

Teaching Plan
EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Date: October 14, 2018

Lesson Title: "True Work"

Lesson Passage: Galatians 6:1-10,14-15

ABOUT THIS LESSON

Chapter 6 of Galatians tells how the Spirit-led Christian relates to others, especially to other members of the household of faith. In the Bible passage, Paul urges the Galatians to restore those who have fallen into sin, to bear one another's burdens, to support those engaged in Christian teaching, and to do good to all.

TEACHING/LEARNING GOALS

(1) Explain what Christians ought to do about brothers and sisters in Christ who fall into sin. (2) Explain the principle of spiritual sowing and reaping.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

Begin with this: A pastor came home from a late meeting at the church after a very demanding day, and said to his wife: "You know, this job wouldn't be half bad if I just didn't have to deal with people." *Observe that living the Christian life would be easier if we just didn't have to get along with people. Point out that relationships occupy a great deal of time and energy, at home, at work, and in the church.* These are the laboratories in which we practice Christian virtues like love, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness and humility.

TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Use this outline as you interpret the Lesson Passage:

- RESTORING THOSE WHO HAVE SINNED (6:1)
- BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS (6:2-5)
- SUPPORTING CHRISTIAN TEACHERS (6:6-8)
- DOING GOOD TO EVERYONE (6:10)
- * A FINAL REJECTION OF LEGALISM (6:14-15)

2. To set the stage for discussion of 6:1, share these thoughts:

Ideally, Christians should lead exemplary lives; but we know that Christians are not immune to sin. Unfortunately, church members sometimes get drunk, steal money, go to jail, use illegal drugs, and commit adultery. The question is, what should be done about it? The church should not simply ignore the problem (*recall 1 Cor. 5:1-2.*); but Paul's instructions in Gal. 6:1 emphasize restoration, rather than rejection. FOR DISCUSSION: Do you think it is possible for the church in our day to deal with open sin within its membership in a redemptive way?

3. Observe that Gal. 6:1 suggests some principles that might serve as guidelines in dealing with wayward church members: (1) In the Greek

text, "If a man be overtaken in a fault" can be understood in either of two different ways. Paul is either saying, "If a person is caught in the act of doing wrong" or "if a person suddenly slips off the path" ("fault" means literally "a falling beside," or "a false step"). The first meaning reminds us that we should act only on the basis of concrete evidence, never on rumor or hearsay. The second meaning suggests that any Christian is capable of unintentionally slipping out of step with the Spirit. (Peter's denial in Lk. 22:56-60 is an example.) There is a difference between [a] falling into occasional blunders and [b] making sin a way of life. (2) Our response to those who have fallen into sins should emphasize restoration, rather than punishment. (The Greek word for "restore" was used to describe the setting of bones and the mending of nets.) (3) We should deal with the fallen brother or sister in a "spirit of humility," in view of the possibility that we, too, could fall (6:1).

4. Refer to the second point in the outline, "BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS" (6:2-5). *Let individuals read verses 2 & 5. Then ask the class what they make of the apparent contradiction between these two verses.* EXPLANATION: The words translated "burden" by the KJV in the two verses are different. In verse 2 the Greek word denotes a crushing weight; the word in verse 5 is used of a soldier's pack. Paul is saying, "Carry your own suitcases, but help each other with the trunks." A further comment: (1) "Bear one another's burdens" might refer specifically to helping fallen believers (see v. 1). (It's much easier to stand apart and criticize than it is to get involved with a wayward Christian brother.) (2) Conceited persons (v. 3) will not bother themselves with the burdens of others. (3) Verse 4 means that one should test his own Christian performance by what he himself is capable of doing, not by what others fail to do.

6. Call attention to the third point: "SUPPORTING CHRISTIAN TEACHERS" (6:6-8). *Comment:* (1) "All good things" in v. 6 probably refers to material support. (2) Paul probaably had in mind those who gave full time to teaching. (3) This reminder was needed because, in the pagan Gentile world, priests were not paid for teaching; they received fees only for offering sacrifices.

7. Refer to "DOING GOOD TO EVERYONE" (6:10). Note the relationship between verses 9 and 8. ("Well-doing" is "sowing to the Spirit." "In due season," the Spirit will bring the harvest. FOR DISCUSSION: Does verse 10 really mean that Christians should do good to everyone, regardless of their relationship to Christ? What does "doing good" mean?"

8. Comment on "A FINAL REJECTION OF LEGALISM" (6:14-15): In contrast to the false teachers who bragged about circumcision, Paul declares that he boasts only in the cross of Christ. As far as the superficial values of the world are concerned, he is the same as dead (i.e., they have no influence on him).

CLOSING THE LESSON

Take a few minutes for individuals to comment on insights from this study that have particularly impressed them.

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