

Mid-Week Bible Study: RELATIONSLIPS

Week 4: SERVE

Text: Galatians 5:13-15; 6:1-5,10

Introduction:

QUESTION: WHEN HAVE YOU RECEIVED STELLAR SERVICE?

We've all had experienced with customer service that we'd like to forget. But we also tend to remember the ones that make your smiles rather than frown.

Good customer service is not about making a sale or even keeping a customer happy. It's about doing what so right and helping the other person. This same principle should apply to our relationships. Our relationships are strengthened when we help and serve each other. Serving is a tangible way to love others.

Setting: Though saved through grace, there were some Believers in Galatia who had been convinced that they had to be circumcised and obey the mosaic law to fully be a Christ. The apostle Paul was not only shocked at how easiest these believers to be convinced of what was wrong, he also set out to convince them otherwise.

Point: In your relationships, be sure to seize the opportunity to serv

GALATIANS 5:13-15

Freedom is a natural hunger. We all want to feel free, but sin so easily entangles is and holds us back. Paul reminded the Galatians in chap. 5 that Jesus' Sacrifice broke sin's hold on us.

Verse 13: The Apostle begins this section by reminding the Galatians believers they were **called to be free**. However, in our freedom Paul highlights two limits on Christians life.

- **Called** –Does not refer to a Christian vocation (like being called to preach). God calls us to faith; this God has the right to define Christian life.
- **Free** - We are free from OT concept of slavery & legalism.
 - We are no longer slave to sin, but we should not abuse the freedom that Christ provided.

Instead of abusing our freedom or as Paul referred to it as “indulging the flesh.”

- Our flesh/sinful nature is self-absorbed and all about me/myself/and I. This philosophy is what destroys relationships.

There we must then realize that we are called to use this freedom to serve one another humbly in love.

Question: How have you seen relationships strengthen through acts of service?

The word serve here in Greek “**douleute**” means to be owned by another, to be a slave.

- We are called to use our freedom to commit serve each other.
- Free from self and now free you be a slave **to another through love.**
- Faith and freedom have an undeniable obligation to live and serve others
- To be in Christ is then to practice self-giving love acts as a way to overcome the power of the flesh.

Verse 14: Paul noted that through their service to others the entire law would be fulfilled.

This was Paul’s first time in the letter that he spoke well of the law.

- No one could be justified by the law (2:16; 3:11)
- Dying to the law (2:19)
- Curse of the law (3:13)
- The law = slavery vs Christ = salvation (5:23-24)

There are several OT verses that support both Paul’s and Jesus’ notion that serving others fulfills the law.

- ***Read Leviticus 19:18 & Deuteronomy 6:5***

Paul writes this to prove to the Galatians that the way to fulfill the law is not through circumcision but by loving one another through the power of God.

Paul’s haters in Galatia suggested that he was dismissing the significance of the law. Paul’s retort was that if believers really want to fulfill the law, they are to walk in love of others. **For the law was to create one people, one family bound tighter by love or God and one for one another.**

Verse 15: Paul warned his readers that if you bite and devour each other then you will ultimately end of destroy each other's.

- "Bite" was used to define an attack by a snake.
- "Devour" was a term to describe how wild dogs devoured their prey.

Our Relationships deteriorate quickly when we are always in conflict. Conflict often arises when we are looking to get others as oppose to supporting others.

- Satan wants us to destroy healthy relationships. And we do his dirty work when are spiteful, petty, and always on the attack.
- **Read Matthew 12:22-28**

GALATIANS 6:1-5

In chapter 6 Paul gave us a more effective way to use our energy & time to develop our relationships.

Verse 1: Paul starts verse 1 suggesting how we should act towards people we are in relationship with who's sin has either been exposed or we have a sense that they are being overtaken or overwhelmed by a temptation that results in a slip or lapse.

Question: How can we help others see blind spots in a way that strengthens relationship?

The text states that we are required to **restore** that person **gently**.

- gentleness is a fruit of the spirit. (Gal 5:23)
 - Gentle - in Greek also means humility. **Read 1 Corinthians 4:21.**
- Paul warned for us to watch ourselves or we may also fall prey.
 - Do not forget that we all sin and fall short. Mom used to say, "**it could be me tomorrow.**"

Verse 2: Paul states that in our relationships we are also responsible to carry each other's burdens.

- Burdens – in Greek literally means "carrying a heavy load for a long distance."

- In Paul's time slaves/servants were responsible for carrying another person's heavy baggage.
- Burdens = temptations, physical illness, mental disorders, financial issues, unemployment, family crisis, spiritual oppression, etc.

In our relationships they will never be fulfilling if we see another struggle and refuse to offer our assistance to help them bear their load.

- ***Read Romans 15:1***

Verse 3: Paul warned against pride or arrogance. These traits are most likely derailing our acts of love.

- When you consider yourself superior it inherently puts others down and could prevent you from resorting and shouldering their loads.
- Pride = self-deception. It hinders our desire to bear others burdens and distorts our reality that states we too fall short.

Question: What actions and attitudes enable us to carry one another's burdens?

Verse 4: We must also take responsibility for ourselves.

If we are not prayerful our flesh can distort our attempt to honestly assess ourselves. The Greek word for test when translated means to "closely examine something."

- This same word was used to describe how fire determines to purify of gold.

Paul here in verse 4 probably was thinking about Jesus teaching on removing planks from our own eyes before we judge others.

- ***Read Matthew 7:3-5.***

Many relationships suffer because one person is unable to perform honest self-reflection and acknowledge their own struggles.

- **Mirrors are made to develop a heathland view of self.**

Verse 5: When able we should be willing to carry our own load. Paul calls for us to assist each other carry our issues and gently call other sinful behavior and conduct.

GALATIANS 6:10

As believers we should look to invest in others and especially believers by sowing good seed.

- Good seed: affirmation, prayer, Financial support, ministry of presence etc...

Paul encouraged those at Galatia to not tire of doing good. He told them in verses 7-8 that if they sow well, they will reap a harvest.

In our relationships serving and helping others is like making a deposit in the bank.

Your money grows and so does its value.

- ***Many of our relationships are painful because we have made in meaningful deposits into them so we when need to make a withdrawal we have nothing to pull from.***

Paul stated in verse 10 that Christians should take every opportunity to do good to all people.

- The word opportunity translates into the word Kairos which **means a special or divine God time to do God's will.**
 - ***Thus, we must see opportunity to do good as a sign from God to invest in our relationships.***

Paul used this word good in both verses 9 and 10.

- While he used two different words both suggest the doing outward deeds of kindness.
- In other words, Paul urges believers to give, encourage, and in particular help the poor, discouraged and needy.
- ***Read Acts 10:38***

Our willingness to help others is an act of evangelism.

- When outsiders see how we treat each other it can either draw them closer to Christ or push them further away.
- ***Read Matthew 5:16***