

Reaping Everlasting Life
Galatians 6:6–18 (Galatians at a Gallup)

Grace Chapel
INTRODUCTION

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REVIEW (Galatians 1:1–6:5)

Amazingly, amateur legalists pulled Galatians from the grace gospel revealed to Paul (a former legalist). Thus, Paul did not learn the gospel from men, not even from the apostles (ch. 1). Instead, the great heroes to the legalists (Peter, James, & John) see Paul as an equal, with Peter even accepting Paul's rebuke for shunning Gentiles (ch. 2). The divine signs persuaded these believers about Christ & they received the Spirit [as a seal], legalists tricked them that the Law was also needed; but all law-keepers are under a death-curse, which death curse Christ removed from all believers & gave life (3:1–14). God unilaterally confirmed the Covenant to Abraham & his [linear] Seed, so it cannot be altered, but God temporarily added the Law to display sin as sin until Christ made believers alive, (specifically) faith in Christ rendered the Galatian believers God's children (blessed through the Abrahamic Covenant), rendering all racial, gender, or life-station distinctions secondary (3:15–29) Israel lacked authority as a minor heir under the Law as a babysitter (despite promises that it will be the world's key nation), until Christ redeemed both Jews & Gentiles, making all believers sons & heirs (4:1–7), but (unlike Israel) the Galatians were once pagan polytheists, but now as believers who have known God, enslavement to human rules risks loss of reward (4:8–11), so they should resume mutual fellowship with Paul, (4:12–15), who labors again for these whose wandering and animosity distresses him (4:16–20). Would-be legalists should observe that not all sons of Abraham are free, as two covenants; Law (pictured by Hagar) and the Abrahamic (pictured by Sarah) show that enslaved legalists will persecute those with liberty until the legalists are expelled (4:21–31). Gbels should live as ones Christ liberated, not as Law-slaves who submit to [religious] circumcision that have become alienated from Christ [because] they fell from grace [to legalism] because they no longer eagerly await righteousness [in Christ's presence], so circumcision has no relation to accomplishes [rewardable righteousness], but faith working through love [accomplishes it] (5:1–6) The Galatians ceased being truth-persuaded and leaven temporarily distorted their view of grace, but persecution by legalists proves that Paul no longer preaches circumcising [Gentiles], so the troublemakers should (figuratively speaking) have themselves neutered spiritually (impotent to produce converts); thus, Paul reminds them that God called them to liberty: not to indulge the sin nature, but liberty to serve (thru love) as slaves each other—loving neighbors to the degree as each loves himself fulfills what the Law required, but destroying neighbors leads to self-destruction (5:7–15). but walking by the Spirit nullifies both fleshly license & fleshly legalism, because the flesh & the Spirit fight each other, so that willpower fails to achieve the goal, but those led by the Spirit (who will inherit kingdom rulership) are not under Law; but the flesh produces sensual sin, religious deviation, inter-personal conflict, drunken excess, & similar ["Me first"] sins. (5:16–21) [In contrast with that produced by the flesh] the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith[fulness], gentleness, self-control (which no law prohibits); and a result of believing His promise of everlasting life is] that the flesh has been crucified [losing its absolute power]; Believers ought to walk by the Spirit, because the Spirit has given them life and ought to avoid conceit, which produces envious provocation (5:22–26). Spiritual believers should gently restore believers overtaken in a trespass, while guarding against falling into temptation; and ought to bear one another's (heavy) burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ (those who see themselves as above helping other with their burdens do not fulfill the law of Christ); each believer is to test the quality of his own work so that he does not try to take credit for another's work, because each one bears his own burden [before the Lord] (6:1–5).

EXPOSITION

6:6 Those who are taught should partner (financially) with those who teach

Koinoneō has a financial sense here, a *common* usage

An illustration of this common usage: Acts 4–5

6:7 Believers ought not be deceived into thinking that God will not settle accounts: Each will reap what he sows

6:8 Specifically, those who sow to the flesh will reap corruption, but those who sow to the Spirit reap everlasting life

What is *reaping everlasting life*?

What is *sowing to the Spirit*?

What is *sowing to the flesh*?

What is *reaping corruption*?

6:9 [In addition] believers should not lose heart in doing good, because, at the appropriate time, God will reward those who do not lose heart [in doing good]

6:10 [In light of God rewarding believers who do not lose heart in doing good] believers should seize the opportunity to do good to all, especially to fellow believers

6:11 Paul concluded his letter with large letters in his own hand

The letters of his handwriting were large. It is not that the letter (epistle) was long

Paul's trademark: cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:17 and 2 Thessalonians 2:2

Paul's first scriptural letter was Galatians; letters 2–3 were 1–2 Thessalonians

6:12 The Judaisers who want to be admired as being circumcised seek to compel the Galatian Gentile believers to also be circumcised in order that the Judaisers would avoid persecution concerning Christ's cross

Good showing in the flesh is defined by verse 13: *that they may boast in your flesh*

The problem is not circumcision per se. Rather, the desire to make a good showing in the flesh is the problem (cf. Galatians 5:6 and 6:15)

Although circumcision is not the big issue today, many today add the requirement of perseverance in an effort to avoid persecution

6:13 The motivation behind the inconsistent legalists trying to compel the Galatian Gentile believers to be circumcised is that they might boast in the Galatians being circumcised [without exposing their own failure to keep the Law]

6:14 Paul only boasts in what was accomplished through the cross, which has become the cross of distinction between Paul [+ believers] versus the world

6:15 [In explanation of the cross as the distinction between believers and the world] the issue for believers is not circumcision or uncircumcision, but being [part of the] new creation

Is the new creation here *individual* or *corporate*?

Illustration of the corporate new creation from Ephesians

A contextual argument from Galatians 6

6:16 Paul wishes peace and mercy upon [Gentiles] who walk according according to this rule of the (corporate) new creation and upon the Israel of God (which also walks according to the same rule)

6:17 No one should trouble Paul (about being a man-pleaser) because he bears scars for serving Christ

6:18 Paul wishes grace from the Lord Jesus Christ to them

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION