

Life Application Notes

Galatians 5:26-6:6 - 9th May 2021

In the last passage we looked at the fruit of the Spirit and how leading a spirit led life transforms us. This passage continues on this theme but shifts to consider how the spirit can transform our relationships with others. This touches on how to deal with issues of sin, both in ourselves and in others and provides both a warning and an instruction for holy and spirit led living.

The main question to focus on today is:

How can we embody Christ-like behaviour in our relationships and our attitudes towards ourselves and each other?

Verse 26:

Here the term 'conceited' can be translated as 'empty of honour'.

- **What is your understanding of what behaviours/attitudes this may relate to?**

Becoming conceited can lead to a need to prove our worth and to competitiveness and envy (wanting something from someone or wanting them not to have said thing). This perspective of looking down on someone (judgmentally) or looking up at someone (envying) is a form of conceit. This can all lead to looking inwards (in a self-absorbed way) rather than outwards, in concern for others.

To note: This can also lead to drifting towards thinking we can gain righteousness through works - "do not make your hunger for honor make you either despise or envy people" (Tim Keller - Galatians For You)

- Consider/Reflect on the thoughts of "I would never, ever do what this person has done?", "I could never ever accomplish what this person does?"
 - **Do you find that your attitudes lean towards these thought processes? If so, what steps can we take to shift our attitudes? What direction should we be aiming?** (Towards Jesus! Our perspective should reflect that of Christ, seeing others how Christ does)

Our worth and our approval comes from who we are in Christ. When we walk more in step with the Spirit we begin to see things the way Christ sees them, ourselves included! Chris on Sunday shared the phrase "Comparison kills joy" - our comparison limits and distracts us from the joy that comes from walking in step with the spirit.

- **How will having a self-image based on the Gospel change the way you see yourself and others?**
- **Reflect/Discuss: When do you particularly need to preach the gospel to yourself? (What situations/relationships/groups?)**

Verse 6:1:

This warning helps us to consider how we approach the instructions Paul now gives. Here Paul instructs the Galatian Christians to be neither quick to criticize nor afraid to confront.

- **Thinking back to verse 26, how might a conceited viewpoint affect our ability to do this?**
- **What can we do to steer ourselves away from criticising others, and/or fearing confrontation?**

The aim is to bring restoration - Paul says this should be done 'gently'.

- **What techniques can we use to gently restore?** (pointing to a better way - the instruction/example of Christ, showing grace)

Verse 6:2:

This other-centered approach is based upon Christ's instruction to "*love your neighbour as yourself*".

- **What do you think Paul means by the term 'burden'?** (Here it refers to a heavy weight, a challenging circumstance spiritually, emotionally, physically, financially?)

Helping to carry a burden means practically coming alongside that person to help lighten the 'yoke' they carry. We all struggle with Sin, but we are in this together - to support one another.

Verses 6:3-5:

These verses consider both the areas of humility and pride.

- **V3:** Describes someone who is too self-important to have a servant heart.
- **V4:** We are to assess our own gifts and opportunities rather than comparing to others.
- **V5:** Load here refers to more of a backpack rather than a weight or heavy affliction to be borne (burden) and is our responsibility to carry (our gifts and weaknesses).
 - **What differs here between our individual 'load' we carry and our 'burdens'?** We each have different loads to carry - so we are to avoid the comparison to others (conceited).
- **What opportunities has God given you to carry another's burdens?**

Verse 6:6:

Paul expects that all Christians are given a good grounding in the Gospel.

- **What do you think this verse can teach us about how we go about doing this?**
This verse tells us that this student-teacher relationship should have an element of sharing/fellowship, which is born out of a love for one another as partners.

This passage addresses both individual and collective instructions for how we should support and love one another in a Christ-like manner. Spend some time praying for one another - specifically on the back of the discussions from the passage - but also praying for

each other on a personal level, praying for any difficult situations. Encourage one another in love. Pray for the communities we are in - that we can build strong relationships with our neighbours and colleagues, supporting them and displaying the love of Christ to them.