

**GALATIANS - SERMON 38**  
**GALATIANS 6:1 — RESTORING THOSE TAKEN IN A FAULT**  
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INTRODUCTION:     Read Galatians 6:1  
                  In Galatians 5 we studied verse 13;

*For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

We are by love to serve one another. One of the ways in which we can serve one another by love is by restoring the one who is taken in a fault (Galatians 6:1). The greatest service we can render to another person is to help them to draw near to God and to stay in close fellowship with Him. There is no greater service to proffer to another human being. This Galatians 6:1 text gives us one positive example how we can render that kind of service to another.

It is sin that separates us from God. Those who help us overcome sin and draw near to God are those who love us the most and serve us the best. Sanctification from sin is not to be an individual endeavor only. This text proves that point. When God saves us He would have us in a local church for many reasons. One reason is sanctification. Sanctification is a corporate responsibility as much as it is an individual one.

“The overcoming of sin in our lives involves a corporate effort, not just an individual one. We need other people to help us overcome our sins.” (Pastor Doner)

The fact that we need the help of others in the overcoming of our sins requires humility on our part. We may be able to address our own sins, but when others address our sins we tend to become defensive. The godly accept the addressing of one another’s sins as part of corporate Christian life.

It is far easier to accept reproof and correction from a brother who has a deep sense of his own sin and approaches us with meekness, and humility. The one who is aware of his own susceptibility towards sin makes for the better counselor. This one will be humble, not haughty; kind, not cruel; sympathetic, not superior.

OUTLINE:

- I THE ASSUMPTION MADE
- II THE APPEAL EXPRESSED
- III THE PERSPECTIVE
- IV THE ADMONITION GIVEN

I THE ASSUMPTION MADE: Galatians 6:1

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

The assumption made here is that saved people can and do fall into sin. Paul speaks of a real possibility. While salvation produces a radical break with sin, it does not in this life produce a perfect or complete break with sin. To claim such is to be deceived.

1 John 1:8

*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

Though we ought not to sin, the reality is that we do sin.

1 John 2:1

*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Galatians 6:1 states that a man may be *overtaken in any trespass*. The word *overtaken* (προληφθῆ) means to be ensnared in a sin without really realizing what has taken place. A person may drift into sin by being caught off guard. Sin is that which overtakes the man. A man may be somewhat surprised by the sin (though perhaps not totally unaware of it). This is usually not in reference to a premeditated sin.

The clear implication of this word is that this man is not a willful, habitual sinner who regularly disobeys the will of Christ. The fault addressed here is occasional rather than habitual. (Peter was overtaken by the fear of man in his sin before the churches in Galatia.)

The mark of the true Christian is that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Abraham, Moses, David, and Peter are all examples of those who were overtaken by sin).

The assumption made by this verse is that a brother can and will, from time to time, be overtaken by sin.

## II THE APPEAL EXPRESSED: Galatians 6:1

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

### A THE KIND OF TRESPASS NOTED

The trespass under consideration in this verse is one that has become obvious to others. This is not a private sin, but a public one. When such sin exists in a brother's life it is essential that action be taken.

### B JUDGING OTHERS

The notion that we are not to judge the behavior of others is utterly refuted by this passage. It is impossible to obey this passage without judging or evaluating the behavior of another person first. A determination concerning the behavior of a brother is required by this passage. This passage is an imperative! (Usually those who complain against 'judging' are those who have something to hide. Their complaint is not one of integrity but defense.)

### C JUDGING INCLUDES CORRECTING

Not only is such behavior to be judged, it is also to be corrected. Intervention is not an option, but a necessity, a duty (*restore such a one*). Here is a dynamic of corporate dealing with an individual's sin within the context of the local church. This does not mean that it is wrong to correct those outside one's personal local church, but the context is the local church.

D WHO IS TO INTERVENE? HOW IS INTERVENTION TO BE ACCOMPLISHED?

1 THE PARTICIPANTS: . . . *you who are spiritual*

Who are these people? The context will help us determine the identity of those who are spiritual.

- a) They are those who are manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Galatians 5:22-23). Those who are spiritual are those who exhibit a substantial amount of the characteristics associated with walking in the Spirit (love, joy, peace, . . .).

When Paul begins to speak to those who are *spiritual* in Galatians 6:1 he clearly had in mind those he had described in chapter 5 as the ones who are walking in the Spirit.

- b) A spiritual man is one who does not have that particular sin himself.
- c) He is also one who is manifesting maturity and godliness in his walk as the result of maintaining and deepening his relationship with the Holy Spirit. It is the opposite of being a babe in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:1

*And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.*

This verse makes *spiritual people* a contrast to *babes in Christ*. They are not one and the same individual.

The point is that the business of restoration is not a process for young and inexperienced believers or those whose walk is inconsistent. Rather this work is for those who are noted for their consistent obedience to the Spirit's leading. Their consistency is manifested by their on-going and substantial demonstration of the fruit of the Spirit in their life.

If an individual does not qualify as one who is *spiritual* then that one should bring the situation to the attention of the elder/pastor who ought to be *spiritual* so that he can deal properly with the matter.

2 THE PROCESS: . . . *restore such a one*

The process is that the erring brother is to be restored. This word for restored (*καταρτίζετε*) is used in other literature in reference to the setting of a broken bone. It conveys the idea that something is broken and needs to be restored to a state of wholeness or soundness. It is no task for the inexperienced. Restoration requires knowledge, skill, and experience not unlike the setting of a broken bone.

This process involves several things:

- a) The necessity of convincing the erring brother of his sin. A person who has been overtaken may be unclear as to what he is pursuing. In the process of restoring it is important to use the Scriptures to demonstrate that his behavior is, in fact, sin.
- b) The erring brother must be persuaded to return to the path of obedience by showing him where this behavior will lead. If this brother persists in this sin he must be made aware of its consequences to himself and to others. He must be helped to establish a perspective in overcoming the fault.
- c) The brother must also be comforted with the sense of the pardon and mercy of God. Not only must this brother know about his sin and its consequences, he must also be reminded of the mercy of God and the pardon provided by the Lord Jesus Christ. He must know that there is healing, help, and hope in Jesus Christ.  
  
This must be accomplished in a manner to prevent the sinner from becoming presumptuous with reference to the sin, on the one hand, or despairing on the other.
- d) The *spiritual* brother must confirm his love and support for the erring brother being restored. This involves an on-going relationship.

The erring brother is not to be allowed to continue in his sin, but he must be restored. This restoration is a work for the mature and the skillful. It is carried out with compassion.

### III THE PERSPECTIVE: Galatians 6:1

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

The perspective of the one doing the correcting is critical to the success of the endeavor. A harsh angry spirit will have neither the blessing of God nor the kind reception of the offender. An attitude of meekness is required.

The word *gentleness* in our verse is the same word as *meekness* as used in Galatians 5:23 and a component of the fruit of the Spirit.

*Meekness* means to be mild, gentle, and soft in our dealings with others. Those who are meek are calm, tender, gracious, and kind in their admonitions. It is not uncommon for the offender to become defensive, but if they sense kindness in the brother who corrects them much can be accomplished profitably.

A classic example is found in Abigail when she went to David. David was overtaken with the sin of revenge against Nabal.

1 Samuel 25:23-35

*Now when Abigail saw David, she hastened to dismount from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. "Please, let not my*

*lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent. Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, since the LORD has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal. And now this present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord.*

*"Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days. Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."*

*Then David said to Abigail: "Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. "For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hastened and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!"*

*So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person."*

David, having been corrected by this example of meekness in a woman, blesses her. This is the best possible outcome for such a situation. The sin is stopped and the brother is reconciled. There is affection and respect as the result of this encounter.

#### IV THE ADMONITION GIVEN: Galatians 6:1

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

The phrase *consider yourself* means to examine closely, to look attentively at, or to peer at something. It refers to more than a casual glance. It is an on-going scrutiny.

The point is that introspection and self-examination are integral to restoration.

If we are going to take on the responsibility restoring another, we must not only examine their sin, but ours as well.

- 1 We must check to see if there is a beam in our eye - first. We must determine whether we are *spiritual*. Am I guilty of the same sin?
- 2 We must determine if we are in danger of falling into the same sin. Are we as vulnerable as was our brother?

Such introspection will foster and produce humility in us. It will dispel any sense of superiority. No one ever reaches the stage of being completely out of the danger of falling into sin.

1 Corinthians 10:12

*Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

We need to remind ourselves that we could fall into sin soon. How would we want to be treated? (Think of the great men who have fallen - Peter, David, Moses . . .) We are not immune to such grievous lapses into grievous sin.

Restoration must be accomplished with the right motive; the good of the sinner and the glory of Christ.

Galatians 6:2

*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

Proverbs 27:17

*As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

The work of Galatians 6:1 is the work of friendship. The proper counselor comes to you out of love. We are our brother's keeper.

Sanctification is a collective and cooperative endeavor occurring in a collective and cooperative environment. There is real danger is exempting oneself from the assembly of the saints in the local church. To neglect the local church and participation in it is to neglect one's own sanctification.

These situations must be handled for a little leaven will leaven the whole lump. If the individual is not corrected and restored, it may eventually produce an adverse effect upon the whole church.

Conclusion:

In conclusion we must be reminded that the text refers to a brother overtaken in a sin. We are not given license to meddle in a brother's personal preferences, liberties, or peculiarities. It is sin only that mandates intervention by this text. There may be things in others that irritate us but if they are not sinful we are not given the liberty or mandate to use this passage to change that behavior. The things in others that irritate us, if they are not sin, God calls us to cover them with love.

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