Galatians 6:1-10

"Restoration of the Fallen"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We turn again to Galatians chapter 6 and we are reading verses 1 through 10 for the Scripture reading this morning. Galatians chapter 6, verse 1 through verse 10.

The apostle has just been speaking about walking by the Spirit and now he gives some of the details of the life that is by the Spirit,

"Brethren, (he writes in Galatians 6:1) if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word share with him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we

faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee and we praise Thee today, this beautiful day, for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which has gone forth throughout the whole world. Not only the world of the Jews, but also the gentiles. And we thank Thee that we have been by Thy grace the recipients of the saving message of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we thank Thee, too, for the encouragement that we receive when we read the apostles exclaiming of the glories of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ and of the suitability of the word of God for our needs.

And we thank Thee, Lord, that it is suitable for us in our lost condition to give us the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. And we thank Thee, too, that the word of God is sufficient for all of our daily life as well, whether young or old. The gospel, the word of truth, the grace of God, is sufficient for us. In our school, in our business, in our home life, nothing is more suitable for us than the divine inspired word. Help us, Lord, to remember this and may by Thy grace we be enable through the Spirit to live accordingly.

We thank Thee for the day in which we live and for the privilege of proclaiming the gospel of Christ. We ask, Lord, Thy blessing upon this assembly of believers, and friends, and visitors here. May the ministry of the word of God be rich in their lives today, and for all of the ministry of the Chapel, its radio ministry, its publications, especially the taped ministry which goes out so far over this globe. We pray, Lord, Thy blessing upon it. May it bring forth fruit to the glory of Thy name.

We thank Thee and praise Thee for the country in which we live and we give Thee thanks for our governments. We pray, Lord, Thy blessing upon our President and

others who serve us in this way. By Thy grace, Lord, give us the kind of freedom constantly in which the gospel may run and have free course.

Now Father, as we meet today in the Sunday school and the ministry of the word around the Lord's table, may we experience a time of true ministry and communion that glorifies Thy name and builds us up in our faith. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] This morning we are turning to Galatians chapter 6 and spending most of our time discussing the Restoration of the Fallen. A simple summary of the Epistle to the Galatians might be expressed in this way; because we are sons, we are free. And because we are brothers, we are in bondage. We are free from the law as a means of justification. And we are free from a combination of law and grace. We are not justified by the grace of God and Jesus Christ plus some other work. For example, the apostle states in chapter 2, in verse 21, "If righteousness should come by the law, then Christ died in vain." To add to the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ is to express in an indirect way the fact that his death was insufficient for our sins. It is to say in effect we do not think that he did at all. We are also free from the law for sanctification. Sanctification is accomplished by the Holy Spirit and the lives of believers. And while the life that he produces does not violate the Law of Moses, we are not under the Law of Moses as a code.

As a matter of fact, I think that we could say that this is Paul's answer to Cain's impudent question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Well, yes, we are. We are our brother's keeper because while we are free from the law as a means of justification or any combination of law and grace as a means of justification and free from the law so far as sanctification is concerned, we are still in bondage. We are in bondage, the bondage of the free love of the brethren implanted by the Holy Spirit in our hearts through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So while we are free from law we are truly bound to one another in the service of love. As Paul puts it in Galatians chapter 5, in verse 13, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty," we are free. But then he adds, "Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve," be in bondage, "to one another." So we are free because we are sons, we live in the new age, we are in bondage by reason of the fact that we are in, by the Holy Spirit, to serve one another in the relationship of members of the body of Christ.

Many years ago General William Booth who was the founder of the Salvation Army was unable to attend of their international meetings. And as they met he sent them a one word telegraphic piece of advice, and that one word was, "Others." A commentator commenting upon that reminds us of the fact that in one of the columns of Charles Schulz, Lucy asks Charlie Brown, "What are we here for?", or, "Why are we here on the earth?" And Charlie Brown answers, "We are here to make others happy." And then Lucy, thinking for a little while, adds, "Well why then are the others here?" [Laughter] An intriguing questing, no doubt, but the answer is really simple. The others are here for the same reason that we are here, ultimately. And the answer from the standpoint of the Bible is expressed in just one little phrase, it's the phrase, "One another."

Have you ever noticed how many times in the New Testament that phrase occurs? Particularly in the hortatory sections of the Bible. Think, for example, of our Lord's words in the New Commandment that we, "Love one another." Then when you turn to the Pauline Epistles and the other epistles of the New Testament there are so many uses of this word that we could not begin to refer to them. There are passages in which we read, for example, that we are to forgive one another, that we are to have forbearance toward one another, that we are to prefer one another, and many other types of expression. Then many of them are not positive, but negative. We are not to do certain things to one another.

Now those words "one" and "another" express the union that exists between believers in the body of Christ. We know, of course, that we are united to the Lord Jesus. When we believe in him who is our representative and who has made it possible for us to have ever lasting life, we are taught through the Bible that by virtue of his atoning work, that representative work for us, we are united to him. Union with Christ is one of the greatest of the doctrines of the Bible. We sometimes forget, however, that being in union with Jesus Christ brings us into union with one another in the body of Christ.

Now that is important and I think we will see in the passage to which we turn that this little expression "one another" enshrines the union that believers have with one another and which impresses upon us the fact that we have mutual responsibilities to one another if we are resting in Jesus Christ for our salvation.

Now if you are in the audience and you have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, what I'm going to say for the rest of the message will not have direct application to you. This is a passage that is written directly to believers in the Lord Jesus. And so if you are not a believer then these words do not have direct application to you. Your responsibility is not to seek to fulfill the exhortations of the New Testament and your own strength which you cannot do, your responsibility is to flee to the cross of Christ, to receive the forgiveness of sins, and the life by which you may be enabled to perform the exhortations that are set forth in the word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

First of all, Paul speaks of restorative ministry to the weak. This is the pragmatic outworking of the principles of chapter 5. For rudeness, gentleness should be substituted. He has said in verse 26, "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another," but rather instead of the rudeness that characterizes the men in the flesh, gentleness should be substituted.

To walk in the Spirit, what does it really mean? I am inclined to think, I may be wrong about this, there are many things I may be wrong about, of course, this is one thing I may be wrong about, I'm inclined to think that many of us really think that

walking by the Spirit is a kind of indefinable, inexpressible, esoteric experience. It's a numinous experience, which some people evidently have attained unto but which most of us have not attained unto. And so we look for some kind of experience in order to walk by the Spirit. And we think of spiritual people as people who have attained to this indefinable, inexpressible, experience. Incidentally, any experience that cannot be defined and expressed is probably not a true experience to start with. And even if it can be expressed and defined it might still be an untrue experience. But one thing that characterizes the biblical experiences is that they are definable.

James Denny when once speaking about mysticism and some of the errors of it and some of the excesses to which people have been led by that kind of Spirit said, "I would rather be saved in Christ than lost in God." I understand exactly what he meant. He said that he would rather have his feet on the ground and know that his atoning sacrifice had been accomplished and he had come to the possession of life, than to be lost in God in an inexpressible, indefinable experience. Now if you were to ask the Apostle Paul, "What does it mean to be walking in the Spirit," he would not say, "Have you been to Keswick or have you been to a Victorious Life conference?" He would simply say in this context, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual why you restore such in the spirit of meekness." You bore one another's burdens when you are spiritual. You do not think that you are something when you are really nothing. You are deceiving yourself. Every man is responsible for his own relationship before the Lord and when we stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ we shall be judged individually by what we have done.

The man who is spiritual is the man who shares with the one who teaches in all good things. The man who is spiritual is the man who sows to the Spirit. The man who is spiritual is the man who does good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith. To walk in the Spirit, that walk is characterized of these simple

pragmatic expressions of it. It is not an indefinable, inexpressible esoteric experience. It is just as practical as these exhortations.

So we look at them and first we notice the injunction in verse 1. Now I think it is important for us to notice the first word of this chapter, "Brethren". Now notice also the 18th verse, "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit. Amen." In the Greek text the word brethren is right at the end of that verse, except for the word amen. So we have a chapter that begins with the word brethren and it concludes with the word brethren. In a sense that one word sets the tone of this entire passage. Bengel, the 18th Century German commentator said, "A whole argument lies hidden under this one word, 'brethren!'" What a great expression of the body of Christ we should have in Believers Chapel if we truly understood what it means to be brethren in Christ.

I remember about 15 years ago when this first came home to me with some force. I was expounding a passage in Matthew chapter 12. It's the passage in which our Lord is approached by some and is told that his mother and his brethren are outside. And he looks around and he says, "Who are my mother and my brethren? They that do the will of God, these are my mother and my brethren." It was our Lord's way of rejecting the physical relationship as the important relationship for the spiritual relationship.

Now that meant a great deal to me because in my own family I had a very close relationship, I think, with my father and with my mother. I guess especially with my father. We had many things in common, I think. I loved him, he was an ideal father. And I think that when I read that text I thought of my relationship to my father and a tremendous relationship with my father, but our Lord was saying that the deepest relationship is not the relationship that we have to our wife, or to our father, or to our mother, or to our brothers or sister. The deepest relationship in life for individuals in the family of God is the relationship that we have to one another in the body of Christ. We are actually more closely related to those who are related to us spiritually than those who are related to us physically.

The spiritual relationship is deeper than the blood relationship. In other words, the true expression of the relationship that we have in the body of Christ is the relationship that means that we truly love fellow believers more than we love the members of our own family. Now I must confess I've not attained unto what our Lord is speaking about. I desire to attain unto this, I desire to reach the place where I look at things as they truly are spiritually, for this is the way it's going to be in heaven, that my brethren are my fellow believers. The members of my family are important but the most important are the members of the family of God of which I am a part.

Brethren, what a beautiful word that is. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, even graced men may fall from the principles of grace. Well what shall we do then when the brother falls from the principles of grace and falls under law? Well we let him stew in his own juice, one of the commentators has said. We let him stew in his own juice. He should have known better. And we immediately gather a few of the saints together and accuse him of false doctrine, or false practice. No, that's not the spiritual way. The person who does that is only dramatizing the fact that he's not really walking by the Spirit of God. If a man be over taken in a fault I assume that the primary reference of the apostle is to some fault that manifests that he has abandoned the principles of grace. "Ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." By the way, the word fault is a word that literally means a misstep, a false step.

Now we saw in verse 25 of chapter 5 that Paul was saying if we live in the Spirit let us also take each step by the Spirit. But we can take a false step. We can stumble and so he is speaking about that. If a man be overtaken in a false step in our spiritual life, "Ye who are spiritual, restore such an one." To be overtaken, incidentally, is not to be caught in the act, or I guess that kind of sin would be covered by this. But it really means to be taken by surprise. It's the kind of sin that you don't do so willfully as you unwittingly fall into. "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual," now isn't that interesting. "Ye who are spiritual," what does he mean? Why, he means those who

are walking by the Spirit. Those in whose lives those manifested the fruit of the Spirit, for you see the work of restoration is to be done with gentleness. And gentleness is said in verse 23 meekness to be one of the virtues of the fruit of the Spirit. So the brother who has fallen into sin is to be helped by the one who has the meekness of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual individual. And he it is to restore.

Restore is a beautiful word. It's used in the New Testament, for example, of the disciples mending mitts by the sides of their boats. But it also was used in the life of ancient times for a doctor who set dislocated limbs. And I like that expression of it because I think that is what we have here. We have a body, we have individual members of the body who are, or who could be, likened to limbs of a physical body. And it is the work of the spiritual to set the dislocated back into their proper position in the body.

Now when you have a broken bone you're not anxious for a businessman to set it. You wouldn't even let your wife or your husband set it. You want a person who has skill, a person who has been trained. A person who has the gentleness and the wisdom to set the bone properly. Well the same thing is true in the spiritual life. When a brother has been overtaken in a fault it is they that are spiritual who have the tenderness and the care and the skill to set that brother again in his place in the body as he should be set there. And we are to do it in the spirit of meekness, the spirit of gentleness.

Luther has a wonderful little expression, I put it in the Believers Bible Bulletin, I cannot quote it from memory but it's something like this, that when the brother falls into sin we should run to him, we should comfort him, and we should embrace him with motherly arms. That's the kind of response to the brother who has fallen into sin. Now the way we do it is a little different in the 20th Century. When a brother has fallen into sin we of course don't bother to find out if he really has, we've accepted the testimony of one of our friends. And one testimony is enough for us. One rumor is sufficient to establish the truth. And the first thing we do is to get on the telephone and we tell two or three others. And by the time that we have gotten on the phone and told two or three

others and they have told some more, well that brother is really in serious condition. In fact, it's doubtful that he shall survive. I know that he will not survive the gossip of the saints.

This is the first step in discipline, "Ye who are spiritual, restore such in the spirit of meekness." In other words, the ideal thing is if a person sees a brother stumble, overtaken in a fault, the first thing you should be careful about is that no one else knows about it but he. He should go to the brother with gentleness if he's one who is walking by the Spirit himself, and seek to restore him to fellowship with the Lord. And this, if there is response, then there is restoration and no one else is disturbed by the fall of the brother. That is the biblical way to approach the person who has been overtaken in a fault.

Now let me assure you that if we go some other way it is not really a mild thing. It's a very serious thing and we can be sure that if we do not follow the directions of the word of God then it is we who are in need of some discipline and help from the spiritual too. Now he says also, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." It was John Bradford who made the famous statement as he saw someone going to execution, "There but for the grace of God go I." It's in that spirit that all restoration should take place, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.

Now one other way in which we can determine whether we are walking by the Spirit is set forth for us in the 2nd verse of the 6th chapter, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." If we must bear burdens let's don't bear legal burdens, the burdens of the Law of Moses. Let's bear the burdens of one another. Now I don't know that the apostle is thinking about this but you may remember that the Lord Jesus spoke about legal burdens in Matthew chapter 23. He spoke about the Pharisees that sit in Moses seat and in the 4th verse of that chapter he said of them, "But they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers," legal burdens.

It's not that kind of burden that we bear; it's one another's burdens. We're not under law, we're not to bear the burden of the Law of Moses, we are under the Spirit, we are freed from the Law of Moses. But we're not free from relationships to one another and to serve one another and to serve one another. And to bear their burdens is one of the evidences of the man who walks by the Holy Spirit. We don't bear Moses' burdens but we do bear our Lord Jesus Christ's burdens as they are represented in the saints.

And Luther again said, "For this kind of work Christians need strong shoulders and mighty bones," because we do have lots of burdens. The saints have lots of burdens. And I know if we were to have a true catalogue of the burdens of this small audience of saints we would find many, many burdens. "Bear ye one another's burdens."

There's an old story that I read a long time ago. It was told by a Bible teacher that said when he was in the United States he had made an acquaintance with a woman who was a member of a society known as The King's Daughters. And in the course of the conversation this person, a woman who was in that society, said that she was a Christian and that she with about twenty other members of the society had made a trip to the Holy Land. And in the course of the trip to the Holy Land, which took over two months, she learned some important lessons about what it was to travel with Jesus Christ.

She said, "When we landed in Joppa and we got off of the boat, right down at the key, we were met by the tourist agent who introduced us to a fine, young Arab man and he said that he was to be our dragoman, our guide, our interpreter for the trip. And the young man stood up at that point and said to all of the ladies who were present, he said, "There are three rules that if you observe will ensure that we will have a happy journey together. Rule number one, you must let me handle all of your luggage. Rule number two, you must follow me and never go before, I bear all the burdens and you must never get ahead of me. The third rule is you must look to me for everything." She said, "We smiled, we thought those were pretty good rules and nothing could have seemed to be fairer." The young Arab stood and looked at them, he said finally, "Ladies, I want all your

luggage." And they said, "There it is," mountains of trunks that they had brought. And he said, "I've seen that, but I want all of your luggage. I want your vanity cases too." They objected at first but he said, "No, I must have everything, I am responsible for everything and if anything is lost I must answer to the company." She said, "I learned my first rule of traveling with Jesus Christ, that we cast all our burdens on him, the great burdens and the little burdens."

She said, "A few hours afterwards we came to Ramle, the junction where the road divided, the railroad divided. And one line went into Jerusalem and the other went south to Egypt. We got off of our train, we looked around, and we saw a train that was empty, we all rushed to the train because we wanted corner windows so we could look out and see the scenery. And we jumped in and we sat there and we sat and we sat and we sat and finally the guide came and he said, 'I see ladies you've forgotten the second rule, that you're not to get ahead of me.'" They said, "Well we saw this train here and we wanted corner seats." He said, "I know, you've got corner seats too, but unfortunately this train is not going where we're going. That one over there is." He said, "Now if you'll run you might be able to get standing room." And she said, "We learned the second lesson of traveling with Christ, and that is you must never go before him but always follow his lead."

Finally she said that near the end of our trip we were going to spend five days out from Damascus in the desert and at dawn on the day in which we were to go out into the desert we gathered, we got on our camels and she said, "You should have heard the things that we said. This is the hottest place we've ever been." You can see they didn't come from Texas [Laughter]. "This is the hottest we've ever been. Where shall we ever get any food, where shall we get any water, where shall we possibly sleep out in the desert? And furthermore, are there not gangsters or hoodlums out here in the desert and they'll surely get us."

And this went on all day long until finally in the afternoon about five o'clock she said, "We saw a tremendous rock up ahead of us and as we went around the rock we noticed that there was a triangular shadowed place and there in that shadowed place there was green grass and there was a spring, the first one that we had seen all day long. And not only that but there were tents there and the beds were in the tents and beautiful clean, white sheets were there, and the beds were all turned down. And there were Arab armed guards all around the little encampment." And she said I learned the third lesson, and that is you must look to Jesus Christ for everything.

Now the Bible says that we are to bear one another's burdens. The Bible says that there is a kind of burden that only we can bear but fortunately the Scriptures also say, "Cast all your burdens upon him, and he shall sustain thee, he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Burden bearing, "Bear ye one another's burdens." What is he really talking about? We know that ultimately the Lord bears our burdens. Why, he's talking about the sharing of burdens that Christians should have with one another. We bear one another's burdens. We all simply have our own burdens, but we bear one another's burdens. These are the burdens that have to do with our life. They are the burdens of the tragedies, the disappointments, the stresses of life. These are the kinds of disappointments and burdens that come from illness and sickness and accidents, the things that happen to all of us. The burdens that we bear are one another's burdens. The Christian life in its manifestation, the spiritual life, life by the Spirit, the victorious life, whatever we want to call it, is manifested in the bearing of one another's burdens.

Now the apostle states in the 3rd verse, "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." That's a strange text right here and I can only surmise that what Paul is saying that conceit leads to unwillingness to share the burdens of others. That seems to be the connection. "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Not let every man prove his own work, and

then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." He means simply by this that we are not to compare ourselves with others.

It's very common among Christians. We compare ourselves with some brother who is perhaps having a difficult time, and since we're doing better than he we think that we are pleasing God. But he says that's not the standard with which we measure ourselves. In other places Paul says we don't measure ourselves with ourselves. And then he adds a strange text, which seems to contradict that which is above, "For every man shall bear his own burden."

I've often heard people say, "I don't believe in the Bible because the Bible contains contradictions." Now usually when you ask people after they've made that statement, "Well now, would you give me three contradictions in the Bible," they're at a total loss, they cannot even give you one as a rule. But if I were looking for one I might like to try this. If somebody says, "There are contradictions in the Bible," and is asked for one I might say, "Well what about this one, the Apostle Paul states, 'Bear ye one another's burdens,' and then in just a few words he says, 'Every man shall bear his own burden.'" Do not these texts contradict one another? "Bear ye one another's burdens." "Every man shall bear his own burden." Incidentally if there's some burden that a brother is having that you don't want to bear with him, well here's a text you might want to fall back on [Laughter], "Every man shall bear his own burden."

I learned a long time ago in the study of the Bible that you have to be careful. The Bible's not like the newspaper. The Bible was written by the Holy Spirit who used holy men. Every nuance of every word is significant often. Now look at that 2nd verse, he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens." He's talking about the present time. Further he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens," plural. But now in verse 5 he says, "For every man shall bear." Why, that's not the present, that's the future. "Every man shall bear," and then he says, "his own burden," singular. Bear now, constantly be bearing one another's burdens, the trials of life. But ultimately every man shall bear his own burden.

Now if you look at the Greek text the apostle has also used two different words for burden. In verse 2 he has used the word in which the weight of the burden is stressed. In verse 5 the word that is used is not that kind of word, the weight is not stressed, it was the word that was used for a soldier's pack for which he had responsibility. What does Paul mean? Well, when he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens," he's talking about Christians helping one another with the daily trails of life. But when this life reaches its conclusion we're going to have to have a time of answering to the Lord for the way in which we have lived our Christian lives. We call it the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. He's speaking about that in verse 4 when he says, "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden."

The time is coming when each of us shall stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ to receive the rewards for the things that have been done in our flesh. And then I shall not be able to help you and you shall not be able to help me. Then everyone shall bear his own burden at the judgment seat of Christ. Now is the time for bearing one another's burdens, that's what the apostle means. It's not a contradiction at all; it's two sides of a very important truth.

Well finally the apostle in verses 6 through 9 speaks of responsiveness to the word of God and to the principles of grace. He says, "Let him that is taught in the word share with him that teacheth in all good things." Someone might call this the pragmatism of the theologian. There are two differing views of the 6th verse of Galatians chapter 6. I must say the common interpretation of this, and perhaps the correct one, is that the person who is taught in the Scriptures should share his material things with the one who teaches them the word of God. If we listen to someone and he has lifted us up through the exposition of the word of God and we have received spiritual benefit from him then we should share with him the material benefits that we have received in life because by the guidance of the Holy Spirit he has been led to devote his time to the study of the

Scriptures. Like the Levites of the Old Testament who were supported by the other tribes because they had as their duty the carrying on of the ministry of the word of God in Israel. So today those who teach us in Scripture ought to be rewarded by participation in the material blessings of life which we have obtained.

Now that of course is a biblical principle. I do not debate the principle at all, it is a biblical principle. It is our responsibility. Believers Chapel believes that this is one of the important responsibilities that we have. We are to communicate. We are to share with those who teach us the word of God. We would be much poorer spiritually. We would be much poorer prepared for the judgment seat of Jesus Christ if we did not have men who are expounding the Scriptures and enabling us to grow spiritually.

I'm not sure, however, that that is what Paul has in mind here. He expounds that truth in 1 Corinthians chapter 9. Paul may not be speaking of money here. In the first place the context has no suggestion of money in it, either before or after. In the second place so far as we know there was no problem about money in Galatia. It is true that wherever the legalists were they seem to use as one of their criticisms of the Apostle Paul the fact that he never charged them anything for the things that he taught. They had the strange idea that because the Apostle does not insist on payment for what he is preaching that therefore what he is preaching must not be worth much. And they suffered others to extort money from them.

The apostle speaks about that in 2 Corinthians chapter 11, in verse 20. He says, "For you tolerated, if a man bring you into bondage," he's talking about the legalists, "if a man devour you." They made great demands on them. Well they had seminars every week where they were charged twenty to forty dollars in order to hear the word of God. You notice, incidentally, I said that on purpose. Because I do think that is a scandal in Christianity. It is a scandal that we have so many who are supposedly ministers of the word of God who are charging us for the privilege of hearing the word of God. It's an amazing transformation that has taken place in Evangelical Christianity.

Let me say this, so far as I know, I may be wrong, I wish you would study the Scriptures and prove me wrong or right, I do not think that in the New Testament there is any evidence whatsoever of the Apostle Paul ever pleading for money for himself. Now he pled for money for the poor in Jerusalem, for others, but never for himself. In the Bible, so far as I know, there is never an appeal made for financial sustenance of that individual. Too much self interest involved. We are dependent on the Lord but you as a Christian, many of you are on many mailing lists, you get appeal after appeal after appeal. Appeals with return address envelopes. That is not a biblical practice. I challenge you to find it anywhere in the word of God, it's not there.

Now it is possible that the apostle, incidentally he says that the legalizers were devouring them. That's the way the apostle thought about it. You thought my words were strong. Listen, you should have heard Paul on this point. They're devouring you, they're taking everything you've got. They're fleecing you, these legalists, and you let them do it. So far as Paul was concerned he never did. As a matter of fact he took pride in the fact that he earned his own way. He said you gave me gifts from time to time and I appreciate that, but I was not a burden to you. It seems to me that it is possible that what Paul has in mind here is when he says, "In good things," he's talking about the good things of grace. And he's talking about the Judaizers when he's saying, "Let him that is taught in the word," you Galatians, "share with him who teaches," the Apostle Paul, "in the things of grace." Reject the teaching of the legalizers, accept the teachings of grace which I have sought to bring to you when I was there and through this epistle. "Let him that is taught in the word share with him that teacheth in all good things of grace," that's what he's speaking about.

I hesitantly say this passage teaches. The other principle is a biblical principle. I don't question the fact that we are to support those who minister the word to us voluntarily. But it may be simply abandon the Judaizers teaching and rejoice with me in the principles of grace.

Now finally he says, and we must close, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." You cannot outwit God, who thinks that he can outwit God? He says, "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." That text is very important as a principle. He's talking about sowing the principles of grace, and not sowing to the flesh. But this is a principle that is very far reaching. He says, "Whatever a man soweth that shall he reap." Did you notice that? Did you notice that little word "that"? "Whatever a man soweth that shall he reap." Not what he thought he sowed, not what we hoped to sow, not what he planned to sow, but he reaps what he sowed. "Whatever a man sows that shall he also reap."

And finally Paul concludes with a word concerning doing good. He says there are really two opportunities in life. In verse 9 he refers to one, two seasons, we put it this way, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap." That's God's season in the future when we reap the things that we have sowed.

Now he speaks about our season. Verse 10, "As we have therefore," season, it's the same word, "opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Charity begins at home, we are told. But it does not stop there. For the Christian has responsibilities to do good to all men, especially those who are of the household of faith. These are the evidences of walking by the Spirit.

If you are here today and you have never believed in Jesus Christ, I reiterate what I said just briefly previously. These things are not written to those who are not believers in Jesus Christ. You do not have the capacity for doing the exhortations that the Apostle Paul sets forth. You cannot bear one another's burdens. You cannot share in the good things of grace. You cannot do good in the sense that the apostle speaks of here. You need the experience of the new birth. You need through the Holy Spirit to recognize your sin and to recognize that Christ is offered an atonement for sin. And you need through the grace of God to come and receive as a gift the life of God in Christ.

May God bring you to the knowledge of your sin, the knowledge of Christ's saving work in his blood, and to the possession of him who is life eternal. Shall we stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] We thank Thee, Lord, for these wonderful words of exhortation to us. Enable us, Lord, to bear one another's burdens, remembering that each of us shall ultimately bear our own burden at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. Enable us to do good to all men and especially to them who are of the household of faith. And Father, if there are some here who do not know him whom to know his life eternal, O God through the Holy Spirit, bring them to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. We ask in his name. Amen.