

## GALATIANS CHAPTER 6 NOTES (by Matthew Janzen)

### Galatians, pt. 53 "Rebuke with a Gentle Spirit"

Read: Galatians 6:1-5

#### Intro

What we read here in the first part of chapter 6 is a continuation of the thought from the end of chapter 5. Paul has told us that the entire law is fulfilled in one statement: **love your neighbor as yourself**. He's speaking of the horizontal law, from person-to-person. Paul is telling us that we must fulfill the law, and the way to do that is by serving one another through love (5:13).

When you approach your family member in Messiah, you should be thinking that they are more important than you are, so you treat them with ample respect and dignity, even when they stumble.

#### Galatians 6:1 is Powerful

Such is the case in verse 1: "Brothers (and sisters), if someone is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual should restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so you won't be tempted also." Paul is talking to the body of Messiah here. He is speaking about groups like the one we have here, and he's talking to all of us.

#### Christians Can Sin

The first thing to recognize here is that you can be a genuine believer in the Messiah and get caught up in a sin. That word caught is translated as *overtaken* in other Bibles. One commentator I read translated it as "caught unawares." I think it's referring to something that wasn't long premeditated.

This verse is not about habitual, unrepentant sin in a community. There are stronger ways to deal with that problem (1 Corinthians 5; Matthew 18:17). What we have here is a believer who falls into a sin through a weak moment or weak time in their life. Their flesh gets the better of them.

It's important that we recognize the difference between this type of sin versus unrepentant sin. Living a life of righteousness, but then stumbling into a sin, is not the same as knowingly, habitually, and unrepentantly committing transgression. There is a difference.

There are those who (1) don't want to sin, fight sin, hate sin, *but fall into a sin*. Then there are those who (2) don't care what anyone thinks, they are just going to keep doing what they want to do no matter how sinful it is. Galatians 6:1 is a reference to *the saint who is struggling*; the saint who is at a weak point in his or her life and gave in to temptation. When this happens, Paul says that those of us who are spiritually strong (being led by the Spirit) should restore such a person with a gentle spirit.

### **How Do We Help Others?**

We can't say that it doesn't matter what spirit we do it in, because Paul says do it with a spirit of gentleness. If we are walking by the Spirit, gentleness will flow out of us naturally. There will always be some in the congregation who are stronger than others. That doesn't mean the strong will always be the same people, but someone who is strong will always be there to support someone who is weak.

When we find out our brother or sister has been overtaken in a transgression, our first thought should not be, "Well I told you so," but rather "Let me go and talk to them, and help restore them."

Keeping the commandments is not a competition with our neighbor; we are on the same team. When our neighbor needs help carrying a burden, we go help them, and hope they are restored to do better. We don't point and laugh at them, and think we have a higher score than they do.

### **Private but Open Rebuke**

Matthew 18:15 says: "If your brother (or sister) sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother."

This is where open rebuke starts. Sometimes open rebuke still means private rebuke. It's open because you are being open with your neighbor, but it's private because you begin with just you and your neighbor. The hope is that they will listen, and no further action will have to take place.

In the times of my life when I made the worst decisions, and did things I should not have done, the people who helped me were not the ones who wanted to nail me to a cross, but the ones who picked me up and carried me on their shoulders.

It takes a mature saint to look past a sin their brother or sister has committed, and see that there is still hope for them. It takes someone who has been bumped, bruised, cut, and left for dead to reach out a helping hand, and pour oil on the wounds of a defeated brother or sister. "The one who forgives an offense seeks love, but whoever repeats a matter separates close friends." (Proverbs 17:9 NET)

### **We Can All Fall**

Let's not forget what the end of Galatians 6:1 says: "watching out for yourself so you won't be tempted also." When we are doing well in our walk, and have victory over sin, and we watch our brother or sister fall, our tendency is to want to magnify *their* sin, because it makes us feel super spiritual. "Look at what they did. They should have been in the Word like me." That's not the right attitude to take.

We should mourn when we see someone in our spiritual family fall. We should not kick them in the gut while they are down on the ground. We shouldn't mock them, or curse them. We should reach out and try to make them whole again.

### **An Example of Healing**

Tisha recently had a puppy hurt her leg. She found out about it one morning and started taking extra care. She cuddled that little dog, and petted her, and held the puppy close to her. She checked her out to see what the problem was. She put a little brace on her leg, and kept her away from harm. She took her to the vet to see what else could help. She did everything in her power to make that little puppy better, and it worked.

We ought to treat our fallen brothers and sisters with care. When other people want to point fingers, we ought to reach out with helping hands. When others want to kill we should want to heal. When people want to scream "I told you so!" we should gently say, "I'm here to help you my friend." Our gentleness is not okaying someone's sin. Sin is always bad. Our gentleness is simply saying, "There is hope. You can be forgiven."

### **There is Hope**

Listen, as long as someone is breathing, there is hope of forgiveness. You may have gotten way off track. You may have placed Yahweh's Word by the wayside. You may have forgotten how sweet His law is. You may have been overtaken in a transgression. If you ask Yahweh to forgive you, and your neighbor to forgive you, and repent of your sin, forgiveness is for you. It's not too late to turn around and go in the other direction. It's not too late to say I'm sorry and start anew. There are people here who are willing to pick you up, and doctor you back to spiritual health.

### **Humble People Make Helpful People**

We have to remember that all of us are susceptible to being overtaken in a sin. While we are on a spiritual high mountain today, our day of temptation may be just around the corner. What you condemn today may be what you partake in tomorrow.

If you are humble, you will realize this, and you will deal with your brother or sister in a spirit of gentleness. A man named Augustine once said, *"There is no surer test of the spiritual person than his treatment of another's sins."* One ancient Rabbi warned: *"though reproof was a religious duty, it might be better to abstain lest one forfeit humility by seeming to make oneself superior to another."* Everyone who recognizes their own need of mercy shows that mercy to others, and never forget that what measure of judgment you hand out is the same measure that will be placed back on you.

It is so important that when you see or hear about a brother or sister who has fallen into sin, that you don't become puffed up, but rather mourn. Don't immediately go to excommunication, but instead seek for restoration. Don't throw them away, but dust them off. Don't crucify them, but help in carrying their cross.

There have been little Messiah's in my own life. I have seen and experienced the Messiah in a tangible way, by certain people that Yahweh has placed in my life. There have been people who have loved me through all of my faults. And there have been people who saw me caught in a transgression, who came to me in the spirit of gentleness, seeking my restoration and well-being. These people have helped me believe that there really is a

Messiah, for how else could they act this way? This is not the normal, fleshly way, this is the supernatural, spiritual way.

### **Galatians 6:2**

Look at the next verse: "Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Messiah." What burdens? The burdens we just talked about in verse 1. This verse isn't about helping someone move their furniture, or stopping to jump off your brother's dead car battery. *Some of y'all gonna' call me up after this sermon wanting me to help you move, lol.* Those are good things to help with, but this verse is about carrying the weight of your neighbor's faults. Going to your neighbor in a spirit of meekness and picking them up out of the sin they've been overtaken in.

In doing this we *fulfill* the law of Messiah. Does fulfill here mean to do away with? Of course not. Fulfilling the law of Messiah means carrying it out. Obedience. Doing it.

And what is the law of Messiah? A different law? Is there anything we read here that's been different than Torah? Listen to Leviticus 19:17: "You must not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor directly, and you will not incur guilt because of him." This verse in Leviticus is the backdrop for Galatians 6:1; they are teaching the same thing. Therefore the "law of Messiah" here is not different from the law of Yahweh.

Law of Messiah refers to the way in which Yeshua walked out the law. Remember that in the first century various Rabbi's would discuss the manner in which commandments were to be obeyed, and they didn't always agree. The law of Messiah Yeshua is a reference to Yeshua's proper interpretation of the law of Moses. One of the main ways Yeshua viewed the law was an act of love (service) to Yahweh and love to our neighbor.

When we read "the law of Moses" in Scripture, we know that isn't a different law than Yahweh's law. It's just a way of saying that Moses was the prophet through which Yahweh gave His law. It's no different with "law of Messiah." Yeshua is Yahweh's Son who perfectly interprets the Torah for us.

### **Don't Compare Yourself to Others**

Now verses 3-4: "For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing he is deceiving himself. But each person should examine his own work, and then he will have a reason for boasting in himself alone, and not in respect to someone else."

If we approach our fallen brother or sister in a spirit of pride (that we aren't the ones caught in the sin) we are deceiving our self into thinking, "I would never fall into that sin. Not me." It very well could be you tomorrow, or a month from now, or a year from now. ("I'll never deny you Lord," Peter said.)

This is why we are called to examine our own works. When Paul says we should boast in our self alone he isn't encouraging pride, he's saying that we shouldn't compare our life to the life of the person overtaken in a sin. The NLT reads here: "Pay careful attention to

your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else."

You can always find someone to compare yourself to, in order to make you feel better. "Well at least I'm not like that person."

When I go over to someone else's house, I notice all of the imperfections. I notice dirt in a corner, or cob-webs. I notice an uneven piece of trim. I'll see if the couch isn't clean or if the kitchen sink is a mess. I notice it more, *because it's not my house*. My house isn't perfect either, it's just that I become used to the imperfections in my own house.

We have to purposefully slow down and think about **our own faults**. At the end of the day, don't spend your time meditating on what other people did wrong, evaluate yourself. Ask yourself, "Where did **I** mess up today? What can **I** do to make **myself** better? What actions can **I** take to help **me** be more loving, and more of a servant tomorrow?" When you do this day after day, you will eventually become more righteous in your actions.

Then there's verse 5, which we'll end with today - "For each person will have to carry his own load." I thought we were supposed to carry each other's burdens? Verse 2 is about helping your neighbor when they are overtaken in a sin. Verse 5 is about comparing yourself (by yourself) to the Torah. You have to carry your own load in the sense of you have measure your own righteousness and spirituality, and not compare it to someone going through a struggle.

### **Closing Exhortation**

These are very practical verses; ones that you will have to use in your own life. Sometimes you will be the spiritual one, walking strongly in the law, reaching out to help your neighbor. Other times you will be the weak one who has fallen into a sin, and needs to be pulled out. The next time something like this verse happens in your life, no matter which side you are on, remember these verses. If you're the sinner, realize there's hope for you. If you're the strong person, don't be prideful, but help your neighbor, and realize it might be you next. Fulfill Yeshua's law of love.

## **Galatians, pt. 54 "Supporting Pastors Financially"**

Read Galatians 6:6

Today I'm going to teach about a subject that I would probably never teach on if I didn't go verse-by-verse through books of the Bible. It's an uncomfortable subject for a Pastor to speak on, or at least I think it should be uncomfortable. The topic is: Supporting Pastors Financially.

I opened with Galatians 6:6. The one who is taught the message - students or those who sit under a teacher of the law and the gospel - must share his goods with the teacher. Goods (or good things) here could be anything from garden produce, to wine vintage, to

silver or gold or money. According to this verse, it is a righteous and necessary thing to support a genuine teacher<sup>1</sup> of spiritual things with material things.

### Why Say this Here?

Before I explain this more, let's ask ourselves... "Why does Paul write this here?" It seems out of place at first. He's just talked about rescuing a brother or sister who has been overtaken in a wrongdoing, and examining your own works in the faith. So what does supporting a teacher financially have to do with that?

Well, nothing specifically. But what I think Paul is doing here (from Galatians 5:13 through Galatians 6:10) is *describing what it looks like to love your neighbor as yourself*. Remember that he said the entire law is fulfilled in that one statement. What I think he does is explain some of the ways in which we love.

We walk after the Spirit rather than the flesh.

We operate in the fruit of the Spirit.

We don't become conceited, or provoke one another.

We restore a fallen brother or sister with a gentle spirit.

We carry one another's burdens.

We examine our own works instead of comparing our selves with each other.

*And then... we supply a pastor/teacher with our goods.*

All of these are loving our neighbor, and I think that's why Paul brings this up here. It's just another aspect of what it means to fulfill the law of loving your neighbor. Provide for those who teach you the proper understanding of the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I say genuine teacher here because many men assume the office of a teacher when they are not qualified. The criteria are listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, as well as some in 1 Peter 5. A man should never just go on a feeling, that he is "called to preach." Proof that one is called will be found by a community recognizing the characteristics listed in a man, especially older men in the community. Acts 14:23 mentions that Paul and company appointed elders in every congregation. They saw in certain men the qualities and abilities to be overseers. The overseer is never perfect; he is never the Messiah, but he should exemplify what it means to serve the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> The old KJV of this verse reads like this: "Let him who is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." It's a little difficult to get what this is saying, because the word *communicate* in today's English doesn't really mean the same thing it meant back in 1611, or even in 1828. Noah Webster defined the word *communicate* back in 1828 in his dictionary of the English language, and his number one definition was this: "To impart, to give to another, as a partaker; to confer for joint possession; to bestow as that which the receive is to hold, retain, use or enjoy, with to." *Communicate* used to primarily mean to give or share something with another person. Listen to this in Philippians 4:14-16, KJV. Paul says: "Notwithstanding ye have done well, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my necessity." Paul is praising the Philippians for helping him out during his time of affliction, and in that they supported him materially at the beginning of his ministry. That's how they "communicated" with Paul. The NLT translates Philippians 4:14-15 like this: "Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty. As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once." I'm pointing this out just in case anyone is thrown off by the old English in the KJV. *Communicate* in Galatians 6:6 KJV does NOT mean those who are taught the Word should speak with their teacher; it means they should support their teacher financially.

### **Why is this Required?**

Why is it that we should support those teachers we learn from in the faith? A man who spends his time studying the Word, and then teaching those studies to a community, is laboring. It is spiritual labor, but it is nonetheless labor, and a laborer is worthy of being paid.

If a man comes to work with me for a day, he deserves to be compensated for that work. A person can choose to give his labor as a gift. If one of you need some help at your house, I can choose to go to your house, and work all day as a gift from me to you, but it is never wrong for a person who works to want pay at the end of that day's work. If someone does work for you, you should pay them, unless they tell you they offer their services as a gift or volunteer. You should never take advantage of a person's work.

This applies to pastoring teachers. Men who labor at studying and teaching can (1) refuse to take material support or (2) take material support. It's not wrong either way. If I go and teach somewhere, and I've put in hours, days, weeks, months, and sometimes years of study to be able to teach a comprehensive course on a subject in the Scriptures, I don't *have* to take up an offering, but it is not wrong for me to receive an offering for my labor, travel, and time.

### **What I Practice**

Here's what I am comfortable with. I never *ask* for an offering. Whether it be here or anywhere I go to teach. I study, I go, I teach, and I don't ask that anyone give me anything. I don't have offering time, and I surely don't try to pressure people into giving. But... I do accept offerings when people give them to me. Why? Because a worker deserves to be paid. I spend a lot of time laboring in the Word, and it is not wrong to receive financial support for my work.

### **Why This is Difficult, and Awkward**

I am going to go over some additional Bible verses on this matter, but I want to talk a little bit about why this is a difficult subject to teach. For starters, I worry about sounding like I'm asking for money by just teaching this subject. I promise you I'm not. I've worked hard and supplied for my family for 22 years now, and so has my wife. We do manual labor with our own hands to supply our needs, and I sometimes receive money from people who give to me for my ministry. I'm only teaching this because it came up in our study through Galatians.

Secondly - and I believe this is the main reason it's hard to teach on this - there have been so many preachers on TV, radio, and now the internet, who beg for money every single time you see them preach. It's awful. Not only do they beg for money, they live lavish lifestyles. I am not against a man working a good, honest job and becoming rich. That is fine, so long as he doesn't let it interfere with his relationship with Yahweh. However, I am against a man being a full time preacher and living a lavish lifestyle with the financial support he receives for his ministry.

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In listing the qualifications for being a pastor/overseer, Paul says in both 1 Timothy and Titus that the elder should not be greedy for money. Peter says that the elder should oversee because he is eager to serve the people, and not because he desires their money (1 Peter 5:2). No one should ever enter the ministry because it's a money-making job. What is taking place today in the name of Christ is shameful.

A full-time minister can be fully supported by those he is teaching, but he should be made comfortable, not rich, and if someone in the community is lacking, he should have no problem with offerings or charitable gifts going to people in need.

Listen, no minister of the gospel needs a 54 million dollar jet to preach. No minister of the gospel needs an expensive suit and tie set to make his message sound better. No pastor needs to spend the night in a \$5,000 a night hotel room his church pays for. Do ministers need clothes? Of course. Do they need to eat? Of course. Do ministers sometimes need travel expenses? Sure.

If I travel to somewhere to preach or evangelize, there would be nothing wrong with the congregation here paying for my airplane ticket or gas and food while I'm away. There would be nothing wrong with me getting a daily allowance, so my family stays taken care of. But those would be my needs. An airline ticket to a far away place might be three or four hundred bucks, but it certainly isn't 54 million. That's ridiculous. Do you know how many widows and orphans could be helped with 54 million dollars?

Those that are taught the Word, must share their goods with the teacher, but the teacher isn't allowed to make merchandise of the people, and that's what has been done by so many preachers. They peddle the Bible. 2 Peter 2:1-3 speaks of greedy ministers making merchandise of people. The NLT says that "in their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money."

They hide their gimmick behind the Bible, and claim to offer healing and prosperity if you only send in a "seed offering" to their ministry. They actually teach that you can buy a miracle. That makes me nauseous and upset. And then a little, elderly widow woman somewhere sends them a thousand dollars because she thinks they are sincere. Yuck.

### **How We Overreact**

I think what we do is see all this nonsense, and then try to move as far away from it as we can. We don't want anything to do with the Creflo Dollars and the Kenneth Copelands, and rightfully so, so we go to the other extreme, and sometimes end up thinking that it's wrong for ministers to be paid at all. We let the abuse turn us away from the proper use. Never let the abuse of something turn you away from the proper use of that something. The Scripture teaches us here in Galatians, and elsewhere, that it is proper and required that pastoring teachers be paid for their work in the ministry.

### **Scriptures Teaching This**

Let's now look at a few parallel texts that go along with Galatians 6:6.



## Matthew 10

In Matthew 10 Yeshua sends out his 12 personal students, giving them authority over unclean spirits and power to heal sickness and disease. He then gave them these instructions:

**5** "Don't take the road leading to other nations, and don't enter any Samaritan town.

**6** Instead, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

**7** As you go, announce this: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'

**8** Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with skin diseases, drive out demons. You have received free of charge; give free of charge.

Now if Yeshua's instructions stopped right there, we would get the impression that they were not allowed to receive compensation for their ministry. Yeshua didn't charge for the authority he bestowed upon them. *You've received your power freely; therefore you should use your gift freely.*

But when we read the next two verses, we see that Yeshua is telling his disciples not to **exploit** the people. They aren't to go around asking for monetary support, or putting a price on a healing or a teaching, but just do the work of the ministry freely. What that doesn't mean is that if they are given support they have to deny it. We see this from the next verses:

**9** Don't take along gold, silver, or copper for your money-belts.

**10** Don't take a traveling bag for the road, or an extra shirt, sandals, or a walking stick, for the worker is worthy of his food.

That last phrase, "for the worker is worthy of his food" is spoken in the context of not taking with them gold, silver, a traveling bag, or an extra shirt or sandals. They were not to take these things, because as they did the work of the ministry, some of the people whom they helped spiritually would give to them materially.

If they needed some gold or silver to pay for a stay at an inn, or if they needed a new pair of sandals, someone would see and supply these men their need. If they hadn't eaten all day and were tired, someone would invite them into their home for the night, and let them sit at the table for supper. The worker (in the ministry) is worthy of his food (material support).

## Luke 10

Next we have in Luke 10 a similar account. Here Yeshua is sending out 70 men in pairs, ahead of him, to every town he was planning on going to. Here's what he told these men:

**2** "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.

**3** Now go; I'm sending you out like lambs among wolves.

**4** Don't carry a money-bag, traveling bag, or sandals; don't greet anyone along the road.

**5** Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this household.'

**6** If a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.

**7** Remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they offer, for the worker is worthy of his wages. Don't be moving from house to house.

Yeshua calls these men workers, and then tells them to eat and drink what the household of peace offers them, because "the worker is worthy of his wages." Wages refers to dues paid for work. Here again we see workers of spiritual things being compensated with material things.

## 1 Corinthians 9

Let's go next to 1 Corinthians 9, which is written by Paul (the same author of Galatians). I won't comment on each verse, but you'll see that Paul is writing about his authority to take material or financial compensation for spiritual, ministerial labor.

**4** Don't we have the right to eat and drink?

**5** Don't we have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife, like the other apostles, the Lord's brothers, and Cephas?

**6** Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?

When Paul writes here "refrain from working" he is speaking of refraining from laboring on a regular job, in order to labor in the spiritual work. Remember Yeshua in Luke 10: "the harvest is abundant, but the workers are few." Yeshua speaks of a spiritual harvest of *people* for the Kingdom, and workers who do the work of the ministry in teaching the people about the Kingdom. Paul is saying that he and Barnabus (his co-worker in ministry) have the right to refrain from working a regular job in order to focus on the work of the ministry, and then be given to materially or financially.

**7** Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink the milk from the flock?

**8** Am I saying this from a human perspective? Doesn't the law also say the same thing?

**9** For it is written in the law of Moses, Do not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain. Is God really concerned with oxen?

**10** Or isn't He really saying it for us? Yes, this is written for us, because he who plows ought to plow in hope, and he who threshes should do so in hope of sharing the crop.

Paul now uses the law of Moses to back up his claim. His analogies aren't just pulled out of a hat, they are in line with what the standard of Yahweh, the holy law, teaches.

Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 which is initially about oxen being used to thresh grain. In old times oxen were used to tread out grain, freely walking around on stalks of grain laid on a threshing floor. As the ox walked around in a circle, grain on the stalk would fall off. Some people still use this method today, and say it is the superior way to thresh grain. The law of Moses taught that out of respect for the animal, you weren't to put a muzzle over his mouth where he couldn't eat. While the ox worked for the person, the person was to allow the ox to bend down, and eat some of the grain (or hay) that was in his path.

Paul's point here is that there is a principle in this law teaching us to respect and pay those who work for us. A pastoring teacher is like the ox, in the sense that he is laboring in study of the Word to bring benefit to the people, so that they better understand Yahweh's ways and how to serve Him. Not paying a minister is like muzzling an ox.

**11** If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?

**12** If others share this authority over you, don't we even more? However, we have not used this authority; instead we endure everything so that we will not hinder the gospel of Christ.

Paul explains that he did not use his authority in this matter (although in some situations he took pay, Philippians 4:14-18). His point is not to dismiss everything he has said, but instead to say that it is the teacher's right to forego compensation if he so chooses. A pastor-teacher can choose to work and labor a regular job himself, and also study and teach the Scriptures, but the pastor-teacher has the right to not work a regular job, and be supported by those he teaches.

**13** Do you not know that those who perform the temple services eat the food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the offerings of the altar?

**14** In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should earn their living by the gospel.

Now Paul goes to two more supporting points. First he speaks of those who perform temple and altar service. Who is he speaking of? The Levites, yes. Paul wants his readers to think about the tribe of Levi, who according to the law were the ministers and teachers among the Israelites. They performed the sacrificial rites at the Tabernacle and later Temple, and they were also the teachers in spiritual matters and judges in court cases.

Paul is saying that the Levites eat of the sacrifices and offerings that are brought by Israelites from other tribes. Even though the Levite didn't raise or take care of the animal, they partook in the meat of the animal, or the produce from someone else's garden, because they do all the ministerial work in Israel.

Then Paul speaks of "the Lord has commanded" something. I believe Paul is speaking of what we went over in Matthew 10 and Luke 10. It could be that Matthew and Luke's writings were already circulating in Paul's day, in the primitive form of sheets of papyrus.

Or, Yeshua's words could have been orally passed down at this time. Either way, Paul is saying that the Master Yeshua commanded that those who preach the gospel are allowed to earn their living that way, because the Lord said, "the worker is worthy of his wages."

"The Lord has commanded" means that this is a law. It is a commandment to financially and materially support teachers. Did Yeshua add to Torah here? Not at all. We see the principle in the support of the Levites, and even in not muzzling animals who work for you. Yeshua pulled from the Torah this principle, applying it to supporting pastoring teachers who labor in the study and teaching of the Word.<sup>3</sup>

### **Didache**

Lastly, I'd like to go to a first century, Christian document called the Didache. The word Didache is a Greek word that means "teaching, or instruction." It's believed that this document circulated among Gentile Christians in the early centuries A.D. It is not Holy Scripture, but it does give us an idea of the thoughts of some of the earliest believers in the Messiah. Here's some of the things this document says about paying ministers.

#### **Chapter 11:3-6**

3. And concerning the Apostles and Prophets, act thus according to the ordinance of the Gospel.
4. Let every Apostle who comes to you be received as the Lord,
5. But let him not stay more than one day, or if need be a second as well; but if he stay three days, he is a false prophet. *Seems to contradict Luke 10:7; we stick with Scripture*
6. And when an Apostle goes forth let him accept nothing but bread till he reach his night's lodging; but if he ask for money, he is a false prophet. *We wipe out just about all TBN preachers here.*

So that's pretty strong right? I'd say it is, and if that's all the Didache said, we'd be extremely wary of anyone who was paid in the ministry. But notice this next section from the same document.

#### **Chapter 13:1-7**

1. But every true prophet who wishes to settle among you is "worthy of his food."
2. Likewise a true teacher is himself worthy, like the workman, of his food.
3. Therefore thou shalt take the firstfruit of the produce of the winepress and of the threshingfloor and of oxen and sheep, and shalt give them as the firstfruits to the prophets, for they are your high priests.
4. But if you have not a prophet, give to the poor.
5. If thou makest bread, take the firstfruits, and give it according to the commandment.
6. Likewise when thou openest a jar of wine or oil, give the firstfruits to the prophets.
7. Of money also and clothes, and of all your possessions, take the firstfruits, as it seem best to you, and give according to the commandment. (*The Lord has commanded, 1 Cor. 9:14*)

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<sup>3</sup> Puritan scholar Matthew Henry put it like this back in the 1600's: "It is the people's duty to maintain their minister. He may waive his right, as Paul did; but those transgress a precept of Christ, who deny or withhold due support." Presbyterian commentator Albert Barnes (1800's) writes this on the subject: "Further, there are as strong reasons why they should support him, as there are why they should pay a schoolmaster, a lawyer, a physician, or a day-laborer. The minister usually toils as hard as others; expends as much in preparing for his work; and does as much good."

So the Didache, just like Holy Scripture, teaches us to be cautious about our giving, but it also teaches us to support genuine teachers and prophets.

### **Conclusion**

Galatians 6:6 - "The one who is taught the message must share his goods with the teacher." I'm teaching through Galatians, so I taught this message today, not because I need to take up an offering, but because I am committed to teaching everything in Holy Scripture, in hopes that you all learn more and more, and are not deceived by all the winds of doctrine floating around in the world today.

### **Galatians, pt. 55 "You Harvest What You Plant"**

*Read: 6:7-10*

We're going to be looking at verses 7-10 today, which are the conclusion to this section in the letter about loving and serving your neighbor as the fulfillment of the law. This section starts at 5:13 and ends here in 6:10 before Paul goes on to his conclusion in verses 11-18, which we will finish in the next few lessons, Yah willing.

### **We Can't Mock Yahweh**

Today we begin in verse 7. Paul starts to sum up this section by saying, "Do not be deceived: the Almighty is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he will also reap."

Someone may go about their life, doing whatever they want to do, and everything seems okay. No major problems, and when something bad happens, you just come up with a human solution and keep doing your own thing. You can slowly, over time, forget Yahweh and His ways, and go your own way, and things feel smooth for a while.

We should not deceive ourselves into thinking that we can live in a way that mocks the Creator. Eventually, whatever it is that we've been planting will sprout up, and we will reap what we've planted.

If you plant tomato plants you reap tomatoes. If you plant okra seeds you reap okra. It's not complicated at all, but it just doesn't seem as cut and dry in the spiritual realm... yet, it is. Judgment will come at the proper time to the one who just continuously sows to the flesh. You cannot live anyway you want to live and get away with it.

Even if the judgment takes place after death, it will still take place for those who lived according to the works of the flesh. A person may live their entire life here on the this earth sowing to the flesh, living a wicked life. It is nothing but the mercy of Yahweh that allows a person to live this way and not be zapped instantly. But even when this happens, the person will die, and after that comes the judgment. Yahweh will not be mocked.

### **Eternal Destiny is in View**

Verse 8 tells us this much: "because the one who sows to his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit."

I do believe that sowing and reaping takes place in the here and now. I believe you can sow to the flesh and reap trouble, and you can sow to the Spirit and reap blessings - in this life. A life dedicated and devoted to Yahweh will not be free from affliction, but it will be a better life in the present than if you are dedicated and devoted to sin and the devil.

But in this verse, Paul is centering in on our **ultimate harvest in eternity**. We know this because he speaks of eternal life from the Spirit to the one who plants seeds according to the Spirit. So the contrast is **eternal life** for the righteous versus **corruption** for the wicked.

This helps us believers, because sometimes we can live a life in service to Yahweh and still go through things that make us wonder if Yahweh is really there. A sickness, a disease, a trial, a test... and we wonder where Yahweh is in all of this. The truth is that the best lessons learned come through the toughest trials and tests. The purest gold is that which is tried and refined through the fire.

As believers and followers of Yahweh Almighty, whatever happens here in our earthly life is not worthy to be compared to our eternal life in our resurrected, glorified body. We have a promise from Yahweh of resurrection to immortality. Our cold, dead body that gets buried will raise to new life at the final coming of Yeshua the Messiah. Just as Yahweh raised up Yeshua from death, so also will He raise us up from death, and the 70-100 years we experience here on earth in this body will seem like the grass that withers away compared to the 1000 years and beyond that we will have in the kingdom.

If our hope was in this life only, we would be most miserable. It's okay to enjoy this life. It's fine to be happy and have moments of greatness, but do not anchor your hope to the body that you now possess, because we all have to die one day.

It's not something we think about when we are young, but it is something that happens to every single one of us. It's been happening for thousands of years.

I knew my Granddaddy would eventually die, but I didn't really know it until it happened. It felt like I'd always be able to go over to his house and have him kiss me on my cheek and smell that Polo cologne he'd always wear. I took for granted that I'd always be able to hear him say, "I love you grand-darlin'." But that time has come and gone. It's a reality for us all.

But as believers, **we have a blessed hope**. Someone told me the other day that they were speaking to an unbeliever, and this person expressed that they were so scared of dying, because they didn't know what was on the other side. I can't imagine the feeling. I don't

even know what I would live for if I just believed we were evolved stardust that interacted with each other for a little while, and then "POOF" we're gone.

But my hope is built on nothing less than the Messiah's blood and righteousness. This life I live is a good life, but it's not the best life I'll ever have. One day I'll get a body that will never die. I'll get a life where there will be no more sorrow or depression or pain. I'll live in a kingdom wherein dwells righteousness. There will be no more sickness or death. There will only be joy and love without end.

But that's only for those who are in Messiah. Those outside of Messiah may experience some good things now, but don't be deceived, Yahweh will not be mocked. There will be a judgment, and all those who spent this life sowing to the flesh will reap corruption. Only those who sowed to the Spirit will reap eternal life.

### **Don't Get Tired**

Verse 9 says, "So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up."

Sometimes we do good, and do good, and do good... and nothing changes. It seems like we just go through the motions and get stuck in a rut. We think about what another life would be like. We wonder if we've made the right decision in following Yahweh. We ponder about the unbelievers we know who seem to be living a decent life. We wonder if all we do in the Spirit is worth it.

Let me encourage you today: IT'S GONNA' BE WORTH IT ALL, some beautiful and happy day. It's gonna' be worth every mile, every heartache and every trial. Don't get tired of doing good. Don't get tired of keeping the commandments. Don't grow weary and think it doesn't matter. Dig your heels in and say, "I'm going to live for Yahweh, no matter what anyone else does, and no matter what happens."

### **My Experience in Working**

There are times when I wonder if all of the work I put into the ministry is doing any good. I labor and toil and study, and I wonder if anyone is listening, and so I study harder, and put out more material, and try to explain things better, and on and on it goes.

And I will tell you that there have been a couple times when I almost stopped doing ministerial work. I have never been able to quit though, and I believe it's because Yahweh put this inside of me, and I can't stop... but I have thought about it.

But then, I'll get a call or text from one of you. I'll get a card in the mail. I'll have someone tell me they needed the sermon from last week, and I won't think it was that good of a sermon, but Yahweh used it to reach someone here in need. Thank you so much for all your encouragement.

Sometimes Yahweh lets us get to our breaking point before He shows up. He does this so you learn to rely on Him rather than you. We're good at trying to fix everything

ourselves, but we end up making a mess when we leave Him out. He hands you the reins so you eventually realize you can't do it; you need Him. He is the giver of all good things.

You will reap a harvest - AT THE PROPER TIME - if you don't give up. The proper time may not be the time you expect. You may think it needs to be your time; the time you think you need it most. But the proper time is only determined by the Father, the Creator of time.

### **Your Good Seeds**

All the good you do, all the loving of your neighbor you do. Every man, woman, and child. Every man who works hard, and gets hurt, but keeps going, guiding his home in the commandments. Every woman who keeps the home, and changes diaper after diaper, and cries herself to sleep sometimes. Every person who just lives day after day doing what the Creator has given them to do. Every kind work you speak. Every gift you give to the poor or the widow. Every act of self-control.

Every time you let someone run over you because you take the high, spiritual road. Every time you put someone else's needs ahead of your own. Every time you attend Sabbath service. Every time you sing a praise song to Yahweh. Every time you bow your head to pray, even when you don't feel like. Every time you have spoken about Yahweh to others. All of this is taken into account and remembered by the Almighty, whether it seems like it or not. You are storing up treasures in heaven.

You are planting seed after seed of righteousness when you do all these things, and you will harvest an abundance of goodness when the time is right.

You ever seen those memes going around about eating a salad and then looking at yourself in the mirror that night to see how much weight you lost. It's funny because it's so true. We want immediate results, but the results we are talking about take time. Sometimes it takes your entire life, and then your reward will be at the resurrection of the righteous. You say, "but I want a little bit of a reward now." Sometimes that happens, but it's not a guarantee. Sometimes Yahweh has a plan for us that involves hardship. Sometimes Yahweh has a task for us that doesn't feel good, but in the end the harvest will be so abundant.

### **Do Good to All**

So therefore, as we have opportunity (vs. 10) we must work for the good of all, especially those of the household of faith.

Every time you have a chance to do good for someone, do it. Don't worry about who sees, don't worry about what anyone says, don't worry about who gossips or doesn't understand why you're helping a person. Just do good, to all. Believers and unbelievers.

I don't have to agree with a person on anything to be kind to them. If I walk up on a job and the person there is an atheist, or gay, or a Muslim, or my enemy, I have purposed in



my heart that I am going to work for the good of all people. That doesn't mean I agree with them. That doesn't mean I hold to the same ideas as they do. It just means they are a person, and I'm going to do my duty towards them as a person when I have the opportunity.

But especially... do good to those who are of **the household of faith**. Take special care and interest, to do good to those who share the same faith as you, and as our father Abraham shared.

Believers should come first in your life as a believer. We are called to love even our enemies, but that doesn't mean we have the same level of love for an enemy as we do for a trusted brother or sister in the faith.

### **The Household of Faith**

Brother TJ and I are not related in the flesh. His last name is Martin. Mine is Janzen. I never knew TJ even existed until about 13 or so years ago. We weren't cousins who grew up together. We weren't even neighborhood friends that played sandlot baseball. Yet he is closer to me now than a brother. I told him the other day that I have all the confidence in the world in him.

You know what causes that? The Spirit of Yahweh. The gift of faith. We are connected in the household of faith. Not the Janzen household. Not the Martin household. We are connected because we do the will of the Father, and that goes for all of us believers! We are connected with one another because our Father has placed a bond there among us that is stronger than any family ties that exist.

The household of faith is the one we must belong to. This phrase is the culmination of everything Paul's written in this epistle. There were Israelites in the first century who shunned heathens who believed in the Messiah, because they weren't like them. They were outcasts by many Hebrews simply because their ancestry and upbringing didn't match up.

But who is my mother and my brother and my sister? Those who look like me? Those who talk like me? Those who can go on ancestry.com and show that they have European blood? Nope. My family are those who do the will of the Father in heaven. That's my household. It's the family of faith. Understand this: it is those who have faith that are Abraham's children.

Whether you are part of this family isn't dependant on your physical lineage. Salvation has never depended on one's physical lineage. It has always been about who serves Yahweh because of faith, and who doesn't serve Yahweh because of unbelief. So you will see the difference between the righteous and the wicked. Between the one who serves the Almighty, and the one who does not serve Him.

Shame on us for making it about anything else. Shame on me for once looking at someone and thinking they weren't worthy because of who they were in the flesh. None

of us are worthy in the flesh! There is none that doeth good, no not one! Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing! Yahweh Almighty makes His masterpieces out of rotten material as you and I. You are what you are by His grace, not because you are anything in your own self.

What is most important in matters of relation is faith, or the Spirit. Sometimes, praise Yahweh, our blood family is our spiritual family... but that is not an absolute. While everyone matters, and we should work for the good of all, those who matter most and those we must work for first are those of the household of faith.

There is neither Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female. We are all one in the Messiah. If we belong to the Messiah, then we are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise.

Roles still exist in this household of faith. Men are still men and women are still women, same for Jew and Greek, slave and freeman. But the key is that were are equal in our salvation and right-standing before the Father, because we are in His Son, the Messiah.

I'm thankful to be part of this household of faith today, and I'm thankful for all my fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters in the Spirit. You are my family. You are who I will spend eternity with. HalleluYah!

### **Galatians, pt. 56 "Boasting in the Flesh"**

Read 6:11-18

This is Paul's concluding exhortation to the Galatian Gentile believers in the Messiah. It is a summary of the epistle. It's like you getting to the end of a letter you are writing, and you say in brief what matters most to you; what you want the readers to remember.

#### **Large Letters?**

I want to jump right into this today, so let's start with verse 11. It's a short verse, but there are so many interpretations of it:

**HCSB 11** Look at what large letters I have written to you in my own handwriting.

**KJV 11** Ye see how large a letter I have written to you with mine own hand.

Good scholars argue for either translation and understanding. Some say Paul is making a reference to the size of the individual letters he is writing. Others say Paul is talking about the letter as a whole being large or long.

#### **Ancient Scribes**

Oftentimes, authors in antiquity used scribes or secretaries to write letters for them. The author would speak what he wanted written, and the scribe would pen it down.

For example, Romans 1:1 says "Paul, a slave of Messiah Yeshua, called as an apostle." But at the end of Romans, 16:22 we read this: "I Tertius, who penned this epistle in the Master, greet you." Tertius was Paul's scribe for at least the letter to the Romans. It was a letter from Paul, but it was written down by Tertius.

Paul would also often sign his name at the end of his letters.

## **2 Thessalonians 3:16-18**

16 May the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

17 This greeting is in my own hand - Paul. This is a sign in every letter; this is how I write.

18 The grace of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah be with all of you.

Paul did this because he wanted the recipients to know he valued them, and because he wanted to steer them away from forgeries going around during that time (2 Thessalonians 2:2 "by a letter as if from us"). By him using his own handwriting, he gave them assurance that the letter was from him.

So, did Paul use a scribe here in Galatians? Some scholars say no, and they go with the KJV rendering that Paul is referencing the length of this letter.

## **Isn't Galatians Short?**

We might object by saying that Galatians is a short letter compared to Romans or 1 Corinthians. Galatians is 6 chapters, while Romans is 16 chapters (and 1 Corinthians is 16 chapters). But we must understand that this view does not hold that Galatians is a long letter compared to all the other letters of Paul, but a long letter for him to write all by himself. According to this view, Paul is pointing out that he didn't use a scribe, but instead wrote the entire letter with his own hand.

Let me show you something interesting, that Bible study nuts like me love. Let's look at Hebrews 13 for a second. Now, no one knows for certain who wrote the book of Hebrews. Some believe it was Paul, others believe Barnabus or Timothy may have written it. Regardless, look at what Hebrews 13:22 says:

22 Brothers, I urge you to receive this word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words.

Using my Bible, Hebrews is about 10 pages long. Galatians is about 4 pages long. Yet Galatians may be called a *long letter* by Paul, and Hebrews is called *a few words* by its author. Why? No one can be certain. It could be that the Hebrews author spoke of many subjects in the letter, but didn't go into much detail with any of them. Whatever the case, I just find things like this interesting.

### Another View (Letters)

So why do other scholars think Galatians 6:11 is speaking of the individual letters rather than the letter as a whole? These scholars view Paul's epistles as a whole, and notice that his common practice is his signature and conclusion. Many say that he picked up the pen and wrote with large letters at the end of Galatians, because he was emphasizing his conclusion. Like turning on the caps lock button today.

I take the view that Paul writes in large letters because of something else he has already said in this epistle. If we didn't have anything else to couple Galatians 6:11 with, I'd probably take the long letter as a whole view, but I think that Paul is speaking of him finishing out this epistle in his own handwriting, and he wrote in large letters because he had bad eyesight. He had to write big in order to see what he was writing.

Think about giving someone with bad eyesight a Bible with tiny print. They can't use it, so you exchange it for a Bible with giant print, and they then can read it. The large letters enable visibility. I think that's why Paul wrote with large letters. You say, that's reading a lot into this text isn't it brother Matthew? Well... again, if all we had was Galatians 6:11, yes, it would be reading a lot into the text, but we also have Galatians 4:13-15. I'll read it here:

13 You know that previously I preached the gospel to you in physical weakness,  
14 and though my physical condition was a trial for you, you did not despise or reject me. On the contrary you received me as an angel of [Yahweh], as the Messiah Yeshua himself.

15 What happened to this blessedness of yours? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.

Paul mentions his physical condition twice, and calls it a weakness. He says it was a trial for the Galatians to take care of him the first time he came to preach the gospel, yet they didn't complain about it, and treated him as if he were the Messiah.

Then he goes on to say that they loved him so much they would have torn out their eyes and given them to him. Now obviously that is a figure of speech, but the point is that the Galatians loved Paul so much that - if it were possible - they would have given him the good eyes that they had to replace the bad eyes that he had.

This, coupled with Galatians 6:11 is why I believe Paul picked up the pen at the end of this letter, and didn't just write a signature, but wrote what we call verses 11-18. It was an emphasis of his to show how much he cared about the Galatians, and how much he wanted them to reject the false gospel of the Judaizers. They knew he couldn't see good, so he wrote the conclusion of the letter, in large letters, so he'd be able to see what he was writing, and they would know he picked up the pen.

So... that's all interesting to learn and know, but more importantly, let's look at what Paul wrote with his own hand.

**Galatians 6:12-13**

12 Those who want to make a good showing in the flesh are the ones who would compel you to be circumcised - but only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Messiah.

13 For even the circumcised don't keep the law themselves; however, they want you to be circumcised in order to boast about your flesh.

**Misusing Commandments**

Every commandment of Yahweh is good and beautiful. The problem is that men often take commandments, twist and turn them a little bit to fit an agenda, and what started out as a good commandment ends up being a bad tradition or practice. Anytime we take a commandment and misuse it or abuse it, it becomes null and void.

Here are a couple examples: the 5th commandment says to honor your father and mother, but what about a parent who abuses a child? When a father or mother begins to use their power to their own advantage, in order to manipulate the child, it then becomes a sin of the parent. A father can misuse the authority Yahweh has given to him, and just quote, "honor your father child," but the entire time be seeking to carry out his own will rather than Yahweh's will.

The same goes for the 6th commandment of "do not murder." There are some who would go so far to say that we should never kill under any circumstance. So if someone breaks into my home with intent to harm to my family, I cannot protect myself. Is that what this commandment is about? Does the sixth commandment forbid self defense? Of course not, but the commandment becomes void when we try to teach that it means something it was never intended to mean.

**Abusing Circumcision**

Circumcision is a good commandment, but it wasn't given to be used as a free pass to do anything else we want to do. It also wasn't given as a means of salvation. Circumcision was not the way in which Abraham was made righteous; it was a sign or seal of Abraham's faith. Faith preceded circumcision, and faith was the deciding factor in Abraham's salvation, not circumcision. And once Abraham received the sign of circumcision, it didn't mean he was now free to live any way he wanted to live.

Those who wanted to make a good showing in the flesh were compelling the Galatian Gentile believers to be circumcised. They wanted to boast about their flesh. They wanted to use the Gentiles as a trophy on their shelf, saying, "Look how many Gentiles I compelled to be circumcised," and then forget everything else.

**Avoiding Persecution**

Paul says they did this to avoid persecution. Remember that persecution didn't just mean being talked about wrongly. We are talking about persecution in the sense of being stoned, flogged, or beaten for what you believe.

Paul was persecuted this way for believing that Gentiles could receive salvation without converting to become Israelites through circumcision. **Paul saw the torture stake of Yeshua as the means through which Gentiles gained access to the kingdom** (compare Gal. 3:13-14).

13 Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written: Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.

14 The purpose was that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles in the Messiah Yeshua, so that we could receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The blessing of Abraham is the gospel that was preached to Abraham. The Gentiles' faith in the promised seed - Yeshua - was likened to Abraham's faith in Genesis. Just as Abraham was declared righteous by faith, so were the Gentile believers.

Some of the believing Jews didn't like this. Thus when Paul went around preaching this gospel, he caught a lot of flack for it - even to the point of being physically abused for what he taught.

The influencers or Judaizers wanted to avoid this type of persecution, so they sought to compel or force the Gentile male believers to convert to Judaism through circumcision. This way, no one could say they taught the same thing as Paul (that Gentiles could be saved as Gentiles), and no one would beat them or stone them for their teaching. **So they exchanged the torture stake of Messiah for circumcision.**

So here is the motive. The motive is not Scripture. The motive is not the commandment. The motive is not anything righteous. The motive of this teaching is rather (1) to avoid persecution, and (2) make a boast in someone else's flesh. That's it. It's the easy way out and the way to make one's self appear righteous.

### **The Hypocrisy**

Paul tells us in verse 13 that even the circumcised - those Jewish believers who were pushing this doctrine - didn't even keep the law themselves. **WHAT A STATEMENT.** How were they not keeping the law if they were circumcised? The key is that circumcision, or outward show, is all they had become interested in. Just do this one thing, and forget about the rest.

This can happen to us today. So long as we see someone wear their tassels, or have a beard, or dress modest, or look "Hebrew," do we just accept that they are Yahweh's child? What about a heart change? What about a life devoted to the Creator? What about a *desire* to do the Father's will? What about love, and joy, and peace, and kindness, and faithfulness - all fruit of the Spirit mentioned just previous in this same letter? What about all of that?

**If a person loves Yahweh, He will effect every area of their life.** You won't be known as a child of Yahweh just because you look different on the outside, but rather because

your entire life and person has changed. You aren't the same, and everyone around you knows it. You will be a humble servant, who mourns over your own sins, no matter how advanced you become in sanctification. You will always see and seek for ways to improve your walk with Yahweh.

It is amazing to me that these influencers who pushed the law of circumcision were actually breakers of the law. They focused on one, outward area, and ignored the weighty matters of the law (like mercy, justice, and faith). This verse proves the influencers didn't care about the law, they only cared about their agenda. (It's like the Pharisees who brought the woman caught in adultery to Yeshua. They didn't care about the law of justice, they only wanted to find a reason to trap and accuse Yeshua.)

Is this you today? Are you so adamant about one area of the law that you've forgotten the big picture? Are you hung up on getting people conformed to one thing that you've neglected the main thing? We are pros at puffing up this flesh. We are good at making a name for ourselves, but in the end that's all we will have done, if we did not truly live our whole life serving Yahweh.

If I understand all mysteries and all knowledge and prophecy, but I don't have the love of Yahweh in my life, I am nothing. If I can tie a tassel exactly right, and my beard is big and combed, but I do not love my wife as Messiah loved the assembly, what have I done? If I figure out the exact day for Sabbath, but haven't trained my children to love and serve their neighbor, what does it profit me?

These ought ye to have done, not to leave the others undone. It's not about keeping one commandment and boasting in it, it's about keeping all the commandments and boasting in nothing, but saying you are an unworthy servant and have only done your duty.

The love of Yahweh is to keep His commandments, plural - not one commandment (circumcision, tassels, phylacteries, etc.), and to keep those commandments humbly. If your heart belongs to Yahweh, you will be interested in everything He teaches in His law, and you will be humble and accepting of people who are still learning and growing. Don't be a Judaizer. Just be a faithful, humble follower of the Messiah.

This is not a game. This is real life, and what is at stake is everlasting life. I'd hate for anyone to miss the kingdom because they boasted in the flesh and put the torture stake of Messiah on the back burner.

### **Galatians, pt. 57 "The Israel of Yahweh"**

Read 6:11-18

Today will be my last sermon in Galatians. I picked this book to teach through because I have had a lot of questions asked to me about Galatians. It seems that it's the number one book people use in an attempt to say that the law of Moses has been abolished, or that we are not required to keep the law. On the surface, I can see why. But hopefully I've shown otherwise by digging deeper and examining things culturally and contextually.

I hope that these sermons will be of service to this body of Messiah, and to the worldwide body of the Messiah. My prayer is that people will find the teachings easy to understand yet educational, and when they are asked about a certain text, they can go to that section, chapter, and verse in these teachings, and use them as a study tool to learn more, and be further equipped to give an answer to anyone asking them.

My level of respect for Bible scholars who write commentaries has increased after this study. I've spent about 3 to 4 years of my life studying this book. It takes a lot of time; a lot of mornings, a lot of typing, a lot of meditating and a lot of hot tea. I just want to say thank you to all of the people in the past and in the present who take their time to study books of the Bible, and write commentaries on those books.

### **What do we boast in?**

Okay, so let's get to these last five verses, we'll begin with 6:14.

But as for me, I will never boast about anything except the cross of our Master Yeshua the Messiah, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Paul has just finished criticizing the Judaizers for trying to boast in the Gentiles' flesh. They were using the Gentile converts as trophies. They weren't interested in Torah, they were just interested in boasting that they got heathens to convert to Judaism.

And in doing this they were trying to avoid being persecuted. They didn't want to go through being reviled, flogged, or maybe even stoned for believing Gentiles could receive salvation by believing in the promised seed of Abraham, Yeshua of Nazareth. So the way to avoid being persecuted by the larger Jewish community was to make the Gentiles go through the conversion process.

Paul on the other hand said he would never boast in anything except the torture stake of the Messiah. How Yeshua suffered for us and died for our sins is of greatest importance to Paul. The cross of our Master means the suffering and death of our Master.

This teaches us that we should never boast in what we do. We should never try to take credit for our service to Yahweh. No matter what level of holiness we reach, or how many laws we keep, it all means nothing without the work of Messiah. We have all sinned and fallen short of Yahweh's glory. None of us are without transgression. So where is boasting? It should only be in Yahweh's works for us. Paul's words remind me of a Scripture in Jeremiah.

9:23 This is what Yahweh says: the wise must not boast in his wisdom; the mighty must not boast in his might; the rich must not boast in his riches.  
24 But the one who boasts should boast in this, that he understands and knows Me - that I am Yahweh, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth, for I delight in these things, this is Yahweh's declaration.



I think Paul was pulling from this Scripture when he penned Galatians 6:14. We are absolutely nothing apart from what Yahweh does in our life. Nothing. Anything we accomplish is by His grace and mercy. Anything we obtain. Anything we conquer. Any sin you get control over is because of Yahweh's deliverance power, not your own.

### **Punishing the Circumcised**

I don't think it's a coincidence that right after this is written in Jeremiah, if we keep reading in verses 25-26, Yahweh says this through the prophet:

25 The days are coming - Yahweh's declaration - when I will punish all the circumcised yet uncircumcised.

26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, Moab, all those who clip the hair on their temples and reside in the wilderness. All these nations are uncircumcised, and the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.

Yahweh says he will punish all the circumcised *yet* uncircumcised. I think this is the same thing Paul has been dealing with in Galatia. We sometimes forget that Paul was a Benjaminite Pharisee who knew the Tanak so well.

Notice that Yahweh lumps Judah in with the heathen nations. It's because, as it says, the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart. There you have it. They had the outward symbol of physical circumcision, but the stony heart had not been removed. They still had that outer layer around their inner man; that stubborn layer that has no genuine desire for the law of Yahweh.

Remember what Paul said back in verse 13: "for even the circumcised don't keep the law themselves." That's the same thing Jeremiah 9:26 is saying. They honor him with their mouth or their outward actions, but their heart is far from Yahweh.

### **The World is Crucified to Me**

So Paul boasts in nothing except the torture stake of Messiah, and he says that through what happened on the cross the world has been crucified to him and he is crucified to the world.

Has the world been crucified to you? I realize we must live our lives and go through the routine of day-to-day life, but still... what makes us tic? I must say that this sentence from Paul is extremely convicting to me. Pretty much the entire lives of all the early Apostles is convicting, because they gave up everything to just follow Yeshua, and following him at that time was different than the way we do it today.

We live in a country, thankfully, where we have religious freedom. Especially here in the southeastern United States (known as the "Bible-belt" of America); there are churches on every corner. People might think we are a little weird because of some of our beliefs, and we might get gossiped about, but what kind of persecution is that compared to being spit on, or put in prison, or flogged, or stoned? We haven't experienced any of those things.

So it makes me wonder... for Matthew... has the world been crucified to me, and I to the world?

I was thinking this week about the Coptic Christian men who had their heads cut off by Muslim extremists on a shore of the Mediterranean sea back in 2015. The extremists actually video'd the executions. These men had done nothing criminal, they just would not renounce Messiah. They knelt there and didn't fight back. They had their heads chopped off because they were devoted to Holy Scripture and the Messiah from Nazareth.

I watched recently an interview someone did with the wife of one of these men. She said she counted her husband worthy of respect and praise for dying for the Messiah. She said it was an honor that he died that way. I'd like to watch a portion of this video now.

I will boast in nothing but the cross of Messiah, through whom the world is crucified to me and I to the world. Take some time to meditate on that.

### **What Really Matters**

Gal. 6:15 For both circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing; what matters instead is a new creation.

The acts of being circumcised or remaining uncircumcised *in and of them selves* do not mean anything. It's like Yahweh said in Jeremiah, that He will punish the circumcised *yet* uncircumcised. What matters instead is a new creation. I take new creation here to be speaking of spiritual regeneration. The act of going from a sinner to a saint, or going from someone who has no regard for Yahweh into someone who puts Yahweh at the forefront of his life.

If a person does not have a circumcised heart and genuine faith inside of them, then what you do on the outside means nothing. You are just a white-washed tomb.

You can take a car and put the most expensive paint job on it, the best body, windows, lights, beautiful paint work, wheels, tires, etc. You could put it on a showroom floor. But if you don't have a motor inside of it, you'll never drive it off the lot. It'll just sit there and look pretty.

Unless a person is a new creation. Unless a person loves Yahweh because their heart is new, then getting circumcised means nothing, and equally being uncircumcised means nothing.

Remember this as well. Those terms don't just apply to physical circumcision and uncircumcision, they apply to Jew and Gentile; Israelite and heathen. Israelite boys were circumcised on the 8th day of their life. Heathens (Gentiles) were not. But neither being an Israelite or a heathen means anything. What matters is a new creation, and that's why Paul writes what he does in verse 16:

May peace be on all those who follow this standard, and mercy also be on the Israel of [Yahweh].

This verse is a culmination of everything Paul has went over in this epistle. It shows that the Israel of Yahweh is made up of those who practice or follow a certain way. Right after Paul says that circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing, but what matters is a new creation, he says:

1. May **peace** be on all those who ---> **follow this standard**
2. And **mercy** also be on the ---> **Israel of Yahweh**

This is Hebrew parallelism. I believe the book of Galatians was originally written in Greek, but I'm speaking of the concept here. The Hebrew Bible, the OT, will often say the same thing twice, but in two different ways, and that is what Paul is doing.

Peace and Mercy are equivalent. Those who are peaceful are merciful. Peace be on these people... mercy be on these people. Peace be on who? Those who follow this standard. What standard? That what matters is a new creation (vs. 15). That we should boast only in cross of Messiah (vs. 14). That standard. And mercy be on who? The Israel of Yahweh, and the Israel of Yahweh are those who follow this standard.

### **Who are the Israel of Yahweh?**

The true Israel of Yahweh is not a mere physical or genetic people. It is anyone - Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female - who follows a certain standard. It is those who have the faith of Abraham. Salvation and right standing with Yahweh is seen by looking at those who follow what Yahweh says.

I realize salvation is by grace and mercy, through faith. I know that. But we must not lessen the truth that salvation is seen through obedience. You know who the children of Yahweh are by who obey. You know who has been shown grace and mercy by who you see doing the will of the Father. By those who follow this standard of the new creation.

Focusing on the outside leads to trusting in the flesh. It does nothing but puff up pride in people, and folks start worrying about their ancestry, or what tribe they might be from, or what color their skin is. Eventually people get so wrapped up in it that they begin to judge others by simply what they look like. "Well they can't make it in, because they don't have the right skin color," or "they can't be in the kingdom because their ancestry doesn't match up with what I believe is right."

I can assure you that based upon the scriptures, all of that is not essential to salvation. There is such a thing as physical Israelite people, but it doesn't have anything to do with everlasting life. You can be a thoroughbred, physical Israelite and be as lost as last year's Easter egg. Salvation is not dependant on bloodline or physical characteristics. Salvation is dependant upon - yes grace, mercy, and faith - but it's seen by watching who goes around doing the will of the Father.

This isn't something new Paul came up with. Yeshua told us in the gospels that his mother and brothers are those who hear the word of Yahweh and do it (Luke 8:21). "For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, that person is My brother and sister and mother." (Matthew 12:50) It is the spiritual family that matters, not a mere physical family.

Yeshua said that he who endures to the end will be saved (Matthew 10:22). Notice again that salvation isn't predicated upon what you look like or your physical genetics. It's all about the spiritual. Enduring to the end describes spiritual endurance, not physical. Enduring to the end is a reference to keeping the faith till the end of your life.

When you take hold of Yeshua's robe, believing in his work and doing what he taught, you become attached to him. In Zechariah 8:23, "Yahweh of Hosts says this: 'In those days, 10 men from nations of every language will grab the skirt/hem of a Judahite man tightly, urging: Let us go with you, for we have heard that Elohim is with you.'" Yeshua is that Judahite man. No matter what nation you are from or what language you speak, you can grab hold to Yeshua, and he will be your elder brother.

At the end of the book of Malachi (chapter 3) we are told about a book of remembrance that is written before Yahweh, and that book contains the names of all those who fear Yahweh and have a high regard for His name. "They will be mine" says Yahweh, "a special possession on the day I am preparing." Then Malachi tells us that we will see a difference between the righteous and the wicked. He describes these two groups as (1) those who serve the Almighty and (2) those who do not serve the Almighty.

The same thing is seen all the way back to the time of the Passover in the land of Egypt. It wasn't just physical Israelites that left Egypt after the final plague. Exodus 12:38 tells us there was a mixed multitude that also went up with them. The HCSB calls this an "ethnically diverse crowd." The NLT calls this "a rabble of non-Israelites." There were Egyptians, and even slaves from other countries in Egypt, that watched as Yahweh performed great signs and wonders through Moses, and they were pricked in their heart to follow the Mighty One of Israel.

Exodus 9:20 tells us that when the hail plague was announced, "**those among Pharaoh's officials who feared the word of Yahweh made their servants and livestock flee to shelters.**" People's hearts were being pricked by those plagues, and when it came time to put the blood on the doorpost and lintel, it wasn't just Israelite homes that did so. Anyone who feared Yahweh and took His announcement seriously did so. When the destroying angel went over the homes that night, he wasn't peeping through the blinds to see who was a physical Israelite and who was an Egyptian or a heathen slave. The angel only looked at who had the blood of the Lamb on their doorpost.

During the second pronouncement of the law in Deuteronomy, 29:10-15, we read this:

**10 All of you are standing today before Yahweh your Mighty One - your leaders, tribes, elders, officials, all the men of Israel.**

11 your children, your wives, and the foreigners in your camp who cut your wood and draw your water -

12 so that you may enter into the covenant of Yahweh your Mighty One, which He is making with you today, so that you may enter into His oath.

13 and so that He may be your Mighty One as He promised you and as He swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

14 I am making this covenant and this oath not only with you,

15 but also with those who are standing here with us today in the presence of Yahweh our Mighty One and with those who are not here today.

Anyone who wanted to serve Yahweh was welcome. Anyone who refused to serve Yahweh was eventually cut off. That's the difference. It's always been the difference. That's the true Israel of Yahweh. Whether Israelite or non-Israelite, you can have faith in Yahweh and His promises, and exhibit that faith by the way you live.

It's not about who you are in the flesh. That's what the Judaizers made it about. They weren't even concerned with the Torah, genuinely. They only wanted to get the Gentiles circumcised so they could boast in the flesh. They could boast in getting a Gentile to convert to Judaism and be an honorary, proselyte Israelite through a fleshly ritual. That misses the whole picture. It places our focus on the outside instead of the inside.

Stay away from any teaching that makes you focus on your genetics or skin color for your salvation. Whether it's the white Israelite movement or the black Israelite movement. These groups have an agenda to begin with, and they then go to the Bible to cherry-pick what they want and what they can make sound like it goes in their favor. They've cherry-picked so much that there's nothing left on the tree folks. They've made it all about them, and left genuine faithfulness to Yahweh by the wayside. Their message is "look at me" instead of "look at Yahweh."

### **The Marks of Yeshua**

I have to finish this, look at Galatians 6:17.

From now on, let no one cause me trouble, because I carry the marks of Yeshua on my body.

The teachers of the false gospel were trying to call out Paul as false. We got people today trying to say Paul was a false apostle. Run away from these people brothers and sisters. They don't like Paul because they can't understand Paul. They can't understand Paul because they don't have the Spirit to do so. Yahweh hasn't given them a sound mind. If anyone rejects Paul as an Apostle of Yeshua I reject them as a brother or sister. If you reject Paul you reject Yeshua, because Yeshua is the one who appointed Paul and sent Paul out to do his work. If you reject the one who is sent, you reject the one who sent him.

Paul here says "Quit stirring up all this strife and contention against me. I've got proof that I follow the Master, because the same stripes on his back are on my back. The scars in his hands are on my hands."

Paul had been beaten and tortured for his belief in Yeshua. That's what he means by "the marks of Yeshua on my body." The word "marks" here is *stigmata* in the Greek text. It is used in Greek literature to refer to a mark pricked or branded on one's body. Slaves and soldiers in those days often bore the name or stamp of their master, branded or pricked on their body like a tattoo of sorts (similar to how people brand cattle). Some heathens would even stamp themselves like this with a depiction or name of a heathen god.

Paul is not saying he got the name Yeshua tattooed on his body. He is saying that the marks that Yeshua received before and during his crucifixion, were now upon his body because he believed in and followed Yeshua. He was beaten and flogged just like Yeshua. Paul was actually flogged five times with 39 lashes each time (195 total). And he was flogged by Jews who didn't believe in Yeshua. Those floggings left scars or brand marks on his body.

Paul's flogging, and being beaten with rods, and imprisonments, and fastings, and shipwreck, being cold, and lacking clothing were all sufferings for the Messiah that left marks and fatigue on his body.

"Where are your marks?" Paul is in essence saying. "Where's your proof you love the Master? Have you been beaten for him?"

The early disciples and apostles of Yeshua rejoiced in their sufferings for him. They considered it a prestigious thing to be beaten and dishonored for following the Messiah. And we get all bent out of shape if someone says bad things about us for what we believe.

Instead we should leap for joy. They call me a wolf? Leap for joy. They say I'm nuts for doing the things my Master did? Rejoice! I don't have any marks of Yeshua on my body, but reading and studying things like this prepares me in case it happens. Are you prepared for that? How serious are we for the Master?

This is Paul's final plea against the Judaizers. He's saying to the Galatians, "Where are their marks? Where have they been branded and pricked for Yeshua? Don't you think if they really followed him they would suffer for him?" Paul once wrote: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us." (2 Timothy 2:12)

### **Grace be with you**

6:18 Brothers, the grace of our Master Yeshua the Messiah be with your spirit. Amen.

I leave you today with that same ending. Grace. That's where it all begins. Grace. If grace is not show to you, you will not be saved. And that grace that Yahweh has on you,

through His only begotten Son Yeshua, will begin to manifest in the way you live. You will be different. You will be weird to the world. You will be weird to religious people, but it's only because of His grace on your life.

Never boast as though you have not received. As a child of Yahweh, what you have was given to you. You didn't earn it.

I love you all. I appreciate you for listening to Yahweh's word today. I say unto you, "the grace of Yeshua be with your spirit." I pray he is real in your life. So let it be.