

"A TONIC FOR WEARY CHRISTIANS"**Introduction**

1. The great problem in the Galatian church
2. Error in doctrine produces bad practice
3. Paul here warns of one bad practice

1. A DIFFERENT PROBLEM WHICH ALL CHRISTIANS FEEL

* The problem of weariness in God's work.

- 1) What factors lead to this?
 - (i) the state of society in general – exx
 - (ii) difficulties in the church in particular:
 - rampant error
 - visible decline
 - lack of gospel power
 - division, etc.
 - (iii) comparing the present and the past
ILLUSTRATION: Second Temple: Ezra 3:12-13
 - (iv) prayers seemingly unanswered: "How long?"
- 2) Weariness is an experience common to us all:
 - (i) Abraham: waiting for an heir
 - (ii) Israel going through the desert 40 years
 - (iii) Even the best of men – here Paul ("us")
APPLICATION: Is this relevant to you?

2. DANGERS TO WHICH THE PROBLEM MAY LEAD

* Every temptation may lead to harm:

- 1) Hankering after the world: Was not this the temptation for Israel: "leeks, onions," etc.
APPLICATION: Why do some professing people cool off?

2) Glorifying past times in imagination

"Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" (Ecclesiastes 7:10).

OBSERVE: The past had its problems too! Israel forgot the evils of Egypt and many wanted to go back!

3) Secretly quarrel in heart with God:

OBSERVE: Job was sore tempted.

4) To think God will never work again – "Fails his word evermore?"5) To lose heart and so do less and less.

APPLICATION: Why do some drop off in attendance?

3. THE TONIC WE NEED FOR THIS PROBLEM

* There are two things:

- a promise
- a humbling reminder

(i) promise: "we shall reap..."

(ii) humbling: it will be in God's time

1) I remind you:

(i) The progress of God's work is by both

- periods of rapid growth
- dull times

APPLICATION: These remind us of our sins.

(ii) God's work is a mystery: "not by observation".

APPLICATION: God works even when we do not see.

(iii) God's promise here is as true today as ever it was:

"we shall reap".

2) Sometimes God works suddenly when it might seem that all hope is gone: e.g.

(i) The period before Luther

(ii) America in 1780 period

(iii) Other instances

CONCLUSION

Illustration: Jeremiah Lamphier in New York.

Application: Labour on faith fully!

PSALM

74:1 – 4

77: 7 – 11

78: 62 – 66