

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

This Way to a Healthy Church
Galatians 6:1-14

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Make a sign in the shape of an arrow to be displayed prominently at the entrance of your meeting place. The sign should say, "This Way to a Healthy Church". Letters for the sign are given at the end of the session.

Bible Study Leader:

Copy the questions from the final pages of this session for use at the appropriate time during the Bible Study. Or, write the questions given on large sheets of white paper or newsprint prior to the study time.

Prepare to use the suggested teaching idea by filling small garbage bags with crumpled up newspaper.

Bring a package of vegetable or flower seeds to be used in teaching.

Worship Time Leader:

Make copies of Galatians 5:22, 23 which is located on one of the final pages of this session.

Music Sources:

"Spirit of the Living God", #68, Maranatha! Praise, 1983.

"There's Something About That Name", #40, Maranatha! Praise, 1983.

"Surely Goodness & Mercy", #43, Maranatha! Praise, 1983.

"My Peace", #72, Maranatha! Praise, 1983.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***This Way to a Healthy Church***

Sing “*Spirit of the Living God*”, #68, **Maranatha! Praise**, 1983

Focal Text

Galatians 6:1-14

Background Text

Galatians 6

Main Idea

When we truly recognize by faith the meaning of Christ for our lives, we will seek to live together in a spirit of Christian fellowship.

Question to Explore

Would Jesus recognize our church as being his?

Teaching Aim

To help our church identify how they will practice genuine Christian fellowship in their relations with one another and with fellow church members.

Gathering together:**First thoughts:**

Someone told me of an unusual event they witnessed. They were sitting at a ball game. They looked up to see a very old man doing cartwheels and back flips toward the bleachers. His last jump was a double back flip with a half twist. He landed perfectly in his chair. They were amazed by what they had seen. He was easily the oldest man they had ever seen. His face was deeply wrinkled, he had dark lines under his eyes and he was disfigured with arthritis. They asked him his secret to be able to do the magnificent feats they had observed. He said, “Drinking, smoking, illegal drugs, loose living and a life of partying!” After a moment of silence they asked his age. He said, “28!” He was reaping what he sowed.

Closing the Gathering Time:

So do we. The rule of the harvest is true in our lives. As well, what we reap affects our families and our churches. What kind of harvest are you reaping? Does it please God? Today we shall explore ways to a healthy church.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

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Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

This Way to a Healthy Church

Focal Text

Galatians 6:1-14

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Teaching Aim

To help our church identify how they will practice genuine Christian fellowship in their relations with one another and with fellow church members.

Introduction to your personal study:

One speaker in a message said, “God’s Holy Spirit could be gone for several months from some of our congregations and no one would notice.” Services would be held, meetings would be conducted, activities would continue, and routines would be followed. What does this say about many groups’ relationship to God and to each other?

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

Focusing on the Meaning:

Applying the Fruits of the Spirit in the Congregation: Galatians 6:1-6

How to use the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5 is discussed. Paul addresses the brothers indicating believers in a group. The first application is that of someone caught in a sin. Overtaken, overcome, trapped, and detected are other words used to describe “caught.” Sin is also interpreted as “fault, wrongdoing, misbehavior, trespass, doing something on a sudden impulse”. The one sinning is to be approached by those who are spiritual, godly, and endowed with the Spirit. The confrontation is to be done gently, humbly, and quietly.

Those making the approach are to do it without any feeling of superiority remembering that next time it might be them. Brothers are commanded to assist one another. By doing this they are completing the law of Christ, that of love. They are commanded not to deceive themselves by feeling they are important and really somebody. Everyone is challenged to evaluate his own conduct. The fiery testing of gold for purity provides the example of testing. By measuring his or her own conduct one can rejoice in good achievement without needing to compare it with the work of others. Others cannot fulfill the obligations, work, and ministry for an individual or maintain another’s relationship with God. Every person must fulfill his commitment to God and others. Those who benefit from the instruction and teaching from the scripture are commanded to share with those doing the teaching. We are to share with those who prepare and guide people in understanding and accepting the Word of God.

Warning, Challenge, and Encouragement: Galatians 6:7-10

Now Paul warns the Galatians about being fooled and deceived. In rapid fire he makes three statements. One, he tells them that God cannot be deceived, bamboozled, or tricked. Two, God cannot be cheated. Three, a man will reap what he sows. A person planting in the field of self-indulgence to satisfy his sinful nature will harvest death. An individual planting in the field of God’s spirit to please the Spirit then will have a harvest of eternal life. Paul encourages us to not get tired of doing good. The Galatians had struggled between false teachers and Paul’s teaching. They were involved in the struggle between the law and circumcision and faith. Now Paul is telling them that they should not get tired. Don’t keep on giving in to bad while doing the good he tells them. Harvest does not come immediately after the planting and sowing. The harvest time usually is relatively short. The growing period is the long time. Those waiting and working for the harvest were not to give up.

Paul then encourages the believers to take advantage of every opportunity to do good to everyone. He particularly encourages doing good to those who belong to the Christian family.

Personal Words: Galatians 6:11-18

It appears that Paul now personally takes over for the individual who has been taking his dictation for this letter to the Galatians. He writes that the big letters are in his own handwriting. It seems Paul got excited and wanted to communicate personally with them. Throughout this letter he has made an effort to combat those false teachers who had sown great confusion among the converts he had made. They were teaching that not only must a person have faith in Christ to be made righteous but that they must also become Jews. He directly confronts the motivation of the Judaizers. He says they are seeking to make a good impression outwardly. It was only from their own self-interest. They wanted to be popular and also avoid the persecution they would face if they confessed that it was faith in Christ alone that could save. Paul states that even these who were so adamant about the law were not obeying themselves.

While they were not obeying the law, they wanted others to be forced to be circumcised. It seems to that another motivation of theirs was to brag about the number of people they had persuaded to be circumcised. Paul then expresses his own motivation and purpose. It was to not be proud or boastful of anything except the cross of Jesus. It was to brag about the sacrifice Jesus made and the results of it. When he remembers the cross and the grace of God, all thoughts of self-glorification, ego building, honor, prominence, or fame disappears. It was because of the cross that made Paul was made dead to the call of the world.

The things of the world no longer held interest to Paul and the world's interest in Paul was long dead.

Conclusion: Galatians 6:15-18

The main and only thing is where we should place our focus. Paul says that after this dispute about circumcision and uncircumcision that neither is really important. It really does not matter if a person is circumcised or is not. What is important is that a person is an altogether new creature. The only consequential thing is the individual becoming a new person through the new birth. What counts is whether we are changed into new and unique people. The important thing is not what church we attend or to which denomination we belong. The critical item is that we are new and changed individuals renewed by our relationship to Christ.

Paul then gives a blessing on those who live like this. The blessing he desires for these people is peace and mercy: peace with God and conscience and mercy, God's outward sign of pity. This blessing is extended to all of God's people. Paul then ask that people not argue with him about these items. His body already has scars of the whippings and wounds from Jesus' enemies to demonstrate that he is a slave of Jesus Christ.

He concludes with a prayer for the Galatians that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the Galatian brethren. He begins this letter in Galatians 1:3 by wishing for grace for them and concludes the epistle with the same prayer, grace for them.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Our church should be conducted as a mirror reflection of Jesus. This is an awesome goal in the face of knowing that we are all sinful, imperfect persons. Yet, we must always reach for that goal. Sometimes, it means dealing with sin in the church. Accordingly, that means doing so bravely, prayerfully, and with the acute knowledge that we, too, are sinners though our sin may be of different types; perhaps just not as visible to others. As well, tact and relational skills are of great importance. And always, the sin of others comes with the admonition of Jesus to not judge others lest we be judged ourselves.

These are difficult things with which to deal. And, of course, the best answer is the prevention of situations in which wrong beliefs and overt “sins of the flesh” get a hold within a congregation. Paul’s list of fruits of the Spirit in the lives of each of us is of supreme importance as you seek to teach your church how to avoid sin and how to confront sin with the grace, wisdom, and sacrificial love of our Lord.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

This Way to a Healthy Church

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Galatians 6:1-14

Background Text

Galatians 6

Main Idea

When we truly recognize by faith the meaning of Christ for our lives, we will seek to live together in a spirit of Christian fellowship.

Question to Explore

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Teaching Aim

To help our church identify how they will practice genuine Christian fellowship in their relations with one another and with fellow church members.

Connect with Life:

Offer this to the group: Back before the days of radio and TV the favorite entertainment for teenagers in a particular small town was to attend the monthly business meeting of a local church. The discussions, the accusations, the bitterness, and the controversies that were aired provided recreation for these young people. Many who participated in the meetings were not living consistent lives, yet they felt free to criticize the behavior of others. Sides were taken over the various issues. This spilled over into the community through gossip. The behavior of those taking part did not reflect the fruit of the spirit.

These same kinds of controversies plague some congregations today. Time is spent quarreling over things such as which color of lawn mower should we buy—red or green; did we spend too much for a package of copy paper for the printer; should our worship service start at 10:45 or 11:00. A staff member in one such church commented: “Most of the things our church fusses about are the minor things. I don’t remember any discussion about how many people are we witnessing to, how many people are coming to Christ, or how much are we growing as Christians.”

Guide the Study:

Share: Paul has reviewed the fruits of sinful nature and of the Spirit. Now he approaches how a congregation is to confront an individual who is sinning. Let’s read Galatians. 6:1-5 to see what he commands.

Have someone read Galatians. 6:1-5.

Copy the last page of this session on which the following questions are printed. Or, display a sheet of newsprint on which these questions are written.

What to do when someone is caught in a sin?

Who should make the approach?

What attitude should they have?

What is the caution Paul gives?

What is the command he gives?

Lead the group to answer these questions using the scripture just read.

Follow the answering to the questions, say: Each Christian is to test and evaluate his own actions. We are to test our living against the Word of God, not against the way others live. If we measure up we can be grateful and proud.

Ask someone to read Galatians 6:5.

Now have someone read Galatians 6:2.

Question the participants: How do you reconcile these verses. Are we to carry one another’s burdens or are we to carry our own load? Demonstrate this by asking all class members to stand in a circle and face the right. Give each member a plastic garbage bag filled with wadded up news papers.

Say: Put the sack over your shoulder. Now take your other hand and put it under the sack of the person in front of you. Do you see how you are carrying your own burden

but at the same time helping your brother? By carrying another's burdens we are fulfilling the law of Christ, that of love.

Then say: Paul tells us in Galatians 6:6 about our responsibility to our church leaders.

Read Galatians 6:6.

Tell the class: We are to share material goods with them so they can continue to instruct us.

Read Galatians 6:7-10.

Hold up a package of flower or vegetable seeds.

Say: What will happen if I properly prepare the soil and plant these seeds? What will come up? Will apples come up? Will cotton come up? No. The seed in this package will reproduce itself. This passage tells us in short statements the outcome. "Don't be fooled." "Don't think you can trick God." "You get what you plant." Ask: What will be one who plants to please his sinful nature get at harvest? Destruction. What will the one who plants to please the Spirit get? The Spirit will give him eternal life. What is the admonition and promise that are given in Galatians. 6:9? Don't get tired of doing good. At the right time we reap a harvest.

Offer this: Paul accused those who were trying to make a good impression on the Galatians of three things.

Have a member read Galatians 6:12-13. (Choose an older member if possible to read the verses.)

Now encourage some to answer: What are the three accusations?

Ask: What were the three things? (You may need to help by suggesting the following:)

(1) They are trying to get them to be circumcised.

(2) They are trying to avoid being persecuted for the cause of Christ.

(3) They wanted to brag about the number of people they led to be circumcised-so that they could boast.

Ask: What did Paul want to brag about? (The cross of Jesus Christ.)

Using the **Teacher Preparation** commentary, speak about his death to the world.

Read Galatians 6:15.

Briefly lecture on Galatians 6:15 using material from the **Teacher Preparation** commentary. Magnify the idea that the important thing is that we are new creatures—created by Christ Jesus. As a new creature we are to produce fruit to the Spirit.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Tell the group: Answer the following questions silently.

Now read the following questions to the group. (Allow a few seconds silence between each questions so your members will have time to reflect on them).

Are you spiritual enough to go to a person caught in a sin?

Are you watching your life or are you being tempted?

Are you helping others carry their burdens?

Do you think too highly of your relationship to Christ?

Are you testing your own actions?

Are you comparing spirituality to others or to Christ?

Are you sowing to please your sinful nature?

Are you sowing to please the Spirit?

Are you becoming weary of well doing?

Are you taking advantage of every opportunity of doing good to all people?

What are you boasting about, your achievements or Christ?

After adequate silence, offer these final thoughts: What one thing did God speak to you about in this series of questions? Is it for forgiveness, or strength, or conviction? In this quiet time, pray to God and express your thoughts.

Have several seconds of quiet, then pray aloud: "God, work in our hearts. Amen."

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

This Way to a Healthy Church **Galatians 6:1-14**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Important Questions

The questions given in the adult section are applicable to youth as well. Read the list of questions and take time for private consideration of answers. After an appropriate amount of time, close with prayer.

Are you spiritual enough to go to a person caught in a sin?

Are you watching your life or are you being tempted?

Are you helping others carry their burdens?

Do you think too highly of your relationship to Christ?

Are you testing your own actions?

Are you comparing spirituality to others or to Christ?

Are you sowing to please your sinful nature?

Are you sowing to please the Spirit?

Are you becoming weary of well doing?

Are you taking advantage of every opportunity of doing good to all people?

What are you boasting about—your achievements or Christ?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***This Way to a Healthy Church***
Galatians 6:1-14**Beginning the Service:**

Sing “*There’s Something About That Name*”, #40, **Maranatha! Praise**, 1983;
and “*Surely Goodness and Mercy*”, #43, **Maranatha! Praise**, 1983.

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

Europe and North America are rapidly becoming multi-cultural in many ways. Those nations are also becoming much more influenced by Islam. Pray that those committed to Islam will listen to the true Gospel and not be intimidated by threats, mistreatment, and shunning by those who refuse to hear the truth of God’s Son, our Saviour and Lord. Pray that the Europeans and North Americans who know Jesus as Saviour will speak the truth with God’s love guiding them and never be guilty of sinning against God by mistreating or disliking Muslims. Pray that Christians will demonstrate their love for God by demonstrating their love for Muslim people.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God’s call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

How does your garden grow?
Galatians 6:9-10

Introduction:

It is difficult to garden in the cold climate of Southern Alberta, Canada next to the Rocky Mountains. Warm winds come over the mountains in the middle of winter bringing severe temperature changes and causing plants to dry out only to be exposed a few days later to extremely cold temperatures.

Other circumstances make gardening difficult for one family. The backyard is next to an attractive park. Dandelions grow freely in that park and their seeds blow over into the carefully tended lawn of the family. Soon the lawn has a bountiful crop of dandelions which are pretty enough when blooming with bright yellow flowers, but soon turn to ugly tall weeds.

Another problem for the family is the pleasure their young grandchildren take in digging in the vegetable garden. After the seeds are planted, they may be replanted by eager little boys. When they begin to grow, they may be cut down with a vigorous chop by a child sized tool.

How does your garden grow? God has made you the groundkeeper of your personal life garden. What kind of seeds are you using? Satan has a bargain store for garden seeds. He will make you a very good deal on some of his specials. God likewise has a wonderful seed store from which you can choose. His seeds produce a bountiful garden you will enjoy all your life. Which seeds will you select?

I. Satan's catalogue is located in Galatians 5:19-21.

His seeds include "sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, and orgies." Each package of seed contains a warning that reads; "Those who live like this will not inherit the Kingdom of God."

Sex is a gift from God for marriage. The first three seeds destroy God's gift by producing adultery, fornication, and moral impurity. The devil's will for you is complete depravity in sexual behavior.

Worship is God's gift to us so we can enjoy our relationship with him. The devil will destroy that relationship through idolatry and sorcery.

Social relationships are a gift from God also. Satan can turn your paradise into a jungle through hatred, anger, strife, jealousies, alcohol, and drunken orgies. That is a frightening garden. Leave those seeds alone!

II. God's catalogue is in Galatians 5:22-23.

He only offers nine kinds of seed. They are the best and will produce a great garden in your life. They include "Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, and self-control.” They also contain the disclaimer “Against such things there is no law.” Note Galatians 5:24-25; “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

These nine seeds come in three groups. The first three work inwardly as they produce selflessness, gladness, and an inner calm that rises above outward circumstances. The second group works outwardly to produce an even temper, kindness, and a benevolent spirit. The third group works upwardly by producing dependable Christian living, humility, and self-restraint.

III. There is a manual for the care and growth of your garden printed in Galatians 6:7-8.

The manual reads, “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.” How does your garden grow? A healthy church is made up of people who have planted the right garden. We must be able to work together to accomplish God’s will. Poor choices in our gardening practices will rob our church fellowship of good health.

Call to Commitment:

A man and his wife have been karate experts for over thirty years. She was the first female black belt in the USA state where they live. It was said of the man that if you fought him, you might win the match, but you would lose the fight. He toughened his body to be a powerful fighter. Today, he has terrible arthritis, walks with a limp, has an arm that is very weak, and one eye that works only at about ten per cent of normal vision. All of these problems are a result of the stress placed on his body by his extreme commitment to karate. He is reaping what he sowed in his physical life. Are we as careless about what plant in our spiritual lives? We will reap what we sow!

Concluding the Service:

The passage about the fruit of the Spirit reads this way in The Message.

“But what happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard – things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.”

This passage is one of the most beautiful in the Bible. Let us say it together as a prayer for ourselves and for one another.

What to do when someone is caught in a sin?

Who should make the approach?

What attitude should they have?

What is the caution Paul gives?

What is the command he gives?

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Galatians 5:22-23.

This Way to a Healthy Church