

Galatians #18

December 1, 2024

Series: Galatians: Treasuring the Gospel of Grace

Today's Message: More Like Jesus: Restoring The Sinning Brother, pt 1; Galatians 6:1-6

To bear good fruit, the fruit of the Spirit is to live out, to some degree, an expression of the character and beauty of Christ. The heart of the nature of fruit bearing is love. Not just any love but that kind of love, which is self-giving, self-sacrificing, and even self-denying. It is a love that comes from God (for God is love) and can only be produced and truly realized in our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit. This God-kind-of-love and the fullness of it is expressed best as we love our neighbor as we love ourselves (Gal. 5:14).

Paul has this in mind as he leads us into our text today. Today we see what could be considered the practical application of Paul's teaching on what it means to walk in the Spirit. He addresses the issue of great importance and that is the believer's work of restoring the erring, or sinning brother. I can't think of any circumstance in a Christian's life that would more fully put the love of God on display more profoundly than when a caring believer, exercising faith and love, and clothed in humility, comes alongside a sinning brother or sister to help restore that person to wholeness and to a fruit-bearing life.

Paul teaches us how to restore the sinning brother or sister. It is a beautiful thing as Paul describes it! We need to understand that this is a form of discipline. I think the text is clear that "church discipline" is an act of both individual believers and sometimes several believers to restore or rescue an erring or sinning brother. And truly, no one in the family of God should ever consider themselves above discipline. We all sin. We all err in our theology at times. But can you see how good it is for a church family to love God so much that His very love spills over to you (if you are sinning) through caring and compassionate believers? When church discipline is handled in a very loving way by humble people it is a good thing. And that is what Paul is telling us in Galatians 6:1-6.

Notice how Paul sets up this section on restoring the sinning brother by saying in 5:26 how not to do it. Seeking glory and honor by belittling or disrespecting a sinning brother will not produce fruit. Nor will it be helpful if we choose to provoke (poke and shaming) the sinning brother. No, Paul will show us the better way. First, Take the Responsibility to Help the Sinning brother. Second, Take the Responsibility to Support the Sinning brother. Third, Take the Responsibility to teach the restored brother.

Before we dig in, I want you to consider the flip side of the outline. Remember that each of us has fallen into sin, but few of us have ever had someone come alongside us to help. But if you are fortunate enough to have someone who cares enough to confront you and wants to help, consider these three ideas: First, if you have fallen into sin and a fellow believer comes to you to help you, don't resist, hear them out. Second, if the helping brother can assist you in bearing your burden, let him or her. Third, put your heart into their teaching and share what you're learning.

- I) (6:1) Help the Sinning brother or sister (or be willing to be helped by the more spiritual brother or sister).
 - A) If you are a "spiritual brother" that means you are walking in the Spirit and are filled with the Spirit. It also means that you are displaying the fruit of the Spirit as He cause Christ to well up in your soul.
 - B) The sinning brother has been "caught" and he needs to get up and often needs help.
 - 1) A believer who has fallen **deserves** help.
 - 2) A believer who has fallen **deserves** encouragement.
 - (a) Assurance; compassion and understanding.
 - 3) A believer who has fallen **deserves** a rebuke.
 - (a) A rebuke brings the weight of guilt, the damage, the danger of the sin to the forefront.
 - C) "Caught in a sin/ trespass", or "overtaken in a fault" (KJV)
 - 1) The idea being that the trespass, or sin, or fault overtook him or her.

- (a) Does not necessarily mean that the believer planned on sinning (could have) but was flirting with the temptation rather than resisting. The person was caught, snagged, when they “made provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14),” and carried out the sinful desire.
- D) The Spiritual believer is any member of the Body of Christ, not just preachers and elders. Sometimes it is the preacher and the leaders who get caught in a sin and need help.
- 1) The Spiritual person knows how easy it is to get caught, and they are aware of their weaknesses.
 - (a) This person should have wisdom and a growing understanding of Scripture.
 - 2) But the Spiritual person has a responsibility to “admonish/ warn the unruly, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, and be patient with all.” (1 Thess. 5:14)
 - (a) 2 Thess. 3:15, “Do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish/ warn him as a **brother**.”
 - 3) The Spiritual person is not to **sniff for sin**, but ready when necessary to help, restore, rescue.
 - 4) The Spiritual person’s attitude must be like Jesus. When the Pharisees brought the woman who was guilty of adultery, as we read in John 8:3-11, and they wanted to condemn her, He turned the accusers away in their guilty, turned to the woman and said, “Neither do I condemn you.”
 - (a) He was not interested in condemning her, but rather in helping restore and rescue.
 - 5) Remember, you who are spiritual: The Spiritual person(s) “should not regard him as an enemy.”
- E) “Restore him gently”
- 1) Restore: mend or repair. Restore peace, well-being; **Hebrews 12:12-13** help define what restore means: “Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. ‘Make level paths for your feet,’ so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.”
 - (a) Restoration begins by first showing the erring believer his fault. Once the person admits their sin, then they should confess it.
 - (i) Sometimes you must encourage a person to confess sin.
 - (a) David knew he sinned. But he says in Psalm 32:3, “When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.”
 1. But Psalm 32:1-2 finds David rejoicing when he confessed his sin to the Lord!
 - 2) Gently: This is a characteristic of a Spirit filled believer. “Gentleness”.
 - 3) A spiritual believer is commanded to “restore *such a one* **gently**.”

F) When discipline has been carried out in a God-pleasing way, everyone involved, even the church:

 - 1) Must forgive the restored believer!
 - (a) To protect the one restored: 2 Cor. 2:7-8 says, “Instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. ...reaffirm your love for him.”

G) “Watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.”

 - 1) You are made of the same “stuff” (MacArthur) as the erring brother. You can fall too!
 - (a) “watch” means to keep yourself, your heart and mind, under careful scrutiny continually.

H) What do you do if you find yourself in this situation as either the “spiritual” or the “sinner”?

 - 1) The Spiritual: your attitude should always be like that of Christ Jesus.
 - (a) If you need to help discipline a brother either privately, or along with others, **ask** the Lord to supply you with an extra awareness of His love, grace, mercy and gentleness.
 - (b) **Matthew 18:15-17:**
 - (i) Keep it as private as you can. Then,
 - (ii) If your brother will not listen, involve two or three. Keep it between yourselves.
 - (iii) If need be, announce the fault to the church and pray.
 - (iv) Last resort, put them out of the church. But keep the door open and the light on!
 - (a) **Luke 9:56: “...The Son of man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.”**
 - 2) The Sinner: Hear your brother out. Don’t let yourself be offended. Yield to Christ Jesus!

II) (6:2-5) Support the sinner brother or sister (or be willing to let them support you to restore you).

III) (6:6) Take the time to teach to a restored brother or sister (or be willing to be taught in order to grow up).