

Don't Give Up! - Galatians 6:9-10 – December 17th, 2017

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- I've titled today's teaching, "Don't Give Up!"- In our text today, Paul is continuing with his agricultural analogy of sowing and reaping, or if you prefer, planting and harvesting.- Specifically as it relates to sowing to the flesh and reaping death and destruction, or sowing to the Spirit and reaping eternal life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- In verse nine, Paul encourages them to be patient and not become weary and give up because in time, they will reap a harvest.- In verse ten, he says we should do good to all people when we have the opportunity, especially those who are fellow believers.- It's interesting to note how that Paul is including himself in this exhortation, and it's evidenced by his use of both "us," and "we."
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The reason this is interesting is because it's an indication of how Paul himself was prone to discouragement and weariness.- One has suggested that Paul was speaking to himself just as much as he was the Galatians, in his patience with the Galatians.- This because, Paul had yet to reap the good harvest from them, on the heels of the damage the legalists had done to them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If you were to ask me what I thought was the main reasons we become weary and lose heart, my answer would be impatience.- Often times, we have these expectations in which we hope that something will happen when we want it to, but it never does.- It's for this reason that we begin to lose hope because it seems that it's taking too long and it probably will never even happen.
Proverbs 13:12 (NKJV) — 12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- I think of the single person who longs to be married, and it's been years. Then there's the barren couple that longs for a child.- I also think of the parent who is heart broken for that son or daughter that's as far away from them, as they are from the Lord.- If this weren't bad enough the painful situation goes from bad to worse and seems to continue for an elongated period of time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Whether it's a situation in your life, or a person in your life, you're patience has been tested so long, that you want to give up.- Then to add insult to injury, you dare not say anything to anyone, lest they look down on you for not being a strong Christian.- So, as a result, you close up, shut down, and keep it all in, which can be even more dangerous in that it leads to more despair.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Thankfully, there's an answer to and hope for anyone who may find themselves in that place of weariness and hopelessness.- You'll forgive what may at first seem to be an oversimplification, but the answer is to come to the Lord, and wait on the Lord.- I'm hoping you'll allow me to share with you what the Lord has ministered to me, in my own personal struggle with weariness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- First and foremost the Lord has ministered to me the importance of coming to Him and resting in Him physically and spiritually.- By that I mean, drawing near to the Lord, yoking myself with the Lord, and learning from the Lord, is how I find rest for my soul.- Sadly it's only when I'm overwhelmed and become weary from being so burdened and I can't go on that I draw near to the Lord.
Matthew 11:28-29 - 28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Elijah comes to mind when I think about someone coming to the place where they just can't take it anymore and want to die.
1 Kings 19:4-8 — 4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" 5 Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat." 6 Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. 7 And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you." 8 So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Elijah is so physically fatigued and emotionally exhausted and doubtless, he's also very sleep deprived and as such depressed.- I find it rather interesting that the Lord has to let him just eat and sleep so he will have enough strength for 40 days and nights.- I don't think it's possible to overstate how sleep deprivation and physical exhaustion contribute as a major cause of depression.
I would like to recommend a book that has been a tremendous help to me. It's written by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and bears the title, "Spiritual Depression, It's Causes and its Cure." Here are a few excerpts from this timeless classic, "The greatest and the best Christians when they are physically weak are more prone to an attack of spiritual depression than at any other time ... You may be in this condition simply because you are working too hard physically. ... It is possible that a man has been over-working- I do not care in what realm, whether natural or spiritual- and has been over-taxing his energy and his physical resources. If you go on working too hard or under strain you are bound to suffer. And of course if that is the cause of the trouble, the remedy you need is medical treatment. There is a striking example of this in the Old Testament. ... when Elijah had that attack of spiritual depression after his heroic effort on Mount Carmel, he sat down under a juniper tree and felt sorry for himself. But the real thing he needed was sleep and food; and God gave him both! He gave him food and rest before He gave him spiritual help."
Isaiah 40:28-31 - 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.