

# PM Galatians 5:18-6:18 Judgement Day

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     5, reading from verse 16 to the end of chapter 6. Walk by the Spirit. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Nor the works of the flesh are evident. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. But if they live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

[ 1 : 2 3 ]     Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Brothers, if anyone is caught in a transgression, you are spiritual, should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.

Keep watching yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

But let each one test his own work. Then his reason to boast will be in himself alone, and not in his neighbour. For each will have to bear his own load.

One who is taught in the Word must share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived. God is not mocked.

For whatever one sows, that will also reap. The one who sows to his own flesh, will from the flesh reap corruption.

[ 2 : 2 5 ]     But the one who sows to the Spirit, will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not grow weary of doing good. In due season, we will reap if you do not give up.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, especially to those who are of the household of faith. See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh, who would force you to be circumcised. And only in order that you may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

For even those who are circumcised do not themselves get the law, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh. But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

For now the corruption counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

[ 3 : 40 ] From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers.

Amen. May God add you to the Galatians chapter 5 and 6 there. But mainly chapter 6. As some of you probably know, Galatians is probably one of the first letters that Paul wrote.

It's probably written even before the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, because there's no reference of it here. It's a very early letter that Paul wrote.

And the main theme from Galatians is similar to Romans. Salvation apart from submission to the ceremonial law is defended. I'd like to read verse 5, that would be our focus.

It says, for each will have to bear his own load. For each will have to bear his own load. There's two words here that were told in verse 2, bear one another's burdens.

[ 4 : 49 ] But here it's translated a different word from the original, for each will have to bear his own load. First, it might appear a contradiction, but let me explain about verse 5, first of all, before we go into some detail.

The load, as some have tried to translate it, is like a backpack that we carry ourselves. It's something that we carry alone. In other words, what it's teaching us is that we have certain responsibilities that God has given us, and these responsibilities can't just be transferred to other people.

God has given us these responsibilities. And so we'll have to bear this own load, the gifts that God has given to us.

In the dictionary, this word that's translated means, a burden which must be carried by the individual as something personal and hence not transferable.

It can't be shifted to someone. It's that the responsibilities that we have been given by God differs according to our own gifts and differ according to how God's providence have interceded in our lives.

[ 6 : 02 ] That's how God has given us our responsibilities. And we'll have to be answerable to them, to God. He's given us different sets of difficulties, opportunities, weaknesses.

And that's our load. That's our responsibility. So we're encouraged throughout this chapter not to compare ourselves with somebody else.

We're to assess our own gifts.

John Stott in his commentary says this, trying to explain this verse. There's one burden that we can't share, and that's our responsibility to God on the day of judgment.

On that day, you can't carry my pack, and I can't carry yours. That's how he puts it. In my daily readings recently, I've been going through an interesting book called Ecclesiastes.

[ 7 : 05 ] And the very last verse of that interesting book, in chapter 12, verse 14, says this, And I think that's what verse 5 is talking about here.

For each will have to carry, to bear, rather, his own load. As Ecclesiastes reminds us, that every deed will be brought into judgment, every secret thing, whether good or evil.

So it's reminding us, verse 5, that we're all going to stand before God as to how we've lived. We'll each have to bear our own load in that respect.

We'll have that challenge. We're personally responsible for God. Any reward we receive will be measured out in harmony with our works.

The Judaizers, to see where they stand, themselves, in view of the coming judgment. So, basically, verse 5, saying, Each man will be judged in according with his own deeds.

[ 8 : 18 ] I think I've got divided this into three. We come under our good preaching in Christchurch, and somehow the minister there always manages to find three points.

I don't have that gift. But tonight I've tried to have three different aspects to this within the chapter, and within the context of what we read in chapter 5 as well.

It's very much connected, as you know. Originally, this letter was without any chapters. It was read once, from beginning to end.

So there's always connections with what has gone before. So the first point I've got is we'll be judged to see if we have fallen into any sin.

This is highlighted for us in the verses we read from verse 19 to 21, which highlights all these sins. the works of the flesh are evident, it says, and it lists several of them in that long list of the works of the flesh.

[ 9 : 30 ] And I think that's what it's referring to in chapter 6 at the very beginning. If anyone is caught in any transgression, in any of these items listed, I know there's nine fruit of the Spirit, I can't remember how many are listed under.

I did count them, but I can't remember now. You can count them yourself afterwards. But there's a long list of things that are works of the flesh. And I think when Paul opens chapter 6 or continues his writing, that's what he's thinking about.

If anyone's caught in any of these particular transgressions that are listed, you who are spiritual should restore him. So there's a connection there with the previous chapter.

So I've just taken three of these things in the list, which seem to be evident in chapter 6. I think the first thing that's evident, that's highlighted, is the work of the flesh called rivalry.

Sorry, get my word around. Rivalry. I think there's definitely a rivalry between what's happening with the Gentiles being converted and with the Jews.

[ 10 : 44 ] What was happening was that there were certain groups of people who insisted, and as it goes on to explain, that these Gentiles weren't truly Christians until they were circumcised.

That must happen. They can't be accepted until a circumcision comes upon them. There was a group, and there was this rivalry between Gentiles who'd been outside the church, outsiders, as we were talking about earlier, who were converted, yet weren't circumcised.

And how were they going to be incorporated into this church, into this community, when we had these people emphasising that teaching, and to the others who were converted and who hadn't been circumcised.

So it's that kind of rivalry between these fractions of the people. That's things highlighted here in this chapter. And they're thinking too much of themselves.

Verse 3, for example, highlights some of that rivalry. For anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. And there's an example of Peter who thought a lot of himself.

[ 12 : 06 ] But remember how he said, even if everyone else falls away on account of you, I'll not ever fall away. And of course he did.

He denied Christ three times. An example of somebody called Thuidus in Acts 5, verse 36, and when they're comparing people in that chapter in Acts who rose up, somebody mentions this guy called Theodos, how he rose up claiming to be somebody that was killed and all his followers were dispersed and it all came to nothing.

So there's these people who thought there were something, but at the end of the day it was proved wrong. And this rivalry, I think, is highlighted here in boasting that these people were practicing as they were comparing themselves with each other.

And of course the Jews who had been circumcised thought they were better than the Gentiles. So they were boasting in that as verse 4 says, but let each one test his own work and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbour.

So it's something, sort of being proud in the inheritance and comparing it to someone else. I'm free church, but you're not free church, you're an incomer kind of thing.

[ 13 : 36 ] There was that rivalry where they were not really accepted into the community because they hadn't been brought up. Thankfully that note that our free church has changed now. I think there was a kind of comparison that there was a very close-knitted church at one time in the past and a few were brought into it.

Amusingly, I've been a member for over 50 years in Leith and I'm still considered an incomer because I wasn't originally free church by some, in jest I think it is, but you know there's that kind of rivalry of boasting.

You know, I've been free church all my life, my father was free church, my grandfather was free church. So we have to avoid that kind of rivalry, that kind of boasting about these opportunities, these blessings that God has given us.

And then in verse 13, again, it's highlighted here, this rivalry, this boasting. It says, for even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but the desire to have you circumcised so that you may boast in your flesh.

So that's, they were hypocrites not practicing what they were preaching and they thought themselves better and so they were boasting about their inheritance and about their rights.

[ 15 : 01 ] So I think this sin of rivalry was prominent throughout chapter 6 here and we must be careful in this particular sin not to be comparing ourselves with others and thinking that we are better because of our past or whatever that God has given us these gifts.

So that's the first thing I spotted as one of the sins listed there in verses 19 to 21 the sin of rivalry that's evident in chapter 6.

The second sin that's highlighted I think is the sin of impurity and we're told there in verse 8 for example it's the one who always sows to his own flesh well from his flesh reap corruption but the one who sows to the spirit well from the spirit reap eternal life.

So there's this sin of impurity one who's sowing according to his own flesh well from the flesh reap corruption so there's this impurity that is highlighted within that thought in these verses sowing to the flesh means allowing to have the old nature to have its way and again some of these things that are highlighted within that list one of them for example is sexual immorality which the original word as you might know is translated into English as porn and how easy it is nowadays to fall into that sin of porn isn't it through one click of the mouse and so impurity can be easily accessible and it's one of the three things in the council of Jerusalem which I think immediately followed after Galatians there were three things that the Galatians were warned about that they shouldn't participate in what was it food offered for idols the third one was sexual immorality that was the third one mentioned so it's interesting that Paul highlights that sin here the sin of impurity in Colossians we're told this put to death what is earthly in you sexual immorality and Matthew in his gospel says woe to you hypocrites for you are like white washed tombs which outwardly appear beautiful but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness in other words these people were trying to cover up their impurity outside but inside

God knew what they would really like and that's the impurity and that's very challenging because outward appearances with a shirt and tie and jumper or jacket look good but inside it's what counts and that's the things that we are trying to hide and cover up Romans put it like this for just for just as just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity it says that's how under before you were brought into the kingdom that's how you lived presented your members as slaves to impurity so now it says rather present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification and again in Thessalonians it says for God has not called us to impurity but to holiness so to focus on holiness in Greek there's a word for holiness and any time in Greek if you want to put that in the negative you add an e it's the same word but just an e makes it negative so it's completely opposite of holiness impurity completely contrast and there's definitely impurity and it warns that anyone who sows to his own flesh will reap corruption so there's this impurity that's running through

[ 19 : 33 ] I think chapter 6 and the call rather to focus on holiness and to avoid uncleanness the very opposite of holiness so there's this aspect of rivalry that if anyone is caught in a transgression if anyone is caught in this kind of I'm better than you kind of thing you shouldn't be here that kind of talk if anyone's talking like that we're told to gently speak to them if anyone falls into impurity again the spiritual are meant to take them aside and speak to them and the third thing I've highlighted as one of these several sins is enmity and earlier in Ephesians he puts this in well known chapter 2 when he's talking about the Jews and Gentiles he says together as one body

Christ reconciled Jews and Gentiles to God by means of his death and our hostility towards each other was put to death as I said here's a great enmity between those of the Judaizers and the converted Gentiles there was this enmity between them there was much enmity between those who were circumcised and those who weren't and that caused much strife between the two and again Ephesians were told get rid of all bitterness rage anger harsh words and slander rather than causing divisions and avoid disputes so there's these three things I think that highlighted when it says if anyone's caught in any transgression but that includes the whole list read it again and it's very challenging that list it covers quite a wide variety of activities but these are just three I've mentioned I note within chapter six that that were to avoid and counsel each other against these three things of rivalry impurity and enmity but in the second thing moving on from that we're judged to see if the fruit of the spirit is in our lives so as it goes on to say in that verse that we read about sowing in the flesh it says but those who sow to the spirit will from the spirit reap eternal life and that's going back to I think these verses these nine fruit of the spirit that are listed it's continuing this thought whoever sows according to the fruit that I've already spoken about these nine items will inherit eternal life so we're to sow according to the spirit and then there's three other things that I've noted that I spotted within this chapter about the fruit that's mentioned and the first one I've already kind of hinted at

I think it's the last one in the list isn't it it's self control that's one of the fruit of the spirit to have self control over these works of the flesh in fact in verse 14 we have here it says Paul says but far be it from me to boast except in the cross as the Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world so in Paul's case the earthly pleasures had lost their charm for Paul in that verse that he quotes there that he has written there rather so the pleasures of the these earthly pleasures had lost their charm for Paul there's no meaning for him now he was dead to the desires of the world he's saying and I to the world he was dead to these desires rather he was living towards the cross of

Christ the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ that was his boast and these things and so it was this aspect of the fruit of the spirit which we are called to exert nine of them but I'm just mentioning three of them tonight the self control over all these sins that are mentioned here we need the spirit the fruit of the spirit to help us overcome these aspects of jealousy and strife and anger and dissensions and envy and drunkenness and so on so in our own strength we might fail in doing these things but with the help of the fruit of the spirit of self control God has also we pray that he would make us aware that these earthly pleasures have lost their charm for us and that we no longer crave these things but rather we seek to have the fruit of the spirit in our life the self control over these tempting things that come into our way into our life it's difficult now even watching a nice program you think it's going to be nice a nice nature program or some other program you turn on and then out of the blue something happens out of context and you think why and it's difficult to exert self-control in these things you know we just keep watching but we take self-control and know when to press the button certain things

I like entertainment and last night there's no exception or whenever it was and certain things happened and I just switch back to well hope snooker's not too evil watch the snooker although need self-control there too but anyway these things need to be under the spirit of the fruit of the spirit to learn to self-control so we don't fall into these sins that are listed go through them yourself and it's a challenge how often do we become angry for example and so on so we need this fruit of the spirit self-control to help us as we were singing to follow Jesus and the second highlight of the fruit of the spirit is actually mentioned in chapter 6 and that's the fruit called gentleness if there is someone we know who is caught in a transgression or who is not living as they should we're told that he is spiritual in other words he is the fruit of the spirit in the life those who have matured in the

[ 26 : 46 ] Christian life those who have been following all you know suppose you've been told before a hundred times that fruit is in the singular you can't just say I'll go for self control and joy it's one the whole package and we have to have that fruit of the spirit in our lives and so this gentleness has to always be within our lives one to another the spirit of gentleness so if it says Matthew 18 doesn't it if your brother sins against you go and confront him privately if he listens to you you have won your brother over but it's in the spirit of gentleness we're told we're to treat ourselves it's so easy maybe to get jealous of somebody or get angry with somebody and so we're to exert this fruit of the spirit called gentleness and not be conceited it's finished the last verse of 26 it says let us not become conceited provoking one another envying one another so there's this rather having a spirit of gentleness in our lives that's the second fruit of the spirit that I spotted within this chapter here the spirit the fruit of gentleness and the third one it comes again from chapter 5 but it's brought into here quite clearly it's not a verse for red it's in verse 14 the whole law is fulfilled in one word you shall love your neighbour as yourself and I think this aspect of the fruit of the spirit is echoed right through chapter 6 the spirit of love towards one another and that is highlighted in the verse bear one another's burdens and so fulfilled the law of Christ that means getting to know each one another talking to one another what burdens have they got we can pray about sometimes by talking about your burden to someone else helps you share it you can't share a burden if you're carrying a burden last night last afternoon we were burdened by carrying a whole lot of stage props from one place to another and it took three of us to carry this burden down the road and you only can do that if you're close together and we did that and it's similar in the Christian life we really need to get close together to know what burdens they have that we can help with and it's important to have fellowship with one another so that we get to know each other and sometimes we keep things privately but that shouldn't be so there are some things

I've kept privately but it's been a burden to me some of these things I have to deal with at times are a burden but speaking to someone else about them sometimes helps and Jesus is an example of this because we're told to I can't spot the verse but it says called to fulfill the law of Christ he's the ultimate example of this kind of love he laid down his life for his friends this aspect of love is not only sharing burdens that we can share with another in verse 6 so the congregation who have been gifted by God with their resources make an effort to support those who are in the ministry or to pray for them and to remember them not only practically but spiritually and that's what we're told this love that the brethren have towards those who teach them is practical in that it says in Corinthians those who preach the gospel should receive their living from it and so the love aspect is highlighted there in verse 6 loving those who have committed their lives to serving the

Lord but I think also it's highlighted in verse 9 this love because it says in verse 9 and let us not grow weary in doing good so that love is you know doing good and you season will reap if we do not give up let us as we have opportunity let us good to everyone especially to those the household of faith so this love is a practical love it's doing good to those that we come across using opportunities God has given us to do good to our neighbours and to those who we come across and so doing good reminds us that we are actively to give those around us whatever love discerns is best for them whatever love discerns best for them you know sometimes it's difficult especially in

Edinburgh you pass all these beggars in the street and we've been told by Bethany never to give these people money because some might be legitimate but most unfortunately spend their money on things they shouldn't love and the love is to give to those around us whatever love discerns best for them so although you might see their need you see them putting a bowl out of two children away and whenever their notice reads it's not acting love sometimes by just giving them a five pound note because you don't know what they're going to do with that so this love remember when we act in love do it whatever discerns best for the person who's receiving that love so these are three aspects of the fruit of the spirit that's highlighted here the self control the gentleness this love that's emphasized in goodness and in sharing our resources

I think I said three fruits of the spirit fruit of the spirit but there's another one I should have said four because I highlighted faithfulness you see these people weren't faithful to God in their teaching they were teaching something that wasn't right they were teaching that the cross of Christ wasn't sufficient they needed something extra they needed to add in their case circumcision and there's a lot of that kind of teaching now that it's not sufficient you need to do something as well whatever that activity is they want to add to the gospel and we're to be faithful in our teaching of the gospel and these Judaizers certainly weren't being faithful to what is scriptural that all that needed to become a Christian is to accept Christ as your saviour and to repent of your sins and to commit your life to him and so it doesn't matter if it were circumcised or uncircumcised both would be come before

[ 34 : 31 ] God accepted by him there's plenty of false teaching going on in this epistle chapter 1 if I remember rightly oh foolish Galatians it talks about these people oh foolish Galatians why are you departing from the truth so quickly because people were coming in with these false teachings and confusing them and so we have to be faithful in God's word and what God's word is saying in this environment that we're living in it's tempted sometimes not to mention certain things now because it causes strife but we have to be faithful to what God's word is teaching about marriage about these different aspects that the secular society have taken undistorted we have to be faithful to God's teaching and as I said this morning that might bring persecution but we're never to divert ourselves from what

God is teaching in his word so this aspect of faithfulness is again an important aspect of the fruit of the spirit so there's these four aspects of the fruit of the spirit that I see here those who are spiritual it says should speak that's linking back to this fruit of the spirit which is self-control gentleness love and faithfulness and the third point I have briefly is we judged if we have been made into a new creation verse 15 in Galatians it says this for neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision but what counts is a new creation and that's what we judged upon in the last days we come before God's judgment in verse 5 for each will have to bear his own load and as we come before him in judgment the question is are you a new creature in Christ have you become a new creation and that's what matters not anything outward but that's the load that we have that judgment as we come before him

Corinthians puts it this way if anyone is in Christ he's a new creation the old has passed away behold the new has come this new creation that's spoken about here is something that already happens within our lives when we give our lives over to serve the Lord Jesus Christ as Jesus put it to Nicodemus we're born again it's a new creation that has happened and we are now part of that new creation that will come at the end of the day and that's what we judge upon if we are new creatures if this part of this new creation will belong to the new creation that will come as Jesus comes to judge the world at the end of the day so all that matters I think is that through Christ crucified we are made new creation that's what matters that we come to know him and know the fruit of the spirit in our lives which will help us to avoid these sins of the flesh and this new creation has different things in the last few verses there's a couple of things that are mentioned about new creation and the first of these is verse 16 a blessing for those who have a new creation who have come to know Christ and the blessing is this as for all who walk in this rule in the rule of new creation as for any who walk in this rule peace and mercy be upon them and upon

Israel of God one of the blessings of belonging to this new creation is the prayer for peace the blessing of peace that we have even that God gives us through difficult circumstances he blesses us it says through his mercy to have this peace those who have this new creation have this peace so it says nor uncircumcision but a new creation and as for all who walk in this rule peace and mercy be to you so the question is are you enjoying this peace as a new creature in Christ Christ the second thing is pointed out in verse 17 for now on let no one cause me to trouble for I bear my body the marks of Jesus the second thing about a new creation is it must be a witness well Paul's witness was actually marks physical marks but what is our witness what are our marks and in other words we mark ourselves out as belonging to Christ if we are new creatures a new creation will not allow us this blessing of peace but these opportunities to witness and the third thing I've noted about new creation is in verse 18 the grace of the Lord

Jesus Christ be with you spirit now sorry for the Greek again but interestingly you is in the plural and spirit is in the singular and what Paul's bringing out here he wants to think of this body of Christ as a single entity the one body of Christ so the new creation in us brings us peace the blessing of peace the opportunity to witness and a unitedness together in one spirit so verse 5 again for each will have to bear his own mode someday we'll stand before God and the realisation makes us different and changes our sorry I'll read that again someday we'll stand before God that realisation makes us different and changes our lives how it ought to may God bless these few thoughts to us this evening shall we conclude by singing to God's praise