

SCRIPTURE READING: Galatians 6:6-11.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Galatians 5:1; 13-15; 16, 24; 6:1-2; 6.
2. Wow! That's a lot of hard work.
 - A. Is it worth it? Absolutely. Galatians 6:7-8. Eternal life.
 - B. Is it necessary? Absolutely. Mom's farm and the corn crop. Galatians 6:7-9.
3. Conclusion. Galatians 6:10, 11.
4. We live in an age of instant gratification. We want fast food, rapid weight loss, easy credit, quick fixes, etc. We want it all and we want it all NOW! However, when it comes to getting the truly important things of life, it just doesn't work that way.
5. Consider marriage.
 - A. A really happy marriage is a truly important thing of life. Ecclesiastes 9:9; Proverbs 5:18-19.
 - B. But, a really happy marriage doesn't just happen. If you find a couple acting like newlyweds after 20, 30, 40, or 50 years of marriage, rest assured that it didn't happen by accident. It happened because they did a lot of hard work, most of which was focused on changing themselves, not their spouses.
 - C. Sadly, many people who marry today don't want to do the work it takes to get what they really need out of marriage. As a result, they usually do one of two things.
 - 1) They either go from marriage to marriage looking for the quick fix, in this case, finding the right person, instead of focusing on the real solution, working hard to become the right person; or,
 - 2) If they don't divorce, they go for the quick fix of settling for where they're at in their marriage, instead of working hard to get where they'd be much happier if they just had the faith to go.
6. When it comes to the truly important things of life, there are no quick fixes, no easy answers. There is simply no substitute for good old fashion hard work. What's true of building a really happy marriage, is also true of building a really happy relationship with our children, our church family, ourselves, and most important of all, our God. "We will reap if we do not grow weary." But make no mistake about it – the hard work definitely pays off, it is well worth the effort. Proverbs 15:19. "Happiness can be defined, in part at least, as the fruit of the desire and ability to sacrifice what we want *now* for what we want *eventually*" (Stephen R. Covey).

APPLICATIONS:

1. **Work hard.** Ecclesiastes 9:10; Ephesians 5:16A. We only have one life to live. That life is broken up into many wonderful, but fleeting stages. We must work hard so we get the most we possibly can out of every phase of life, so we have as few regrets as possible.
2. **Work hard at the truly important things of life.** Ecclesiastes 9:9; Proverbs 10:1; Psalms 133:1; Philippians 4:4, 6-7; Matthew 16:26.
3. **Work hard in the best possible way.** Proverbs 3:5-8.
 - A. We must not allow supporting roles to become leading roles. Making money, getting rest and relaxation, etc.
 - B. We must work hardest on ourselves. Matthew 7:3-5.
 - 1) Proverbs 16:7.
 - 2) Philippians 4:11B-13.
4. **Be patient.** "We will reap if we don't grow weary." James 5:7-8, 10-11.
 - A. In ideal circumstances, the best still requires lots of hard work.
 - B. In less than ideal circumstances, the best requires even more hard work. It can take a lot of hard work to recover from a little folly. Ecclesiastes 10:1. It certainly takes a lot of hard work to recover from a lot of folly.
 - C. Turning or returning to Christ gets us on the right path, but it doesn't immediately get us to where we want to be. But keep on keeping on. We will get there.
 - 1) In time, we may never completely get where we want to be, but if we work hard as per the above, where we'll go is infinitely better than wherever we'd otherwise be.
 - 2) In eternity, we'll walk with God.