

# Galatians 6

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## Synopsis

Paul went to great lengths in Galatians 5 to show the freedom we have in Christ. But, as we looked at in Galatians 5, that freedom is not just *freedom from sin*, it's also *freedom to obey*. And that's the heart of Galatians 6. Since Christ now fully lives in us (remember, "the life I live in the body I live by faith," Gal 2:20) we have a supernatural power to obey God. For the first time we can freely love the people around us, freely serve others without feeling like it's an obligation. In short, the freedom of Christ in us is a freedom that has freed our hearts to love.

That's why Paul begins talking about the "Law of Christ." We've been set free to live not under the Old Law—all the rules and ceremonial commands given in Leviticus—but freed to live under a New Law, the Law of Christ. If you try and follow the law in order to get the gospel, you'll always fail. But if you receive the gospel and let it change your deepest identity and motivations, then you'll bear the fruit of a life of obedience to the law.

**The win this week** is showing how the Spirit of Christ in us gives us the ability to obey the Law of Christ.

The **recommended Scripture** is Galatians 6:1-10. But if you want to look at something else, here's an **alternate section** you can teach on: Galatians 6:11-18 wraps up the letter & recounts all the major themes of Galatians.

## The Law and the Gospel

### Read Galatians 6:1-10

### Commentary

The hallmark of fulfilling the law of Christ is bearing each others' burdens. Why? Because that's exactly what Christ did for us. He carried our burdens even "nailing them to the cross" (Col 2:14). He did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves. Therefore, to carry the burdens of the people around us—whether emotional burdens, physical burdens, or financial burdens—is to become like Christ. That's fulfilling the Law of Christ.

It's interesting to note in Gal 6:10 that Paul commands us to do good to all people, but especially to those that are part of our new family in Christ, believers. The implication is that our first responsibility is to healing and caring for other Christians. Elsewhere, Paul will use the analogy that Christians are part of one body with Christ as the head. The body metaphor is helpful here because it reminds us that part of the organic unity of a body is that it works to heal itself. When we catch a cold, multiple systems in the body unite to fight the infection. Similarly, as one Christian struggles, the community of believers rushes to his or her aid.

Finally, it's a challenging point to college students that Paul says a mark of love is to lovingly confront a believer caught in sin. Our culture in general and college students in particular often feel a pressure to shy away from confronting someone because, after all, it is their own life. But Paul calls this type of behavior cowardly indifference. The truly loving believer, one filled with the Spirit and living in the freedom Galatians 5 describes, will adhere to the law of Christ by lovingly confronting their brother/sister in Christ.

## ② Questions

Paul mentions in verse 5 that each person is called to bear their own load? What does he mean by this? How is this a response to the gospel?

Paul says there can be a temptation in restoring a person from sin. How would it be that the person confronting someone in sin might end up falling into sin themselves?

What is the "something when they are not" that Paul says that people deceptively think of themselves as?

What is verse 7 in reference to? How does it follow from the verses before?

Why should we do good especially to believers rather than non-believers?

## ② Application Questions

When are the appropriate times to confront someone about a sin? When should you not confront someone? (It might be helpful to reference Jesus' own recommendation in Matthew 18:15-17).

What are the different types of burdens you see in peoples' lives in college? Now, very particularly, what are the burdens of the people you've noticed in your life? The gospel demands creativity on your part here—how can you help shoulder these burdens?

The tendency in our lives is to very subtly shift back to a works-first mentality. In this mentality, we begin serving those around us in order to justify our salvation to God. This often creeps into the lives of professional ministers and Christians who serve the most. So how do you constantly realign yourself with the gospel of grace? The gospel that says we serve *only* because we've already been totally served by Christ.

Following up on the previous question, Paul also says that we're called to help one another (6:9-10). So which is it? Should we help each other or shoulder our own burdens personally? How does Christianity resolve this paradox?

What does it mean to truly love another person? What kind of actions does this require?

What are some practical ways to especially love believers on UK's campus?

### Accountability

In light of this teaching, that obedience to the law of God must follow receiving the grace of God, think about your own life for a moment. There are two questions that must be wrestled with here:

- First, are there Christians in your life that you're willing and able now to help. We often think, "one day, when I have time or money, then I'll sacrifice and help people." But Paul (and ultimately Jesus) demand that we sacrificially carry the burdens of others around us. Try to specifically identify a practice you can implement—whether it's helping to pay for the textbooks of a financially struggling brother or sister in Christ or making it a practice to take an emotionally draining Christian out to coffee each week just so somebody will listen to them—what practice can begin to affect your living? (As a bonus: talk about how to keep boundaries while also sacrificing time)
- Second, what are your motivations when you're carrying the burdens of others? Do you feel guilty or obliged to help? That's not gospel-living. Do you think you have to keep up appearances of "the good Christian." That indicates the truth of what Jesus has done for you still needs to go deeper. Do you not feel compelled to carry the burdens of others? Perhaps you've never tasted the true goodness of the God who's died for you. All of us have mixed motivations and must **constantly wrestle** with the reasons for why we serve. So what are some of the areas in life where you've experienced this mixed motivation?

### Resource Toolbox



[Tim Keller, "Justified by Faith"](#)



[John Piper, "The Law of Christ"](#)



[Kevin Deyoung, "Theological Primer: Law and Gospel"](#)



[C. S. Lewis, \*The Screwtape Letters\*, chapter 8](#)