

OPENING ILLUSTRATION

- › When a key player gets injured, you often see the team rally around him or her. Everyone knows that they have a bigger role to play if the team is going to win. It works the same way in families. If someone in your family is sick, they're not able to do what they normally could. That means everyone else has to pick up the slack. The church, especially, should be a place where members help each other out. We're called to bear one another's burdens. These burdens could be emotional or physical. It could mean providing a listening ear and words of encouragement, or it could mean providing a ride, a meal, or whatever else is needed. Of course, this isn't always easy. Loving others can be inconvenient and difficult. It takes humility, perseverance, and faith.

CONTEXT

- › In Galatians 6, Paul talks about how the church is meant to be a place of self-sacrificing love. We're called to help one another, spiritually and materially. We correct and encourage those who have fallen into sin, being careful to not become prideful or complacent about our own walk with God. We support the ministry of those who teach us, knowing that we reap the benefits of their teaching as we sow into their ministry prayerfully and financially. Simply put, by the power of the Spirit, we're called to do good to others and to not give up.

EXPOSITORY OUTLINE

The following are suggested sermon points for each verse or section of verses for a large group setting.

- › Galatians 6:1-5. *Share the burdens of others, but don't let it go to your head.* We must help other Christians however we can, but we need to guard against self-righteous pride or taking on a martyr complex where we feel like an unappreciated hero for helping others. We love because God loved us, not so others will think better of us.
- › Galatians 6:6-8. *You reap what you sow. Generous people are blessed either spiritually, materially, or both.* Kind people usually receive kindness back. If we seek first the kingdom, God will take care of us and we'll be a blessing to others.
- › Galatians 6:9-10. *Keep doing good for others and don't give up.* Serving others can get tiring, so we need the encouragement to not give up. If we stay at it, our efforts will pay off in the long run. Christians are "little Christs," set free in the world to do good unto others.

GROUP DISCUSSION

The following are suggested discussion questions on each verse or section of verses for leading a small group session, and are also useful in sermon deliveries that include discussion.

ASK A STUDENT TO READ GALATIANS 6:1-5.

- › **What is an example of a "wrongdoing" God might want you to point out to others? Why is it important to do this with gentleness? What is the danger in correcting others?**
- › **Are there any burdens God is calling you to carry? What is the "law of Christ" that Paul refers to?**
- › **How is pride deceptive? Why is Paul against boasting? How is boasting essentially competitive rather than cooperative? What is the "load" you are called to carry?**

ASK A STUDENT TO READ GALATIANS 6:6-8.

- › **What does it mean to "share all good things" with the teacher? Why do you think Paul mentioned this? What if you don't have much money to share? Are there others ways you can be generous?**



- › Paul says that “God is not mocked.” What does he mean by that?
- › Why does Paul talk about sowing and reaping? What are the two possible things we can sow from?

ASK A STUDENT TO READ GALATIANS 6:9-10.

- › Do you ever get tired of serving in the church? Serving your family? Patiently listening to a friend who’s struggling? What do you do during those times?
- › Is there anything God might be prompting you to do as a way to serve others? What perspective is needed to serve over the long haul?
- › Paul says we’re to do good to all people, both inside and outside the church, but especially to other Christians. Why does he make that distinction?

SESSION CONNECTION

- › In Session 12, students read the story of Naomi and Ruth (Ruth 1:8-18) in which Ruth shows great loyalty and kindness to Naomi at great personal cost to herself. Ruth’s loyalty and kindness are a microcosm of God’s great loyalty and kindness toward us. He reached out to us when we didn’t deserve it and at great personal cost to Himself. True kindness is sacrificial and goes against our natural selfishness. In that sense, it is supernatural—it comes from God’s Spirit working in us and through us. The fact that there is kindness in the world is evidence of the goodness of God. Galatians 6:1-10 is a call to kindness, a call to help carry the burdens of others. The point of our Christianity, we’re reminded once again, is love. And kindness is a most beautiful expression of love.

OBJECT LESSON/APPLICATION

- › Guide students to make a list of five ways their parents sacrifice for them and show them kindness. It’s so easy to expect that from our parents as just being part of their job. When people show us kindness, we ought to show them appreciation. Next, ask your students to think of five ways they can be kind to others. It doesn’t have to be something big. Small kindnesses repeated over time add up to being a kind person and doing great good for others. It’s the whole “reaping and sowing” principle Paul talked about in Galatians 6. We can’t give up. Sometimes we can pray for years for someone to become a Christian and it seems like nothing is happening, and then suddenly God’s truth breaks through. All those prayers were heard and answered in God’s time.

God is committed to showing kindness to His people and calls them to commit to showing kindness to others.

- › <http://www.fbc.org/ky/category/sermons/topics/perseverance-in-doing-good/> – Paul Reynolds challenges us to never tire in doing good.
- › <http://www.relevantmagazine.com/reject-apathy/poverty/columns/26246-carrying-each-others-burden>– Cathy Herholdt shares a powerful example of bearing others’ burdens.

* These websites are not affiliated with LifeWay. Consult with your church’s leadership before including these in your session to be sure that your church’s values allow their materials to be referenced in your session time.