

## **Galatians 6:1-10, 14-18**

Pentecost 4 + Proper 9C + July 10, 2019  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church + Boise, Idaho  
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Help for the Weary

The Word of the Lord from Galatians 6:9-10: “Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” This is the Word of the Lord.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

“Let us not grow weary of doing good, ... especially to those who are of the household of faith.” So says St. Paul, and he gives a bunch of examples.

First, “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.” When someone stumbles into sin, there is a good chance that your first reaction will be, “I don't want to get mixed up in that.” True, the Bible warns against busybodies who stick their noses into matters that are none of their business; but there will be times when you are in a position to speak to a friend who has stumbled. It may be the difficult chore of pointing out their sin, calling them to repentance. It may be encouraging one who has repented, standing by them so they know they're not abandoned. Don't be deceived, though – both of these good tasks are difficult tasks, so do not grow weary.

Paul also warns those who do such things, “Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” Heed these words when shocked by sin. The same sinful flesh dwells in you. You are perfectly capable of committing the same sins that shock you now, and church history is full of those who fell prey to the very sins they most denounced. “Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted,” says our text. To flee temptation is a good thing. Do not grow weary of doing so, or else you'll also fall.

“Bear one another's burdens,” St. Paul says. Not just for a day or two, but continually bear the burdens of others – even the chronic burdens. Don't grow weary of helping them.

Yet, at the same time, “each will have to bear his own load.” It would be wrong for you or me to depend on others for help when we don't need it, because that would be to take advantage of them and prevent them from helping others in need. So don't grow weary of bearing your own load, pulling your own weight as you're able with patience and contentment. (At the same time, if you need help, ask; beware if it's pride, not independence, that keeps you from requesting assistance. I suppose that would mean that you shouldn't grow weary of...admitting weariness.)

Furthermore, “Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches,” says our text; in other words, don't grow weary of supporting the church in your offerings. There are plenty of ways to get rid of your money these days – some of them necessary, some of them tempting and some of them a complete waste. You have the privilege of supporting the preaching of God's saving Word, though the devil will do his best to convince you that there are better things to do with your money. Don't grow weary of supporting the proclamation of the Gospel.

And, “the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption.” You’ll be tempted to indulge your vices and depart from the faith. Rather than commit to, or remain committed to, weekly worship and daily prayer, you’ll be tempted that the Lord’s grace isn’t that important and that all sorts of sins are far more attractive. But those sins lead to destruction. Do not grow weary of denying your sinful flesh the pleasures it desires. It will fight relentlessly to get its way. Do not grow weary.

Let us not grow weary of doing good. Of all the instructions St. Paul hands out in this text, that may be the one that accuses most. It’s easy to grow weary of doing good, because selfishness creeps in and wants to do anything but. It’s easy to get tired of serving and indulge in self-pity. It’s easy to grow weary of helping others, of wanting them to go away. It’s easy to be tired and want others to shoulder the responsibilities, because there’s always more to do. It can be difficult to remain committed energetically to church life. A congregation is the family of God in a place, and family life is not leaping from one great triumph to another, but continuing through the years, bearing one another’s burdens while feeding on the Lord’s grace in His Word and Sacrament. It’s easy to grow weary, too, of being committed to sound doctrine. People don’t like it, and we want to be liked. It will only grow more difficult for us to proclaim the truth in our lifetimes – both because the truth will not be tolerated and because error is always more attractive. It will be easy to grow weary of the good, especially since the devil, the world and your own sinful flesh are working hard to wear you down.

The consequences are astounding. If we do not grow weary, says our text, then in due time we shall reap if we do not lose heart – not because we’ve saved ourselves by our energy, but because we’re sustained by the Lord and His grace. If we lose heart and abandon God’s life and grace, then we face only His judgment and wrath.

So, dear friends, examine yourselves this day. Have you grown weary? Weary of helping others? Weary of insisting that we preserve God’s Word? Do you feel let down or lonely and ready to forget service to others, rather than a thankfulness for God’s mercy and the desire to love? Are you weary of being reproved for sin, wishing that God would just take some time off from warning you of its wages?

If so, there is a solution: repent. The solution is repentance because the problem is the sin that seeks to destroy our faith, that wearies us of all of God’s good gifts.

So repent, and rejoice. The Lord does not weary of serving you. He did not throw up His hands at the sins and foolishness of mankind; instead, He stretched them out and took the nails. Though He prayed in the Garden that the cup of suffering might not be His, He also prayed to His Father, “Thy will be done.” The book of Hebrews thus points us to Jesus, “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted (Hebrews 12:2-3).

When you are overtaken by trespass, He does not grow weary of restoring you with His grace.

He who has borne the burden of your sin still promises to you rest from your labors.

He does not cease to remember that you are baptized, that He has placed the marks of the Lord Jesus on you – that you have died with Him and risen again.

He does not cease to offer you forgiveness in His Word and Supper – and with that forgiveness comes the strengthening of faith and salvation.

He has made you a new creation in Him, saved you by His grace; and though your mind and body grow weary and you are tempted to greater weariness, He will not change. He declares that you are His. He promises, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, then, do not grow weary. Do not grow weary of hearing Christ's Word and receiving His grace. Do not grow weary of repentance, but rejoice that it is Christ who gives you life. Do not grow weary of boasting in Christ, your Lord, who does not grow weary of you.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen