

Gospel Living: God is not Mocked

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[0 : 00] Galatians chapter 6, verse 7 through 10. Hear the word of the Lord. Do not be deceived. God is not mocked.

For whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption. But the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good. For in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Let's pray together. Lord, thank you for your word. We pray that you would use your word by your Spirit to strengthen us, to encourage us, to help us to live the way you've called us to live. Lord, we pray that you would help us to see our own sin. Then you would help us to repent and turn from our sin. And that, Father, you would get all the glory and all the praise.

[1 : 03] And we pray this in Christ's name. And all God's people said. A few years ago, I had a guy who asked me to build him some cabinets. And it was a pretty big undertaking for me.

It's the first time I'd ever built cabinets for someone besides myself. And so I set to task to write out and draw out the plans. And I had used up some 3D modeling software and had it all laid out for him, showed him all the drawings, showed him everything about it.

We had agreed on everything. And as we get going into the project, one of the things that began to happen is that he began to want to have some changes here and there. So that was fine. We could handle most of the changes.

And it began to be a little discouraging as those changes kind of kept adding up. But what really hit the bottom for me with all of this is that I had to rebuild the island three times because I always get my numbers backwards.

I just sat there and I remember the last day that I had to tear apart the island for the third time, thinking to myself, why did I ever agree to this?

[2 : 17] I was just so discouraged. I just didn't even want to keep going. Well, we pressed on and we kept going. But sometimes I think in the Christian life, we get this way.

We have things that happen to us. We have suffering that takes place. We have situations that come about. And as we look at God and we think to ourselves, can I keep going down this path? Can I keep doing the task that God has set for me to do? Can I keep obeying God? Can I keep trying to do the good things? We get discouraged.

We lose heart. We want to give up. Can you imagine being one of these churches in Galatia? I mean, they've been taught the truth. They've been shown the truth.

And here come these Judaizers, these false teachers, who come in and tell them, listen, believing in Jesus, repenting and believing in Jesus is not enough for salvation.

[3 : 11] You've got to be circumcised as well. Can you imagine the discouragement that they would have felt in that moment, knowing that maybe we've missed it all along? Maybe we haven't even gotten there.

And what if we don't even do this right? Is there something more that's going to come down the pike later that we're going to have to do? Why are we even wasting our time doing this? So that's why Paul writes to them, because he doesn't want them to be fooled into thinking that there's more to salvation than just repentance and faith in terms of what we have to do.

It would be akin to someone today saying, well, you know, you can repent and believe in Jesus and all these things, but you've got to do more than that to be a real Christian, to be truly saved. Well, at what point is there enough to be truly saved?

You see, legalism is that we count something as essential that God did not count as essential. When we say, well, no, you've got to do this to be saved, you've got to do this to be holy, and God didn't say that, then we're living in legalism.

So Paul has been writing to this church saying, listen, you've got to stop following a false gospel, and you've got to avoid legalism, you've got to avoid living by the flesh, you need to be spirit-led people, and in this case, the two things today that he tells them that they need to do are going to help them not only live a spirit-led life, but it's going to help them to not be discouraged in living that life.

[4 : 45] Here are the two things. He tells them to believe truth and do good. Believe truth and do good. Let's take a look at these two things. First of all, believe truth, verse 7 and 8.

You'll notice that Paul says, do not be deceived. Paul's used this same exact phrase in a couple other places in the 1 Corinthians letter, and what he's meaning by this is, don't get deceived.

Don't be fooled. Watch out. Here's something big that you need to pay attention to. I want you to understand that there's someone trying to deceive you.

There's a truth you need to listen to, so don't be deceived. Now, I'm going to skip over the God is not mocked to the second part of verse 7 as well as verse 8 and talk about this sowing and reaping because this is where this all begins to come together.

He's talking about sowing and reaping, and that's a concept I think most of us can grasp, right? You sow seeds of a particular type of plant, that's the plant that you get.

[5 : 48] You don't, you know, plant potatoes and get corn unless something weird's happened, right? That's just not what happens. You don't plant tomatoes and get, you know, orchids.

That's just not what happens. What you plant is what you reap. So he's telling them, I don't want you to be fooled. God is not mocked for.

Now, that's what my text has, right? That's what the New American Standard says. It's got this word, F-O-R. God is not mocked for. That little word is extremely important because this is the question that that word is answering.

God is not mocked. How do you know? How do you know that, Paul? How do you know, Paul? How do you know that God is not mocked?

How do you know that God is not fooled? How do you know that's not going to happen? Because what a man sows, this he shall reap. Paul is stating here a universal truth, a universal principle.

[6 : 58] It works in agriculture. It works in relationships, both a little imperfectly, but in primary relationship with God, it works absolutely. What you sow, you will reap.

And I want you to notice that Paul is accentuating the future. Verse 7, you will reap this. Verse 8, twice, you will reap.

You will reap. Verse 9, you will reap. If you sow to the flesh, you will, in the future, at the end of all things, reap corruption.

That's what verse 8 is saying. It's also saying, if you sow to the Spirit, you will, in the future, at the end of all things, reap eternal life. So with that in mind, don't be deceived.

When a man sows, he will reap. What does Paul mean right here in the middle? God is not mocked. The word mocked means to sneer at or to show contempt for.

[8 : 01] It's this idea that you think that someone can be fooled. You think that they're beneath you in such a way that you can get by with something. Paul wants the Galatians to not be fooled by the way that people live.

Don't be fooled by what you see with your eyes. Someone before you lives like corrupted, sinful flesh, and it seems like they're prospering.

Don't be fooled. God is not mocked. There are so many people who believe they can do whatever they want to do.

They can act however they want to act, and there's zero accountability from God. And the truth is, God is never mocked.

God is not mocked. For whatever reason, people believe they can live how they want to live, and they believe that judgment day is not coming.

[9 : 10] But their life is going to be one of no consequences and no guilt and no judgment. But the scriptures teach us that God is not mocked. God is not fooled by our actions.

Your sin will find you out. That's what he's saying. And we as Christians, if we're spirit-led, will believe this truth.

And as you apply this truth to those who are not Christians, and you think about the world, the world around us wants to say things like that love is love, or that men are women, or men are women are men.

The world believes that all roads lead to the same place. They believe that every truth is just as valid as any other truth, that you have your truth, and I have my truth, and don't let your truth invade upon my truth.

And just because they have a British accent, or they speak with bravado and confidence, does not make them correct. Because there is coming a day, there's a day, a payday, some day, when every person will reap exactly what they sow.

[10 : 14] And God will give to people exactly what they have been wanting, and what they have earned all of their life. He will not wink at one single solitary moment of sin.

If you sow to the flesh, immorality, idolatry, sorcery, strife, jealousy, outburst of anger, disputes, factions, envying, drunkenness, so on and on and on we could go.

If you sow to the flesh, you will from the flesh reap corruption. He knows every secret sin, every secret thought. He understands and knows even before the word is upon your own lips what you're going to say.

God is not fooled. He knows, he knew, and it is a cosmic universal truth that you will reap what you sow.

But the good news is that you can repent of your sin. You can turn from being the boss of your own life.

[11 : 20] What you've sown previously in your life can be forgiven because you have come to the Lord Jesus Christ. You don't need just simple forgiveness though.

You need the forgiveness, but you need more than forgiveness. You need his righteousness. His righteousness comes by faith and faith alone. I just want you to think to yourself that one day this judgment of God is coming.

One day God's wrath, like a massive guillotine, is going to slam shut upon your life. What will protect you in that moment? What will you look at that you'll say, I hope that protects me?

Is it your kindness? Is it your generosity? Is it your own obedience? Is it your own trying to be kind and nice to people?

Is it some sort of obedience to baptism or church membership or reading your Bible daily or some other thing that you feel like you've got to do to really get this?

[12 : 25] Because here's the good news. The good news is that God has already paid the price for that wrath. God has already dealt with that wrath because in his great love, he sent his one and only begotten son to take that punishment for us.

And today, if you would take Christ as payment for your sin, take him as your boss, take him as your king, as your master, then you will be set free from that.

The Christians, it's not just non-Christians who will face the judgment day. You and I will face judgment day as well, but for us, it won't be a fearful thing.

But let me, let me just back up for a second because as we talk about Christians, you're going to hear the phrase right there in verse eight that says that if you sow to the spirit, you'll reap eternal life.

And we've been talking for weeks now that salvation is not something you can earn. And so maybe sowing and reaping eternal life sounds like it's, we're saying that you can earn your salvation.

[13 : 30] And the answer is no, you cannot. Let me give you a clue as to what is going on here. If I had come in here this morning and I said, Hey, guess what?

Just a while ago, I was out there on highway 16 and this big old diesel come barreling through town. They slammed on their brakes, but they didn't get stopped in time and they ran me over. Now, first of all, if I said that to you in the condition that I'm currently in, you might question me.

You're looking for bruises and cuts and torn clothes, broken bones. Perhaps maybe I might even be unconscious, headed to the hospital, perhaps on my way to death's door.

So for me to stand here and make the claim, I was hit by a truck. You need to prove that claim. You need to look for the evidence that supports that claim, right?

Because we can't just claim things and they're just true. As a Christian, then, if you say, I am saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, and I cannot earn my salvation, but I've been credited the righteousness of Christ by faith, then on judgment day, as he marshals out all of our

actions, he does not do so to embarrass us, but he does to prove that the justification we have is true justification.

[14 : 59] On the judgment day for Christians, he is going to show how we have persevered in the faith, not by our power, but by his power. The judgment day for the Christian is a proving day that your faith was real, and your salvation was true.

So, we sow to the spirit, and we reap this eternal life. So, Christians, let me just give you two ways that you can be sowing to the spirit in your life.

Positively, you can sow seeds to the spirit by the means of grace. Everybody say, means of grace. Means of grace. It's an old theological term. It's a beautiful term.

I love it. Means of grace. It's the way grace comes to us. Not salvation grace, but just the grace of God as he gives to us. Right now, you're experiencing a means of grace.

I'm taking the word of God. I'm explaining the word of God. You're hearing the word of God, and as the spirit gives you conviction, illumination, that is grace upon you, and this is a means of grace.

[16 : 05] When you read the Bible on your own, in a Bible study with others, that's a means of grace. When you go pray to the Lord by yourself or with others, that's a means of grace.

When you fellowship with Christians, that is a means of grace. And if you do not take advantage of the means of grace, then how are you sowing to the spirit? Negatively, then, you sow to the spirit by avoiding certain things of the flesh.

You can go to Galatians 5, 19 through 21 to see those things. That's that listing of the deeds of the flesh. But Christians, we are called to believe the truth.

As spirit-led people, we need to believe the truth. We reap what we sow, and God is not fooled. The second thing, then, we need to do is we need to do good.

We need to do good. This is verse 9 and 10. And I want to start kind of in verse 10 and work our way backwards a little bit. But Paul, the first thing I would say is that Paul wants us to do good to believers.

[17 : 12] And one of the things that he's got here is he's talking about that there's this opportunity, that while we have an opportunity, while we have the time, it's similar to Jesus' statement in the Gospels that says, we need to work so long as we have light.

In other words, we don't need to waste opportunity. We don't need to waste our time. There's coming a day when none of this can be done. This is all going to be over. This is a temporary assignment that we have to do good because the end is coming.

And what he says, he says, do good to all people. Now let's just stop on that statement. We'll look at the rest of it in just a second. Do good to all people.

To do good, this word good, is a moral good. It is a sense of generosity. And in the context of Galatians, it has to do with living out by the Spirit versus living out by the flesh.

To do good is to do those things that the Spirit of God empowers us to do. So think about the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5, 22 through 23.

[18 : 19] The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

And look at this last phrase. Against such things, there is no law. Not only are these things that the Holy Spirit produces in us by His power, but these are ways that we can live out in relationship to one another.

Can you just imagine what it would be like to live in self-control with other people? When you have a moment that maybe something frustrates you, that living out by the control of the Spirit and having self-control and maybe not venting that frustration is actually a good thing for the person that just did something to you?

In other words, what you're doing is you're overlooking an offense and you're letting love cover a multitude of sins. Or perhaps, it's the idea of patience. that living in patience with another person is a good towards them.

Loving them, bringing joy and peace. All of these things, you can take these, you can look at the commandments of the Lord and we're to do good to all people. And Paul is saying that he would have us do good to all, all, all people.

[19 : 42] People who are lost. Gay people, trans people, different people of different ideologies, hateful people, mean people, nice people, comforting people, people of all kinds.

We are to do good to them because they are made in the image of God. It does not mean that we approve of their ideology. It does not mean that we approve of their lifestyle.

It does not mean we have to approve of their sin in order for us to love and do good to them because God did good to us.

when we were still in our sins. We're to do good to all people. But Paul goes further than that and he says, especially to the household of faith.

In other words, there is to be a priority order of my good actions towards others. My brothers and sisters in Christ first, the rest of the world second.

[20 : 51] I have five kids total and I have five kids because we didn't want six. It is considered by some that if we do good in a priority order for the church, instead of just blanket doing good to everyone, some would say that that's unloving, but hear me out.

My five kids, my responsibility to care for my five kids. if I were to take my paycheck and do good for your kids without doing good for my kids first, that would be bad.

I have to start at home before I branch out. And what I'm saying to you is that when Paul says we're to do good to all, he has in view all, but he then says priority order, you're to take care of the household of faith first.

Now this kind of demands two things. Number one, it demands that you ought to be a member of a local congregation because to do good to those who are the household of faith means you ought to belong to a household of faith.

If you're not a part of a household of faith, how can you do good to those who are a part of a household of faith? Not joining a local congregation yet seeking to do all the things that Christians are commanded to do and have all the blessings that Christians are given is a little bit like having the benefits of marriage without making the vows.

[22 : 43] If you are not committed to a local church, then who is part of your household of faith? Secondly, You should love one another.

love another. We cannot do good to people that we've decided not to love or that we don't practice loving them.

Our love for one another is something we are commanded to do. And I want you to think about that. Love is commanded by God for us to do. Matter of fact, Jesus said in John chapter 13, verse 34 through 35, a new commandment I give to you that you love one another.

It's a new commandment love one another even as I have loved you that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you're my disciples if you have love for one another.

Beloved, what we are called to do is we're called to do good to those who are the household of faith which means we need to be a part of that household of faith and good to them.

[23 : 54] As a matter of fact I would say it this way that you need to understand that faith is thicker than blood and that our priority order of doing good is to be to our spiritual family of God even before sometimes our physical family.

There's nuance in there and I'm not going to nuance it here but there's nuance there. But here's what Jesus is saying that all men will know that you're my disciples if you have one another there is no greater witness there's no greater evangelistic witness of the church than for you to come together weekly and show love for one another.

We are to do good to all especially those who are the household of faith. But the second thing and now we're going go back up to verse 9 Paul started this whole thing here in verse 9 and 10 with don't lose heart.

Paul wants you to maintain a positive attitude. He says let's not lose heart. To lose heart means to become discouraged. It means to come to a place of wanting to give up.

God and it is interesting to me that Paul says this here at the very end with the Galatians because they've had all this turmoil in these churches and Paul is saying listen don't get discouraged.

[25 : 20] Why is that? Because it's easy to get discouraged. It's so easy as we look at the world around us and we see people living in just absolute rebellion against God and it seems as though their life is untouched by trouble.

It seems that they have prosperity. It seems that they have good things. It seems that they walk around without a lot of guilt or shame and we think to ourselves well I mean if they're having such prosperity then why in the world am I trying so hard to do good?

The number of times that I've heard Christians say to me that I've thought even to myself this Christian life is so hard why do I keep trying? Because it seems like nothing good ever happens to me.

You ever notice that it seems like the people who say they're following Christ and the people who are really following Christ seem to have some of the most difficult struggles and things.

The psalmist understood the discouragement and temptation to give up on following God. In Psalm 73 the psalmist writes about how he just almost gave up.

[26 : 58] I want to read Psalm 73 to you. It's a little bit lengthy but this is right here at the very end of the sermon so we'll read this I'll make a couple comments and we'll be done.

I just want to encourage you. I want the Lord to encourage you. So as I read this I want you to listen for how much he wants to give up because of what!

he sees in the prosperity of the wicked I want you to listen for the point at which his thoughts begin to change and then I want you to listen for the end of it where his final place of courage rests he's going to keep doing good but why what is it about God that helps him to keep doing good Psalm 73 surely God is good to Israel to those who are pure in heart but as for me my feet came close to stumbling my steps had almost slipped for I was envious of the arrogant as I saw the prosperity of the wicked for there are no pains in their death and their body is fat they are not in trouble as other men nor are they plagued like!

therefore pride is their necklace the garment of violence covers them their eye bulges from fatness in other words that's a sign of prosperity that sounds like a problem but it's a sign of prosperity right the imaginations of their heart run riot they mock and wickedly speak of oppression they speak from on high they have set their mouth against the heavens and their tongue parades through the earth therefore his people return to this place and waters of abundance are drunk by them they say how does God know and is there knowledge with the most high behold these are the wicked and always at ease they have increased in wealth surely in vain I've kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence for I've been stricken all day long and chastened every morning if

I had said I will speak thus behold I would have betrayed the generation of your children when I pondered to understand this it was troublesome in my sight until I came into the sanctuary of God then I perceived their end surely you set them in slippery places you cast them down to destruction how they are destroyed in a moment they are utterly swept away by sudden terrors like a dream when one awakens oh Lord when aroused you will despise their form when my heart was embittered and I was pierced within then I was senseless and ignorant I was like a beast before you nevertheless I'm continually with you you have taken hold of my right hand and with your counsel you will guide me and afterward receive me to glory whom have

[30 : 28] I in heaven but you and besides you I desire nothing on earth my flesh and my heart may fail but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever for behold those who are far from you will perish you have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to you but as for me the nearness of God is my good I have made the Lord God my refuge that I may tell of all your works beloved do not lose heart in following after Jesus do not lose heart in walking by the spirit do not let yourself become discouraged as though what people do in this life doesn't matter and they're going to get away scot free because

God isn't fooled by it do not be discouraged that it seems as though all the good that you do over and over seems to accomplish nothing in this life you have no idea what God is using your good for there are some of the good that he is using that you may never see so let your thoughts take you to the Lord Jesus Christ that he is the one who in heaven is your strength God promises a reaping for sowing to the spirit and that reaping is a harvest of eternal life let's pray for to to to to aspire to aspire to aspire to aspire! aspire! aspire!