

# PURPOSE EXPRESSED

Leader pages on pp. 120-123

**THE POINT:**  
WE FULFILL OUR  
PURPOSE AS WE SERVE  
OTHERS IN LOVE.

## GALATIANS 6:1-10

<sup>1</sup> Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you also won't be tempted.

<sup>2</sup> Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

<sup>3</sup> For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

<sup>4</sup> Let each person examine his own work, and then he can take pride in himself alone, and not compare himself with someone else.

<sup>5</sup> For each person will have to carry his own load.

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<sup>6</sup> Let the one who is taught the word share all his good things with the teacher.

<sup>7</sup> Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap,

<sup>8</sup> because the one who sows to his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

.....  
<sup>9</sup> **Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up.**

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.

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### MEMORY VERSE

### KEYWORDS

**Restore (v. 1)**—Christians need to bring healing into the lives of those fellow believers bruised by the ensnarement of sin.

**Carry . . . burdens (v. 2)**—Christians who are led by and empowered by the Spirit will help each other with the heavy burdens they bear.

**Share all . . . things (v. 6)**—The word for share (*koinoneo*) implies fellowship between the teacher and those being taught.

**Household of faith (v. 10)**—Paul urged the Galatian believers to do good to all, he emphasized that caring for fellow believers was particularly important.

# HOW DO WE EXPRESS OUR PURPOSE IN CHRIST BY SERVING OTHERS?

If you're a Baby Boomer, you are a part of what was called "the Me generation." Boomers were considered narcissistic and self-focused. However, a while back, Time magazine labeled Millennials as the ME ME ME generation.<sup>7</sup>

This self-centered focus Millennials inherited from the earlier generations is prevalent throughout our society. It's not limited to one generation. We're seeing this all around us, and what we're losing in this shift is a focus on the community. We don't think about others.

In the past twenty-five years:

- Patriotism has dropped from 70 to 38 percent. A connection to other citizens has become unimportant.
- Interest in having children has dropped from 59 to 30 percent. A connection to family has become unimportant.
- Involvement in the community has dropped from 62 to 27 percent. A connection to our neighbors has become unimportant.<sup>8</sup>

There's a greater way to live. When we stop looking to ourselves to make us happy and look to Jesus, life becomes more than about self. It leads us to see others, to love others, and to be involved in their lives.

## Share the Load // Galatians 6:1-5

You've been given a purpose in Christ. That's the beauty of the gospel. Christ restores you to be the person He created you to be. Living out that purpose can be hard, yet here's where the beauty of the Gospel shines again. You're not left alone to live out that purpose in your own power. In our previous Bible study, we saw that God has placed His Holy Spirit in every believer, and as you walk in His Spirit, letting Him fill you and empower you, you live out that purpose.

You may be wondering, though, "What exactly is my purpose?" I like the short and succinct way our purpose is stated in the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." We bring glory to God as we serve those around us, those He has brought into our lives.



## THE POINT: WE FULFILL OUR PURPOSE AS WE SERVE OTHERS IN LOVE.

Let me take us back to our previous study again. As the apostle Paul outlined the importance of walking by the Spirit, he said, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:25-26). The very next thing he wrote were the words we're now looking at in Galatians 6. When we walk by the Spirit, instead of being at odds with one another through conceit, envy, or provocation, we are to carry each other's burdens. Walking by the Spirit leads us to walk alongside others.

The Christian life isn't meant to be lived alone. When you come to Christ, you come to the body of Christ—the church. We're in this together. We have a responsibility to help each other grow in Christ, and that includes dealing with sin and error. We're called to serve by helping to restore the other person. The word "restore" would've been used in the first century to set a dislocated or broken bone. When we restore a person, we're seeking to bring healing to their walk with Christ. Paul gave us four ways to step in to help a person.

1. **Step in with grace.** Paul called us to this "with a gentle spirit." A gentle spirit doesn't dismiss sin or downplay its consequences, but it approaches the individual with sensitivity and understanding.
2. **Step in with caution.** Paul also stressed watching ourselves so we "also won't be tempted." As we grow in Christ, we hopefully sin less and less
3. **Step in with humility.** Stepping in to help someone else while being fully aware of our ability to fall into sin calls for humility. We never help anyone when we're harboring arrogance or spiritual pride.
4. **Step in with love.** When we carry each other's burdens, we fulfill the law of Christ. That's love. We're called to love and support one another with whatever burdens and challenges we're facing.

At first glance, Verse 5 seems contradictory to this: "Each person will have to carry his own load." If each of us is responsible for carrying our own load, then why are we also told to step in and help someone else with theirs? Isn't that person supposed to follow Verse 5 and carry his own load?

There's a difference in the wording here. "Burdens" in verse 2 is a heavy weight, and "load" is something lighter that we can carry as we walk with Christ. I view my load as those things that are my responsibility. Of course, those responsibilities can at times overwhelm us and feel like a burden. Take, for example, a father with a special needs child. He has the load, the responsibility of



### DIGGING DEEPER SOWING AND REAPING

J. Hampton Keathley, III outlined several principles in an article called "The Seven Laws of the Harvest." According to Keathley, it is in Galatians 6:7-8 where we are introduced to Law 2, which states we reap the same in kind as we sow: "Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap" (v. 7). The Greek translation for "Be not deceived" is *planao* which means "to cause to wander, lead astray, deceive," and the Greek translation for "God is not mocked" is *mukterizo* from *mukter* which means, "the nose" and indicates "to turn up the nose at, to treat with contempt, or to ridicule." Thus, from this principle we learn that everything yields from its own kind. We can't sow conflict and chaos and reap peace and harmony. Therefore, man can't ignore God's truth and assume that He will not have serious consequences for his actions.

**What will you reap as a result of the seeds you are sowing?**

being a parent to his special needs child, but he carries the burden of meeting all the challenges that accompany those special needs. A single mother may have the responsibility of providing for her kids, but she carries the burden of being there to help her kids with homework or getting them to school because she is working two jobs. It's her responsibility, but out of love, we can step in to help ease her burden. That's fulfilling the law of Christ.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BURDENS PEOPLE ARE CARRYING TODAY?

#### Sow the Spirit // Galatians 6:6-8

Paul's words imply more than a nice pat on the back. Paul was encouraging his readers to help support those who teach God's Word. Let's serve those who serve us. Those who step into ministry don't do it for the money; it's a call from God. The percentage varies from state to state, but over half of pastors have to supplement their income with another job. These bi-vocational pastors do incredible work on little pay, and as we have the opportunity, let's do all we can to support them.

Nevertheless, there is a biblical principle at play here, and agriculture helps us to understand it and differentiate it from the belief in karma. When a farmer sows a particular seed, he expects to reap a particular harvest. Karma is random. Speak angry words to your spouse, and later that day your car gets a flat tire. There's no true cause and effect; that's just two unconnected events. Plant tomato seeds in your backyard, and you can expect tomatoes. Agriculture isn't random, and neither are the spiritual principles that govern our lives.

The spiritual principle Paul was stressing here takes us back to Galatians 5:16-26 and the contract between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Carrying out the desires of the sin nature reaps nothing positive or beneficial, but walking by the Spirit and letting Him produce His fruit in us reaps all the benefits tied to eternal life!

We don't serve because it means some kind of reward for us; we serve because we love Christ, and we love those He has placed before us. We don't give in order to get! To act out of selfish



motives is wrong, and God is not fooled by our outward behavior. We're only deceiving ourselves because "God is not mocked." Doing good to others may look good to you and those around you, but God sees the heart. Ambition is good; selfish ambition isn't. Selfish ambition is listed among the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:20). There's no inheritance tied to such behavior (v. 21), only destruction. As God said through the prophet Hosea, "They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind" (Hos. 8:7).

### IN WHAT WAYS DOES THIS SCRIPTURE PASSAGE INSPIRE YOU TO SOW TO THE SPIRIT AND NOT TO YOUR FLESH?

#### Stay the Course // Galatians 6:9-10

Because "the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit" (Gal. 6:8), "let us not get tired of doing good." At the moment we are serving, we may be tired. We may not see any immediate results. We may wonder if we're really making a difference. Farmers may have moments like that too. The field is planted, and nothing seems to be happening. A lack of rain (or too much rain) can make a farmer think all has been in vain. Nevertheless, as the farmer continues to work the field, and as we continue to work the field God has given us, a harvest will occur.

## THE POINT: WE FULFILL OUR PURPOSE AS WE SERVE OTHERS IN LOVE.

### WHY MIGHT WE GET TIRED OF DOING GOOD?

Let's seize the opportunity that's before us. I like the word "opportunity." It has such a positive ring to it. We're enticed by once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, whether it be a job offer, a vacation, or a special purchase. We see its benefits and understand this opportunity may soon pass if we don't seize it.

We may not always see the benefits of working "for the good of all," but let's trust God for the opportunity He has given us. The Greeks used two words for time. Chronos had to do with chronological time, and it's the most common way we use the word. We check our watches or phones to know the time, the chronos. The other word for time was kairos, referring to a special or appointed time. That is the word Paul used here for opportunity.

As we've been given this unique moment in time, let's seize it for the opportunity it is—an opportunity to serve, to honor Christ, and to live out our purpose in Christ.

### HOW CAN WE MAKE SERVICE TO OTHERS—BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH—OUR PRIORITY?

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Gilbert Young masterfully captures this concept of living in community and helping our neighbor on canvas in his painting "He Ain't Heavy." Painted more than forty years ago, "He Ain't Heavy" is officially the longest selling, most recognized work of art in black art history. The painting has been featured in movies and on television and has become a representation for social responsibility. According to Young, *"I created it to express this idea: Whoever you are, wherever you are in life, you have the ability to reach back and help someone else. You are obligated to do it."*<sup>9</sup> His painting is a beautiful representation of Paul's words to the church at Rome. "Now we who are strong have an obligation to bear the weaknesses of those without strength, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1). As Christ followers, in the same manner that Christ bore ours on the cross. It is sacrificial action done from a place of love.

**Biblical Truth:** "Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

**When was the last time you helped to carry your brother's load?**

## LIVE IT

### What are some ways you can serve others this week?

Romans 13:8, tells us that we "Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law." We fulfill our purpose as we serve others in love. Think about a time someone has served or helped you. How did it make you feel? Now, look around you. What are some of the opportunities that you have to lighten someone else's load? Take some time this week to be deliberate about helping others.

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- **Encourage.** Think of those who played a key role in teaching, discipling, or mentoring you. Find a tangible way to express thanks and "share all his good things" (Gal. 6:6) with one or more of them.
- **Seize.** Ask God to make you aware of any opportunity during the day to serve someone else. Seize that opportunity and serve to honor God.
- **Restore.** Avail yourself to a fellow Christ follower who may be struggling with sin. Without arrogance or condemnation, offer a gentle reminder of God's call to repent and pray for them live an obedient life for Him.



# DAILY READINGS

## 1. SAVED TO SERVE // MARK 10:45

Emmanuel, God with us, the Living Word professed Himself that He did not come to be served but to serve. This is a profoundly humble statement proclaimed by the Savior of the world especially since Jesus was not only 100% human but also 100% divine. Humanity by nature is not humble. Pride is the motivation for all that the natural man seeks. Jesus teaches us what true greatness is in this scripture passage—by seeking to please an audience of One, God alone. The Church's purpose is to do likewise: to lead through serving.

**Purpose expressed is birthed through a heart set on serving.**

## 2. SERVE THROUGH LOVE // GALATIANS 5:13-14

True freedom is expressed through the will to do right. Anyone can do wrong as we are all born in sin, (Ps. 51:5). It takes the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to change the human heart's desire to do right. Paul encourages Christians to seek to serve one another in love versus seeking to serve one's own selfish desires. It is through serving one another in love that the entire law is fulfilled. God's purpose for our lives individually and collectively is to pour out the love that He has plentifully spread within our hearts. In this way, everyone is made one.

**Love expressed unites what sin seeks to divide.**

## 3. PURPOSEFUL CARE // MATTHEW 25:34-40

Jesus declares in Matthew 25:34-40 that the Kingdom of God belongs to those who fed Him when he was hungry, gave Him drink when He was thirsty, gave Him shelter when He was homeless, clothed Him when He was naked, took care of Him when He was sick, and visited Him when He was imprisoned. This may seem strange, but Jesus was saying that when believers do these good deeds for their neighbors, we do them as unto the Lord. When we help one another, we help the Lord because it is the Lord's greatest

desire to help and save those who are in need. The Christian's purpose is fulfilled when we care for one another the way Jesus would. It is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom as we in turn live lives that express the kingdom's agenda and generosity.

**When we show compassion to others, we express God's love.**

## 4. SERVE IN HIS NAME // HEBREWS 6:10

Names were regarded in much higher esteem in biblical times than they are today in Western society. Names were the equivalent of the actual person. Just as Jesus declared in Matthew 25:34-40 that when we care for our brother or sister in any way, we care for Him. The author of Hebrews is iterating the same. Our labor of love shown for His name, will not be forgotten. When we show genuine love towards one another, we make evident our love for God. It is not possible to love God who we have not seen if we do not love our brothers who we have seen, (1 John 4:20). God's purpose expressed through us is never devoid of love for humanity.

**Purpose expressed is love on a mission.**

## 5. FOLLOWING CHRIST // JOHN 12:26

God expects us to follow His lead and do for His glory. For example, while community service is commendable, if not done for the glory of God, man is instead exalted, and it does nothing to meet man's greatest need which is eternal salvation. Serving to please God not only seeks to meet man's natural need but man's spiritual need as well. To serve in love is to serve with a focus on the cross, God's expressed love for us. This is important because we love God because He first loved us. When we keep His love for us in mind as we serve, love flows generously from our hearts to others out of sincere gratitude.

**Purpose is fulfilled through following the lead of the One who gave it.**