**Why should we do good!!**

1 Corinthians 10:24: **"Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others."**

     To me, this admonition sounds like one of those where you have to wonder if it really came from the Bible or not. It seems to have the same ring to it as such oldie but goodies as; "*If you don't have something nice to say, don't say anything at all*." I mean it sounds more Biblical than; "*Cleanliness is next to Godliness,"* or, "*God only helps those who help themselves.*" But it still has that kind of vague feel to it that when you first hear it, you wonder; *"Is that in it the Bible?"* Or, *"Did my grandma used to say that?"* Or, *"Was it merely my latest after dinner reading from the New China take-out bag?"*

     Nope, it's from that Bible. In fact it's located right in between two direct references to the Church (That's us) taking part in Communion, together. It seems that Paul has the unmitigated gall *(One of my goals today was to use that phrase!)* to suggest that how we live as Christians, might influence other people, and furthermore that realization ought to be considered in light of the incomparable significance that Communion holds for us, as Christ's people.

     Wow! *(A kind of a weak response after using something as grand as "unmitigated gall," but I think it still communicates.)*

     Wow! Maybe in context, there is more to this; "*Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others,*" than first meets the eye.   (If at all possible, now would be a great time to open your Bible and read 1 Corinthians chapters 10-11 in one sitting.)

     It seems from our reading that as a Christian you are obliged to view your actions in light of how they will affect other Christians. It seems it might even be possible for you to discover God's will for you as you consider His activity in the lives of others. (That deserves another "Wow!" - but at this point I will settle for a deeply considered, "hmmmm.")

     This goes contrary to the world's thinking. The world encourages you to live your own life, taking care of your own needs and wants first. Sin promotes independence. It isolates you from others and separates you from those you could help or who could encourage you. God designed you for interdependence.

     There ought to be a deep respect within you as you encounter other lives guided by the Holy Spirit. Do not live as if you have no responsibility toward your Christian brothers or sisters. God holds you accountable for how you relate to them. Don't revel in your "*freedom in Christ*" to the point that you neglect your responsibility toward others (Rom 14:15). Paul celebrated his freedom in Christ, but he was keenly sensitive to what might cause other Christians harm (1 Cor 8:13). He was aware that his sin could not take place in isolation but could bring pain to many others.

     We have a responsibility to live in such a way that we do not hurt others. You must deny yourself and allow the Holy Spirit to put to death your natural inclination to be self-centered. As long as you focus on yourself, you will be oblivious to the needs of others.

     So may I suggest, for this coming weekend at least: That as we gather and take Communion together as the Body of Christ, that we lift our eyes up and consider those around us. That we choose to purposely remember that Communion is not merely an individual expression of our new life and dependence upon Christ and His work, but it is also a vivid expression of the life we have *together* in Christ.

     After all, it seems that Paul had the (I will show restraint, and even though I have the freedom to do so, I will not use "unmitigated gall" in this instance.) effrontery (Now that's a cool word!) to hold Communion up before us *twice in this same passage* as an illustration, or we might even say ***a warning***, to consider how our lives are presently impacting those around us.

1 Corinthians 10:24: **"Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others."**