

(25) 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.

(6:1) Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.

(3) For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.

(6) Let the one who is taught the Word share all good things with the one who teaches.

(7) Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap...if we do not give up!

(10) So then --- as we have opportunity --- let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Think on these things:

- 1) Last week we focused on "living by the Spirit," i.e., walking daily in companionship with the Holy Spirit. It's a prayerful communication thing. Why do you think Paul says we "also" need to keep in step with the Holy Spirit (v.25)? What can we deduce from this guidance?

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- 2) What problem does Paul identify when one Christian compares him/herself to another (v.26)? Let's define this term. Is it a sin to envy others for how they live and what they have?

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- 3) Let's explore this a little bit more. Read Mark 14:3-9 (esp. v.7), Luke 2:18, Acts 2:44-45 & 6:1-4, and James 2:1-9. In the dynamic of life's haves and have-nots, who has the upper hand in Christ's perspective?

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- 4) Chapter 6 opens with a discussion on church discipline. Does the language of v.1 indicate the church is investigating its membership? Who would you describe as "spiritual"? In what spirit should the spiritual ones approach the sinning member, and why? See also James 5:19-20.

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- 5) V.2 describes a better dynamic among members of the church. Instead of focusing on discipline, what should we focus on? What is Paul's name for this effort?

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- 6) Vs. 3-5 indicate that self-evaluation, "self-analysis" can be deceiving. That is, *some people can't or won't see themselves as God does*. They believe that they are doing just fine as Christians. See Romans 12:3, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 13:5, and Ephesians 4:11-13. Define the 'mature' Christian from Ephesians. Who are we to compare ourselves with/to? Here in the last phrase of v.5, what Christian principle is stated (consider also 2 Thessalonians 3:10-15)?

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- 7) V.6 is a stewardship passage. We won't go into all kinds of passages on stewardship at this time. What is the basic principle expressed here? What do you think: is this support only financial?

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- 8) V.7 is a farming concept – and a key principle of the Bible. Even when we do the wrong things, and then repent, we often still face the consequences of our decisions. What is the principle? What two extremes does Paul say we can "sow" to, and with what results (vs. 7-8)?

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- 9) What Christian activity can we "grow weary" doing (v.9)? What do you think causes us to be discouraged doing this? Paul says be patient: there is a "payoff" coming. How does he refer to God's perfect timing?

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- 10) Who should Christians do good for? Who "especially" should Christians do good for (v.10)?

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People and situations I want to pray for this week: