

THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

"The Crucified Life"

Gal. 5:24 - 6:5

Introduction

1. The only life which really counts is the life of Christ. Hence, anything short of a crucified life is worthless, at least somewhat impotent.

2. What then is a crucified life? How does it show itself? Is it possible for us to see it in a definitive manner? Yes! Listen to these explanations from the Word.

1. The BASIS of the crucified life. v. 24.

a. An action. True believers alone are in view here. "They that are Christ's." Let us not confuse the phrase with just any one who makes a claim, but only with those who are by divine purchase His peculiar property!

These peculiar people "have crucified" some delights of their souls. The verb is aorist active. Rom. 6:6 expresses a similar idea, but it points to the work of Christ whilst here there is the emphasis upon the actual participation of the believer. One is position and the other is practice!

b. A reaction. Two areas are affected by the crucifixion involved here: affections or passive side of things; lusts or active side of things. Both are sinful and vices!

NOTE: The very genius of the Christian life is the basis for the crucified life. It is not some special arrangement for a few peculiarly "holy" people!

2. The ISSUE of the crucified life. v. 25.

There is a simple but direct statement made here in the Word: If one is animated and actuated by

the Spirit, let him behave like it! One who is spiritually alive will show the same by being spiritually active! This is an incontrovertible principle of the Word of God! Let's not justify certain situations by diluting the Word of God. May we not conclude that: whatever a man's profession be - - if in his temper and conduct, he does not exhibit the native results of the Spirit's activity in his breast, he makes it evident that he is not a Christian!

From this strong vantage point, Paul announces certain critical areas of Christian conduct which show whether one actually "walks in the Spirit." Here they are:

a. Caution against vain-glorying. v. 26.

The hortatory character of the verb suggests: "let us not become vainglorious." It is an appeal to cease a practice! To be vainglorious is to boast of what one does not possess or of what, tho' one does possess it, is of far less value than one has placed upon it.

The reasons for this strong appeal are: 1) mutual quarrelling (provoking one another i.e. calling one another into the field of controversy.) and 2) mutual hatred (envying one another i.e. controversy ending in hatred of Christians.) How needful is this exhortation to-day!

b. Restoration against default. 6:1.

The "any man" of this text is a believer (cf. I Cor. 5:11). He is not a person who is a consistent doer of evil, but an occasional one! For the former, God instructs excommunication (I Cor. 5:13).

To "restore" is really to put a dislocated member of the body into its proper place. A dislocated member is incapable of performing its own

function and occasions pain and inconvenience to the other members. Hence, to restore is to use appropriate means of showing error and bringing back to righteousness. Amputation is not the immediate answer, but neither is it allowed to let the member remain in a state of luxation!

The manner in which the restoration is to be effected is "meekness." This means: no wish to give unnecessary pain, ultimate honor of the Lord, propseity of His church, and best interests of individual.

NOTE: This whole verse is addressed to the "spiritual" or strong brethren (Rom. 15:1). To overlook faults is NOT the procedure assigned to the believers. Why: I Cor. 5:6; 15:33.

c. Occupation against neglect. 6:3.

What a high and exalted view of walking in the Spirit is this verse! Whatever burden - - external or internal, bodily or mental - - these are to be borne by one another! How much could be done if each were to "work to one another's hands." This is not to condone sin, but to help those who find a peculiar affliction more than they can bear!

Conclusion

The practical section of the Word is what really puts the pinch on the believer. So often one glories in doctrine and the work of the Lord for him. This is needful. Let all, however, realize that belief gives birth to action. Conduct is based upon what we believe. Whatever correction is needed in your life, ask God to perform it for you.

- Amen.