

Galatians 6.1-10

On the road to Holiness
but tripping up along the way!

Galatians 6.1

- Paul knows the reality of human frailty – all are capable of sinning. We too will be tempted and trip up.....often!
- he uses "paraptoma" = not a deliberate sin; slipping on an icy path
- a disciple is to respond with gentleness not religious harshness as we need to be people with whom others can share their failings
- aim is to set the person right; back on their feet; Paul uses same word as for "repair" or a doctor re-setting a broken limb
- being Holy is not about being perfect but about being repaired

Galatians 6.2

- by carrying others' failure and weakness with us we fulfil Christ's Law and follow his example and thus journey further towards holiness

Galatians 6.3

- to do this we need to be humble and without conceit knowing our own failure to be holy

Galatians 6.4

- don't compare yourself with others as if in a competition to be holy
- compare yourself to Jesus and those who most resemble him; think of what we were made to be like and what we could have been

Galatians 6.5

- Paul returns to theme of "carrying each other's burdens" – earlier in verse 2 it was about helping those who were struggling and lovingly supporting them. Now in verse 5 the word "burden" is the same as a "soldier's backpack" and Paul is speaking about Duty and completing the task God has given us
- the road to Holiness is one that nobody else can walk for us – our Baptism summons us to "be faithful to Christ" and "to be Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto our life's end"
- so be prayerful; and take personal responsibility for your life seriously

Galatians 6.6

- Paul calls each disciple to offer practical loving support to the leaders of our Church who attempt to teach and guide us towards holiness –whilst on the journey towards holiness themselves. The task of modelling the leadership of Christ in the midst of their own frailty is beyond any person; so they need God’s grace and our love and prayer

Galatians 6.7

- Paul spells out the reality of our actions producing either holiness or emptiness. God’s ways bring a harvest that satisfies our soul and release holiness within us; whilst sin brings a different kind of harvest seen in our lives
- “Who we are” will shape “what we do” and will affect the lives of many others
- sin is not passive or neutral – recognise it; challenge it; turn from it:
- our society is more relaxed about sin thinking it doesn’t matter: yet the reality is sin deeply damages people and hurts remain for years – scars linger in memories; the effects of our sins spread far and wide

Galatians 6.8

- Paul reminds us that on the road to Holiness we cannot trade on the grace and forgiveness of God – Grace is not cheap!
- if we abuse our own body our health will be damaged;
- if we abuse the hearts, minds and bodies of others trust will be broken, dreams shattered and lives destroyed
- we have to resist the idea of casual forgiveness by God; and aware of our own weaknesses remember how addictive sin can be
- so how are we to respond to evil actions? There is a danger of too easily speaking of forgiveness and ignoring the danger of addictive abusive behaviour and the cost paid by those who are abused and hurt

Galatians 6.9&10

- make doing good a priority and gradually holiness will become your natural “default” position where instinctively you want to be
- Holiness enables us to live close to God and recognise his purposes;
- so never tire of what is good for by it we come closer to God