

Northeast Church of Christ

450 Grandview Drive, Cookeville, TN 38506 • necoc.net

Volume 33 • January 24, 2010

From the Pen of Paul: *Let Us Not Grow Weary (Part 1)*

IN THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF THE BOOK OF Galatians, Paul reaches the climax of his letter. Much of the epistle deals with a contrast between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ. In this final chapter Paul deals with several requirements for keeping the law of Christ; these things are demanded by the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 5:1). Among these demands or requirements is Paul's statement in verse 9: "And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

To "grow weary" is to "faint, despond, be greatly harassed" [*Young's Analytical Concordance*]. The word translated "faint" at the end of the verse means "to lose out, relax." [*Young's*]. This statement of Paul's is an exhortation to stay on the course and not to become tired. It is a warning against discouragement. There are a number of things that tend to cause us to become discouraged. Trials, tribulations, and temptations abound and stand as huge obstacles in our path; with the difficulty of the task before us it is not always easy to live the Christian life under all circumstances. Sometimes we witness the hypocrisy of others and because of this we become discouraged. When you add to this the fact that there are so many false doctrines out there which undermine our faith and seek to destroy it, it is easy to see why some become "weary."

This is also an exhortation to "well-doing." Jesus "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Dorcas, in Acts 9:36-39, is described as a woman "full of good works and almsdeeds."

Even the early church, when persecution arose, used it as an opportunity to do well. Luke tells us that "they went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). We have a Book, the Bible, that shows us what well-doing is (II Tim. 3:16-17). The Bible does a complete job; we do not need the *Book of Mormon*, any creed book or discipline, *Watchtower*, or any other writings of men. We are even warned about failure to do well. (James 4:17).

According to the next verse, our well-doing should be directed toward "all men" but "especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). Thus, our good should be directed toward God's people first. As Christians, members of the same family, we should have a loyalty to one another. We should never be guilty of gossip, back-biting or speaking unkindly toward each other. Christians should stand up for and defend each other against attacks that try to do harm or destroy. We witness this in physical families; when one member is threatened, all "go to bat" in his/her defense. This should be even more true in the spiritual family. Jesus said, that it is by our love for one another that demonstrates to the world that we are His disciples (John 13:35).

By this, we are not suggesting that there are not times when brethren must be corrected. Paul had mentioned in chapter two of this letter how he had "withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed (he stood condemned)" (Gal. 2:11). Because Paul cared for Peter, he rebuked him. "Open rebuke is better than secret love.

Continued on p. 3

“What do you suggest to people who are having trouble? Do marriage and other counselors help? Please comment.”

FIRST, LET ME SAY that trouble arises in almost every aspect of life and almost all, if not all, find that they must face various problems and dilemmas from time to time. These troubles vary in magnitude. Some are much worse than others and some people have greater problems than others. Some individuals find it much harder to settle their problems than others. One of the great reasons for this is the personalities involved. Some people are much easier to deal with than others. So people have common problems. Settlements are common and sometimes it is not uncommon to fail to settle some problems, because of the folks involved. (II Thess. 3:1-2).

All of us, from time to time in life, must have someone to talk to. If it is of a confidential nature, we want to talk with a trustworthy person. It is my firm conviction that one of the ways God has fixed for man to get the load off his heart is to talk it off. Men and women often clam up and will not talk. They go with continual heaviness in their souls. Sooner or later it must come out, or there will be physical or emotional problems ahead. This leads us to the question of counselors and how much they can help.

I would not give a plug nickel for a counselor who throws God out of the window along with the Bible. The textbook of every counselor in the world should be the Bible. There may be other sources and various methods used, but the Bible should be the chief book used in counseling. It is not in man that walks to direct his steps (Jer. 10:23). The answer to every human problem is found in the word of God (II. Pet. 1:3). The Bible was not written to tell us how to fix automobiles, airplanes, tractors, radios, guns, and the like. It was written to tell us how to live in order to be happy in this life, and to be happy forever. It

was written to fix and mend the soul.

In the Bible we have the mind of God (I Cor. 2:9-11). Now, God has not told us all He knows, for we do not need all He knows to live and be happy (Deut. 29:29). But, God has given us everything we need to know to make us happy and settle our problems. Human minds are limited, separated from the Bible, when it comes to settling human problems. What advantage has one man over another, with reference to human behavior, if both do not believe in God and His word? If this were the case, then it would all be a matter of human judgment, and one man's judgment would be just as good as another's. But, if we have the God who made us giving us the answers to human problems through His Word, the Bible, then this makes a great deal of difference.

In my judgment, the only really helpful counselors are those who believe in the God of the Bible. They believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God. They believe in Jesus as the Son of God; and in order to be happy man must believe and obey the Bible. I further am convinced that if a counselor would help his fellows he must know and apply the Bible to human behavior—in fact, his own behavior. I would much prefer, personally, to go to a man who knows what Jesus and the inspired apostles and men had to say about human behavior, than to go to a man who rejects God and the Bible, even though he may know all that Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Diogenes, Sigmund Freud, and the rest of the great philosophers had to say word for word. The God who made us knows what it takes to make us happy, and He alone knows how to settle our problems.

—Malcolm L. Hill

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful” (Prov. 27:5-6). However, there is a right way and a wrong way to correct others. Paul exhorts, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man” (Col. 4:6). It is not enough to just be right; one must also be concerned and truly interested in helping. Souls may be lost when correction is offered in the wrong spirit. Paul had already exhorted us to restore the erring in verse one of this chapter; however, he tells us to do it “in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1).

When some attempt to correct others, you would get the idea that they have never made a mistake or even been tempted to do so. I doubt that this type of correction ever accomplishes very much and may actually do harm. In this area we must always be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (Matt. 10:16). And, that is not always the easiest thing to do. Solomon tells us, “As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprovener upon an obedient ear” (Prov. 25:12).

(To be continued next week.)

—*Paul M. Wilmoth*