

Lesson #4 Serve

Background Passage: Galatians 5:1-6:10 Lesson Passages: Galatians 5:13-15; 6:1-5,10

THE QUESTION: WHAT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THOSE AROUND ME?
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THE POINT: SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE
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MEMORY VERSE: For you were called to be free brothers and sisters: only do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh but serve one another through love. Gal. 5:1

INTRODUCTION

Many may ask the question; why do we serve? Why is service so important? Paul in this lesson to the Galatians identifies and emphasizes the importance of service. Our reason for service is based on a gift given to us that we did not deserve. That gift provides freedom. But it is important that we are not confused by this word freedom.

This freedom is not permission to do whatever you want. This freedom is granted because someone else paid a price for it. For the wage of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. This freedom is not from the law. It only saves us from the ultimate punishment. But now the law is accomplished through relationships. We serve God by serving each other.

I. SHOW YOUR LOVE BY SERVING OTHERS GALATIANS 5:13-15

For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh but serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another.

- Christ has made us free. And we are made free by the Truth. **John 8:31** *Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
- Paul suggests that there is no question about the freedom. That is assured but use your privilege of freedom for others. He is reminding the Galatians and us that even though freedom is guaranteed (Whom the Son sets free is free indeed) do not use it as an opportunity to live life as if you are the only thing that matters.
- The law still applies. Jesus said he came not to destroy the law but that the law through him may be fulfilled (made whole). So, it is still important to abide by the law but not because it is a rule but because it is now a lifestyle. It should be a lifestyle reflective of a love for Christ. The only way to show your love for God is to love each other. And to love is to serve.

Matt. 20:25 *But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*

- Then he brings up the *whole* law which is fulfilled in one statement: **Love your neighbor as yourself**. How can that one statement fulfill the whole law? Because the Truth (Jesus) said it.

Mark 12:29 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.*

- Love God first then love each other. But you cannot do the first without the second. 1 John 4:20 tells us you cannot love God and hate your brother. We serve God by serving man.
- With the freedom we have we can still choose to be selfish. The opposite of loving another as you love yourself is by biting and devouring each other, looking out for number one. But there are consequences. Paul lets us know that if you choose biting and devouring each other you are imposing self-destruction.

Question: What if God's responses to us was a direct reflection of how we treat each other?

Truth: A requirement of service according to God's standard is that at a minimum you treat others as you want to be treated. That an easy measuring tool but maybe not easy to do.

II. SERVING OTHERS MEANS HELPING TO CARRY THEIR BURDENS

GALATIANS 6:1-5

Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you also will not be tempted. Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Let each person examine his own work, and then he can take pride in himself alone, and not compare himself with someone else. For each person will have to carry his own load.

- Living a life of service God's way requires standards, valuing relationships and character. Being spiritual should be a standard. When someone is wrong there is a responsibility to address the wrong with a desire for restoration.
- A sanctimonious judgmental approach is not the method you want to use if the desire is to restore. This is a service and it is necessary to maintain good relationships. Avoiding the issue is a disservice. That too can negatively impact the relationship.
- An approach with a spirit of meekness or a gentle spirit demonstrates loving someone else as you love yourself. It is important to follow these guidelines because you may need the same consideration at some point that you are giving.
- When everyone (brothers and sisters) is engaged in healthy relationships with each other and with God, His perfect plan works. Everyone is serving. Burdens are common. Paul says, "bear one another's burdens". This means as you are assisting with someone else's burden someone is assisting with yours. Likewise, we should not walk around as if we do not have burdens.
- You may be blessed and highly favored, but you have some issues too. Paul cautions not to consider yourself something when you are nothing (but by God's grace) you deceive yourself. Focusing on your own issues may make accepting and dealing with someone else's easier. Seeing someone else is much easier than seeing yourself. Look in the mirror first and do a thorough examination of self. That is what you will have to account for.

Question: Starting today what is it that you can do differently to demonstrate that someone else burdens are as important to you as your own?

Truth: We should be looking for opportunities to serve because with God's plan we should be confident that others are looking to assist in sharing our burdens. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. *Psalms 37:25*

III. SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE GALATIANS 6:6-10

Let the one who is taught the word share all his good things with the teacher. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap, because the one who sows to his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit. Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.

- One important truth to remember is that this is not all about you. It is about God. This is His plan and he is the monitor. Gal. 6:7 says do not be deceived: God is not mocked.
- We cannot pretend in this relationship. You cannot portray something and be something else. God knows. Whatsoever is sown will be reaped. What you reap will have a direct correlation to what you have sown.
- So we should not worry or be in despair or get weary in well doing. We will reap the benefits if we do not give up. And our faithfulness is to God for his Glory. And if I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me.

Question: What is more important to you, God and His perfect plan, or your own personal ambitions and desires? Do you want to do you?

Truth: Scripture tells us that we were create for God's Glory. He has provided everything we need. Living a life that glorifies him should be our priority. SERVE!

Isaiah 43:1-7 But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

Final Thought: Are you living your life to please and glorify God? Remember how you treat others is the proof.