

Galatians Study 8

Read Galatians 6:1-10

Life of the Gospel: New Relationships!

Summary: How does the gospel change our image of ourselves and our relationships to others? Outside the gospel we are either confident (if achieving) or humble (if failing). But in the gospel our new self-image produces a bold humility that changes all our relationships.

Do you find it easy or difficult to ask for help from others? Why?

Tim Keller: Without the gospel, your self-image is based upon living up to some standards--whether yours or someone's imposed upon you. If you live up to those standards, you will be confident but not humble. If you don't live up to them, you will be humble but not confident. Only in the gospel can you be both enormously bold and utterly sensitive and humble, for you are both perfect and a sinner! Paul shows us that this new, unique self-image changes all relationships. "Don't be conceited --- provoking or envying each other" (Gal. 5:26). Because we are humbled by the gospel, we don't "provoke" or approach anyone with a sense of superiority. Because we are powerfully loved in the gospel, we don't "envy" or approach anyone with a sense of inferiority. The gospel keeps us from being either codependent on or independent of people. Both approaches are essentially selfish--ways to earn our value through relationships. Now we do not need to have people serve our needs nor to serve theirs. So we are free to sacrifice and commit, but also to love the person enough to confront.

Read Galatians 5:25-6:10

1. In what areas do you tend to compare yourself to others (looks, money, clothes, sports, family heritage, success, leadership, spirituality, talents, etc)? Do you feel you compare favorably or unfavorably?

2. Do you have more of a tendency to "provoke" or to "envy" others? How can the gospel help you to overcome your tendency, whatever it is?

3. In what ways could a person be tempted when trying to restore another?

4. At first glance, verses 2 and 5 seem to be a contradiction. What do you think Paul means (carrying burdens and loads)? What is the “law of Christ” (vs 2)?

5. What does this passage say to you about humility and responsibility?

6. In the previous chapters, Paul has very strongly taught that we are not justified by our actions but by faith in Christ. Now in verses 7-10, he clearly links eternal destiny to what we do- “you reap what you sow.” How can these seemingly opposite ideas be reconciled?

Making it Personal...

7. Do you have a specific “burden” in your life right now that this group could help you with? How can we pray for you?