

Pentecost 6, 2010  
Good Hope Lutheran Church  
Galatians 6: 2 and 6: 5

From Paul's letter to the Galatians, chapter 6. I'd like to point you to verse 2, and then also at the end of that paragraph, verse 5. Verse 2 says, "Bear one another's burdens, because this is what Jesus wants." But then verse 5 says, "Everybody must carry their own load." I'd like to put these two verses side by side, and think about them a little while; and the Lord be with you.

Let's pray: We thank you Lord Jesus for the privilege and opportunity to be your disciples. Make us the people you want us to be, and give us the faith and love and humility we need, today and everyday; Lord Jesus in your name we pray, AMEN.

Whenever a young couple comes to me for marriage preparation, there are as you can imagine a number of topics that we touch on in our conversations. And one of the things we talk about—not very exciting, not very dramatic—we talk a little bit about housework. Who's going to do the dishes, who's going to take care of the laundry, who's going to mop the kitchen floor, and so on, like I say, not real dramatic. But often the pebble in your shoe is a bigger problem than the boulder in your path, so okay, let's talk housework. And when I ask a young couple about the laundry, for example, without fail. Without fail they say, "Oh, we're going to divide it up 50 – 50." Invariably, that's the answer, "we're going to divide the housework 50 – 50," ok. Ok, that's a nice idea, and you can see how they care about each other and how they want to show their love by playing fair

with one another, fine. But let's think about this a minute. How many people are so well organized, that they can sit down Sunday evening and say, All right, Monday I've got the laundry, so Tuesday you fix dinner. I'm busy Wednesday, but I'll make it good by vacuuming Thursday—anybody really that organized? No. No, life moves way too fast for that sort of thing. So what often happens, instead of dividing things equally in advance? Couples end up looking back, and keeping score. “I did the laundry Tuesday. So how come I also had to do the dishes Wednesday? I made supper Thursday—how come I'm doing it again Friday?” And so on—this 50 – 50 thing might begin as a loving goal, but when two martyrs live together under the same roof, I'm telling you it ain't easy, and “50 – 50” has a way of becoming a source of frustration, and resentment, and anger.

So my suggestion? Drop the 50 – 50, it ain't gonna work, sinners like us just keep score and end up arguing about it, try this instead. 100 – 0. 100 – 0, in other words, I promise. I will do everything I can for you and for our family, I will do so all the time every time. I will not keep score, I will consider doing housework a privilege for the one I love, I will do everything I can all the time and not really expect a doggone thing in return because that's what love is. Love is not Let's Make a Deal, my love is my gift to you, period, and anything I may get in return is icing on the cake; and if you

BOTH do that. If you BOTH have that attitude and outlook, giving 100 % and not sitting back waiting for something in return. Do you maybe see how delighted you can be each day, not only with a clean house; but also with the sense that you are indeed loved?

A rather lengthy introduction this morning, but I think this shows fairly clearly what Paul is getting at here in Galatians chapter 6. Bear one another's burdens he says AND, carry your own load. Verse 2, Bear one another's burdens, verse 5 carry your own load, in other words, verse 5, do what you know you need to do personally and take responsibility for yourself. Ok? Duh, be responsible for yourself! But don't stop there. Good grief, don't just do your *fair share* and call it a day, doing your fair share and taking responsibility for yourself is not where love ends—that's where love *begins*, get out there and do for everybody else too. Bear one another's burdens, and if we ALL did that. If we all gave 100 % without counting the cost without waiting for recognition if we all could simply love without keeping score. What a blessed world this would be, for us all.

The problem is, we keep score. We do. We can be selfish, and proud, and resentful. We know perfectly well what we've given to others, we tend to forget what others have given us, we feel entitled. Big problem in our country these days, it hits us too, we feel entitled, "Look I've done my part.

I've done my share, when is so-and-so going to step it up, when am I going to be given something in return, heaven knows I don't ask for much." We seem to live in a world today filled with less and less love, but more and more martyrs, funny how that works. And maybe we're among them somehow, selfish at times, resentful of others; pleased with our own contributions and looking for some sort of recognition? Paul's point in Galatians, there is no one so self centered, as the one convinced of his own generosity. Keeping score, is the sin of pride in disguise, and it bites deep, it leads to anger, it poisons our marriages our friendships our church our community—keeping score, in short, is the very opposite of what we mean by love.

Keeping score in short, is the very opposite of what we see in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the One who was there at the beginning of all creation. God gave us life and the good things of life, God gave us everything!—and what did we give in return, except rebellion and sin. God gave us everything, we gave Him nothing, but He wasn't keeping score, because He loved us. He loved us, and out of love, in His mercy, Jesus Christ was given to die for us. He came to earth to heal the sick feed the hungry tend for the lost, and we gave Him nothing but a cross and a tomb—a tomb which He no longer happens to need, thanks anyway, He rose

from the dead; and He will come again in glory, His Kingdom to have no end, Jesus took your load from you and didn't count the cost. He didn't keep score. Because love doesn't keep score. And He calls us to that sort of loving life today, and gives us the chance to make it reality.

On this day. May we be filled up with the love of Jesus Christ who died and rose again, may we just overflow with the good gifts of God. The better to give them all away, cause that's what love is, and that's what love does.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, AMEN.