

1. We are going to continue with our series this morning from the book of Galatians chapter 6.
2. The foundational verses in this passage have to do with the Law of Sowing and Reaping.
3. **Galatians 6:7-8** Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. **8** Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.
4. Last week we said that the book of Galatians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to a group of churches in a region called Galatia.
5. In this letter Paul states a law of God, and he does it in terms that those of that day would have easily understood.
6. Whatever you sow, that is what you are going to reap.
7. In a literal sense, if you sow corn, you will reap corn, and not potatoes.
8. This law of sowing and reaping can literally be applied to every area of life. Physical, spiritual, and emotional.
9. It is so widely accepted that even unbelievers recognize the validity of the law of sowing and reaping.
10. Unbelievers won't call it sowing and reaping, they will generally use the word, **Karma: a person's previous actions will determine their future fate.**
11. Karma is simply the law of sowing and reaping, only the God who created and instituted the law in the first place is left out.
12. The law of sowing and reaping is so powerful that even unbelievers are affected by it.
13. Even an unbeliever who sows kindness will reap kindness.
14. Even an unbeliever who is generous with their finances will be generously blessed financially.
15. But this passage was not written to unbelievers, it was written to believers. Those with an intimate relationship with Jesus.
16. And in stating the law of sowing and reaping, Paul uses some very weighty or heavy words.
17. He says, do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked.
18. To be deceived is to believe something that isn't true.
19. To mock is to treat someone as being lower than or less than yourself.

20. In this case however, as believers, we are advised to not be deceived concerning this law of sowing and reaping.
21. And when we become aware of the truth of this law, we are not to mock God by acting as if it doesn't apply to us.
22. So, even though the law of sowing and reaping can literally be applied to every area of our lives, in the context of this letter to the Galatians, Paul is applying this law to our relationships with other believers.
23. Remember that verses 1-10 are a single paragraph dealing with a single theme.
24. We know that Paul is applying the law of sowing and reaping to our relationships with other believers because of verses 1 and 2.
25. **Galatians 6:1-2** Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. **2** Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
26. So, based on that passage what is the deception that we need to be careful of.
27. It is the deception that matters of faith in Jesus Christ. Matters of our walk with Jesus Christ. Matters pertaining to our relationship with God the father are intended to be private or personal.
28. Meaning, my relationship with God is between me and God and no one else.
29. That your relationship with God is between you and God and no one else.
30. That matters of sin and failure are between us and God only, and no one else needs to, our should be involved.
31. Not only has the world swallowed this lie hook, line, and sinker, but in many ways so has the church.
32. Our relationship with Jesus is meant to be intimate. Meaning, we should relate to God closely and deeply. But it is not meant to be between just us and God.
33. We know that is the truth because Paul does not say, if someone is caught in sin just pray for them. Don't get involved. Don't mention it to them. Don't bring it up.

34. He does not say that the Godly thing or the spiritual thing to do is to just let them and God work it out on their own.
35. Instead, he says, if someone who claims to be a brother or sister is caught in a sin, you who live by the spirit, those who are spiritual, those who are Godly, should step up and get involved and gently help them be restored back into right relationship with the Lord.
36. He says when we do this, we will be fulfilling the Law of Christ. What is the Law of Christ?
37. John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
38. How did Jesus love? Well, he for sure didn't love from a distance that meant you do you and I'll do me.
39. He loved deeply and intimately. He was involved closely in the lives of others. He spoke to their inmost being and touched them down deep in their soul.
40. And according to Jesus, that is how we are to love others.
41. The law of Christ is not you do you and I'll do me. The law of Christ is that together, we need to be loving one another in deep, meaningful, involved ways that produce deep and powerful relationships.
42. How many are still with me?
43. So, let's move on to the next verses in this passage.

TEXT: Galatians 6:3-5 If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. 4 Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, 5 for each one should carry their own load.

TITLE: Bigger than that.

INTRO:

1. We talked earlier about being deceived. Believing something that isn't true.
2. We know that is possible because according to Revelation chapter 12, Satan, the devil has as his mission to deceive the whole world.
3. I don't think any of us want to be deceived. We want to believe that what we believe is the truth. And yet the enemy is continually using

things and people and information around us to get us to live in deception.

4. I admitted last week. I have been deceived many times in my life.
5. I have believed things about God that were not true. I have believed things about myself that were not true. And, I have believed things about others that were not true.
6. But there is a type of deception that is even more dangerous and that is when we as human beings and even believers in Jesus Christ are deceived, not by someone or something else, but when in fact we deceive ourselves.
7. Paul says **if anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.**
8. Let's work from the end of that verse back to the beginning of that verse.
9. We need to be completely and utterly aware that we can in fact deceive ourselves.
10. We can believe something about ourselves that is not the truth.
11. We can tell ourselves things about ourselves that are not true.
12. You ask, Pastor. Do you talk to yourself? As a matter of fact, I do.
13. I am convinced we all talk to ourselves all the time.
14. Have you ever done anything foolish and said to yourself: you dummy. You are so stupid. Why did you do that? You know better.
15. Have you ever talked to yourself and told yourself what you think others are thinking or saying about you when you really have no idea what they think about or are saying about you? I bet you have.
16. So, not only is it possible, but it is also probable that on more than one occasion we have deceived ourselves. We have believed something about ourselves that is not the truth.
17. In the case of Galatians chapter 6, Paul mentions a very specific area where we can deceive ourselves.
18. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.
19. We can deceive ourselves with unhealthy pride. We can think more of ourselves than is accurate or true.

20. We can think we are better than we really are.
21. Theologian Albert Barnes says to be deceived in this way is to not understand our own character.
22. So, when there is an area of our lives where we think we are better than we really are, then we are causing ourselves to believe something about ourselves that is not true.
23. And in the book of Galatians Paul is talking about one specific area of our lives where we can think more highly of ourselves than we should.
24. What is that area? It is that area of our lives that needs other believers to be intimately involved in our lives, to the point that we will allow others to speak into our lives, even to the sinful parts of our lives.
25. If we read verse 1 and 2 and think to ourselves...well, I don't need anybody to speak into my life and I don't need anybody to know about my sin and failures and shortcomings.
26. And I sure don't need anybody restoring me to right relationship with the Lord, then what we are doing is we are deceiving ourselves.
27. We are deceiving ourselves into thinking that we are better than that. That we are a strong enough believer in Jesus that that just isn't necessary for us.
28. We deceive ourselves into thinking, well that is for someone else.
29. Others may need that, but I sure don't need that.
30. Now. What I am not going to do is I am not going to work harder and try and convince you that this deceptive attitude could creep up into your life or my life for that matter.
31. The truth is the truth, and I am going to let the Holy Spirit take care of that.
32. What I am going to do however is I am going to point out from God's word how that deception of thinking we are better than needing these kinds of relationships with other believers, begins to work its way in our lives.
33. Usually, when we have been deceived into thinking we are better than we really are, which is unhealthy pride, it is because we have compared ourselves to others and concluded, well compared to them I'm not so bad.

34. Or compared to them, I'm pretty good.
35. Galatians 6:4 Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else,
36. Again, let's start at the end of this verse and work our way to the beginning of the verse.
37. When it says here then they can take pride in themselves alone, another word for pride here is satisfaction, or confidence.
38. Keep in mind this is healthy confidence and satisfaction.
39. How can we develop healthy pride and confidence and satisfaction?
40. Well, what we can't do is gain healthy pride about ourselves when we compare ourselves to others.
41. When we compare ourselves with others, we are not comparing ourselves to that which is completely righteous and holy.
42. We are comparing ourselves to that which is flawed and not completely righteous and holy.
43. In the book of 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul said it this way.
44. 2 Corinthians 10:12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.
45. Why does Paul not dare to compare himself to others, because it is possible that that other person has compared themselves to themselves and that is their source of confidence.
46. Let me give you an illustration. Let's say that I go over to the gym in the FLC, and I am the only one there.
47. I get a basketball and I start shooting around and I dribble, and I do some spin moves and I hit some shots and I begin to think to myself. Man. I'm pretty good.
48. What have I done. I have compared myself to myself. I'm the only one there. I have developed this view of myself that isn't based on anything but myself.
49. But let's say I start really thinking. Man, I really am good. I bet I could beat so and so.
50. Now I have compared myself to someone else. But just because I compared myself to them in my mind doesn't mean that I can beat them or that I am better than them.

51. I just think I am better than them.
52. And therein lies the problem with our spiritual lives. As long as I stay to myself, and only compare myself to myself.
53. Or as long as I stay secluded and cut off from intimate relationship with other believers and all I do is compare myself with what I think I can see about them, then it is highly likely that I am living in deception.
54. But there is a solution. **Galatians 6:4** Each one should test their own actions.
55. Test our own actions against what? Against the truth of God's word.
56. The way to have this healthy pride or confidence that Paul promises is when we have tested our actions against the only true and faithful source or righteousness. The word of God.
57. **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
58. The word of God, the bible, cuts way past our actions. It cuts way past what we didn't do.
59. The word of God judges or exposes even our thoughts and attitudes.
60. So, it is only when we test ourselves against the word of God, with the help of other believers in close relationship with them, that we begin to get a true and accurate picture of who we really are.
61. And it is only when we get an accurate picture of who we are, then and only then can we relate to God for who he really is.

Conclusion:

1. You see, only when we commit to live for God his way, as a result of intimate relationships with other believers, can we live the victorious life he has promised.
2. Only then can we experience true restoration and fellowship with him.
3. When Paul says in verse one that if someone is caught in, those who live by the spirit should restore them gently, the relationship works like this.
4. The person who is doing the restoring doesn't say to the one who needs the restoring, now look at me, how well I am doing this. Now

you need to be just like me.

5. No. the one who is doing the restoring says, let's look to the word of God. The word of God says this is how we should be living, and this should be our attitude, so together let's go to God and ask him to help us live or think that way.
6. When we are in close relationship with other believers and together, we are comparing ourselves to the word of God there is safety and there is security and there is wholeness.
7. Because everybody understands that nobody is any better than anybody else. We are all in need of a loving father.
8. We're not called to be in competition with one another, we are called to be in communion with one another.
9. To share with one another in close relationship so that all of us come to a place of maturity in Jesus Christ.
10. It is the enemy that wants us to be in competition with one another.
11. That's because he knows if he can keep us separated by comparing ourselves to one another then he can defeat us mor easily.
12. Let's refuse to fall into his trap. Let's make the decision with the help of the Holy Spirit to reject the deception.
13. Prayer. Lord. Help us to view ourselves not as being in competition with one another but in communion with one another.
14. Have you been comparing yourself with others in order to not feel so bad about your sin.
15. Salvation call. Examine us.
16. Communion. Just before Jesus was betrayed and arrested and crucified, he communed with his disciples.
17. He shared food with them in an intimate way that represented his blood and his body and the salvation he would provide.
18. Let's follow Jesus' example.
19. Hand out elements.
20. Pair up with someone you are not related to.
21. By celebrating this communion together, we declare our belief that we need one another.
22. Take the communion together. One speaks over the bread. The

other over the juice.

23. Pray for one another.