

**THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS:
KEY ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE APOSTLE PAUL
(Emphasis: How to Change to Be More Christ-like and Christ-centered)
Equipping Hour at Saving Grace Bible Church, Osprey, FL
(Lesson 7: 6/17/2018)**

INTRODUCTION

- We are continuing our journey through the Apostle Paul's Letter to the churches of Galatia -- in the cities of Derbe, Lystra, Pisidian Antioch, and Iconium -- churches Paul and Barnabas planted (Acts 13-14).

PURPOSE OF OUR STUDY

To equip you to understand and address the key issues raised by the Apostle Paul to the Galatian churches. Why? So you may live more Christ-like and evidence Christ-centeredness flowing from your life and heart. In doing so, you may be better equipped to be able to teach others and present every person complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28-29).

BRIEF REVIEW

So far we have been blessed to go through chapters 1-5. All of the recordings and notes for our study are available on the SGBC website.

TODAY'S LESSON: GALATIANS 6:1-5

There are two learning objectives:

- (1) Concentrate on the text in Galatians 6:1-5 (and related passages) in order to give you a full understanding of what the Apostle Paul communicated to the churches of Galatia; and
- (2) Identify practical ways (takeaways) for you to apply these biblical principles in your life in the local church.

TODAY'S OUTLINE: Galatians 6:1-5

- I. Restoring Fellow Believers: Addressing and Bearing Burdens (Gal. 6:1-5)
- II. Biblical Principles (Additional) to Apply When Restoring Another Believer

SUMMARY: Galatian saints who have not been enticed away from grace by the wiles of the Judaizers, and who therefore are living Spirit-controlled lives, are exhorted/commanded to restore their brethren who has been caught in any trespass (6:1-5).

v. 1 – Brethren. Note that Paul addresses them as brethren -- a term of endearment rather than “you foolish Galatians.” The one who is caught in a trespass needs to be freed from his sinful ways so that he or she may be restored to usefulness in local church.

Notice that this verse follows an exhortation by the Apostle Paul in Gal. 5:25-26 whereby he maintains if believers live by the Spirit and walk by the Spirit then the outward fruit should not be characterized by boasting (i.e., having a conceited attitude by maintaining a claim to honor; arrogance and pride). Similarly, the evidence of walking by the Spirit would eliminate challenging/provoking others with combative arguments leading to divisions, as well as being void of envy. Thus, a Spirit-led believer – one who is walking by the Spirit and being controlled by the Holy Spirit as evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit -- is to take special care to admonish/warn/counsel/teach a fallen brother for the purpose of restoring him/her to usefulness in the body of Christ.

Although every believer should walk by the Spirit and not yield to the impulses of the flesh, the fact is that due to our unredeemed humanness – responding in the flesh -- we often yield to temptations and sin. Passages such as Romans 12:1-2 and I John 2:15 are applicable for all followers of Christ.

In Galatians 6:1, Paul's appeal is one of brotherly love – to be demonstrated when a brother or sister in Christ has been caught or overtaken in a trespass (when he/she has stumbled or fallen into sin).

The Greek denotes more of a surprise that he/she participated in the very act rather than a premeditated participation in a sinful act (i.e., “surprised by the fault itself.”) “A slip or lapse,” rather than “a willful sin.”

Paul used the word in 3:19 (transgressions), where he spoke of sin as a willful stepping beyond the limits imposed by law. There he was speaking of the ministry of the Mosaic law in showing unsaved man that sin was not only the following of evil impulses, but that it was the violation of the laws of God. Here the apostle is speaking of the case of a Christian, who while desiring wholeheartedly to do rightly, yet the believer is entrapped by sin so Paul urges a tender and gentle treatment of the offending individual.

The verb “restore” literally means to mend or repair to usefulness, as in the setting of a broken limb, or the mending of nets in Matthew 4:21. Here it indicates gently correcting an offender with a view to his/her restoration for usefulness in the local church.

Each one looking to yourself so that you, too, will not be tempted. Examining yourself with continual diligent attentiveness. Restoring an offending brother/ sister belongs to the local church collectively, but each individual must examine him/herself before the Lord; so that he/she fulfills his/her part with humility and sympathy.

Galatians 6:2

Bear connotes carrying something with endurance. The believer who is living by the Spirit will be concerned to restore the fallen brother or sister from his/her sin. In some cases this help will be in the form of assisting the brother or sister with a biblical plan (e.g., a Victory Over Failures Plan or a Discovering Problem Patterns Plan) to follow when similar temptations, circumstances, or situations arise. Such plans could serve as major guides to enable him/her to respond to temptation in a godly manner (e.g., II Timothy 2:22; Psalm 119:9-11; Luke 4; Matthew 4) without sinning and produce righteous fruit.

Please note that the burdens in this verse communicate something extremely heavy, which represent difficulties, trials, temptations, and problems another individual has trouble responding to in a biblical way. Often these burdens can be eased with the help of a faithful and loving Christian brother/sister.

Love -- Jesus stated the same in Matt. 22:39; what He displayed before His followers in John 13:34-35. Love - fulfilling the Law of Christ, which fulfills the entire law – is a spiritual fruit (Gal. 5:22) due to the Holy Spirit being resident in a believer and the believer yielding to the Holy Spirit.

In the case of one who has been overtaken or caught in a sin, applying Matthew 28:19-20 by teaching the brother or sister. In other words, restore by equipping him/her for renewed usefulness in the local church.

Galatians 6:3

If one has the conceited idea that he is morally and spiritually superior to another, he may tend not to take the burden of responsibility for restoring a sinning fellow-saint. A Christian of that character is far from fulfilling the law of the Christ. Any conceit of our own strength or goodness is a vain delusion because when compared to Christ, we are nothing. So, let no one compare his own life with others, as this could feed his vanity; but let each scrutinize his own work. Then, if he finds reason for rejoicing, it will be in the ability that has been given by God's grace, which should result in making one's boast in the Lord Who provides timely grace.

Recall: Luke 18:9-14 -- And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they

were righteous, and viewed others with contempt.

Galatians 6:4

Examine means “to put to the test for the purpose of approving.” The exhortation is to Christians not to form an estimate of themselves by comparing themselves with others, but to put themselves to the test to find out what there is in their characters and in their lives which would merit approval.

The word rejoicing means “that of which one glories or can glory, matter or ground of glorying.” The word is not connected with the word glory (doxa) which is used of God’s glory. It means glory in the sense of exultation, self-congratulation. It does not have the idea of an excessive/unjustified estimate of one’s self that the English word boasting has.

Galatians 6:5

For (by this way, Gal. 6:4, of examining his own work, not depreciating his neighbor by comparison) each one shall bear his own "load" (namely, of sin and infirmity). Note that the Greek word for load (v. 5) is different from that in v. 2. This word load was applied to the pack usually carried by a soldier on the march.

This verse does not contradict v. 2 where Paul tells them to bear with others' "burdens" of infirmity in a loving way; here, that self-examination will make a man to come to the reality that he has enough to do with "his own load" of sin, without comparing himself boastfully with his neighbor.

Own. The word own is from *idios*, which means “pertaining to one’s self, one’s own as compared to that which is another’s.” It speaks of personal, private, unique possession.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES (ADDITIONAL) TO APPLY WHEN RESTORING OTHER BELIEVERS

In addition to the principles we discussed in Galatians 6:1-5 regarding restoring a brother or sister in Christ, several questions arise.

How Can I Restore A Believer Who Has Fallen into Sin?

1. Believe and Depend on the Sufficient Word of God: The Bible

The Bible itself states that the truths contained within it are entirely sufficient to enable a person to live a life pleasing to God (*II Peter 1:3-4*). It provides all the needed principles and guidance for understanding our mental processes, analyzing our emotional responses, and exercising control over our actions. The laws, testimonies, precepts, commandments, judgments, and principles in the Old and New Testaments provide the only authoritative guide for man’s thoughts, words, and actions (*Psalms 19:7-14; Hebrews 4:12*).

The promises and authority of God contained in His Word offer the basis for a vital and abundant life. The Scripture contains the solutions to every problem of attitude, relationship, communication, conduct, and action (*II Timothy 3:16-17*).

Understand and apply Romans 15:14:

The Greek noun *nouthesia* (verb: *noutheteo*). The word, used in the New Testament primarily by the Apostle Paul, is translated "admonish, correct, instruct, or teach." This term probably best describes what encapsulates biblical counsel.

2. Study Biblical Principles and Communicate Them Daily

Apply II Timothy 2:15 in order to establish a strong scriptural foundation to communicate biblical passages and principles for your own life, as well as when restoring others (Matthew 7:1-5; 28:19-20; II Timothy 2:2).

Be thoroughly knowledgeable and practice biblical passages and principles so as to apply them in a systematic manner to address any problem of life. This will help you establish the essential biblical foundation for your own life as well as when restoring others so they may change unbiblical patterns of living and establish new habits of biblical righteousness in thought, word, and action.

In providing biblical counsel while restoring and discipling others, remain committed to God's Word by asking questions before giving answers (Proverbs 15:2; 18:2; 13; 17). Acquire enough information to recognize and understand the fallen brother's/sister's situation/problem in order to formulate and present the biblical solution.

Teach the fallen saint you are trying to restore to confront his/her failures and shortcomings of their personal lives from a biblical point of view (*Matthew 7:1-5*). In doing this, he/she should begin to see the necessity of turning his/her focus away from selfish desires (*II Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 5:17, 19-21; James 4:1-3*) and should determine to live in a manner pleasing to God (*II Corinthians 5:9; Ephesians 4:1-3; Colossians 1:10-12*).

In order for the restoration/discipleship/counseling process to be fruitful, both you and the fallen brother/sister must be deeply committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of God's Word. Both of you must be continually committed to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (*Colossians 1:10*). This commitment will change each individual's focus from loving self to a focus on loving God and loving others in response to God's gracious love demonstrated in Jesus Christ (*Matthew 18:21-35; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 4:32; I John 4:11*).

Even if the fallen brother/sister has a very new or shallow concept of a biblical relationship with God and a limited knowledge of His Word, biblical restoration and discipleship can be extremely effective to help hi/her become complete/ mature in Christ. As you provide biblical counsel by continually focusing the fallen brother/sister on the authority and sufficiency of Scripture while exploring the individual's problems from a biblical perspective, you should repeatedly present the necessity for a wholehearted commitment to Christ (*Luke 9:23-24*).

As the individual being restored view his/her problems from a biblical standpoint, he/she will begin to understand that the peace and joy promised by God do not depend on a financial situation, a work environment, the behavior of one's spouse, or on any other external circumstance. A discouraged or despondent individual can gain great hope as he/she learns from Scripture that God's peace and joy can be experienced, as he/she depends solely on his/her relationship with God through Jesus Christ (*John 14:27, 16:33*).

3. Memorize and Review Foundational Biblical Verses and Passages in their Context

- In His Word, God has given us everything we need to live in a manner that pleases Him (*II Peter 1:3-4*). When looking to restore another believer who has fallen, do not integrate man's theories with biblical truth in order to address or attempt to resolve problems for him/her to live a victorious life. As a matter of fact, Scripture promises that when one places God's Word on a level with man's thinking, serious consequences occur (*Proverbs 1:22-32, 14:12, 30:5-6; Isaiah 5:20-21; Romans 8:6-8; I Cor. 3:19-20*).

- Biblical discipleship/counsel is established upon the biblical teaching that we will each give an account of ourselves to God (*Romans 14:12; II Corinthians 5:10*). Even though believers in Christ will not be condemned by their sins in eternity (*Romans 8:1; Hebrews 9:27-28, 10:10-18*) as will non-believers (*Revelation 20:15*), there are consequences for sins (*Ezekiel 18:20; Colossians 3:25*). Communicate to your disciple (one you are restoring to usefulness in the local body of Christ) that he/she is responsible before

God solely for his/her own thoughts, words, and actions and that he/she is not responsible for changing anyone else's life.

- In learning to assume responsibility for his/her own thoughts, words, and actions, help the disciple understand the conflict between his old self and his new nature in Christ (*Romans chapter 6; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:16*). The disciple must determine, by an act of his/her will, to lay aside the old manner or way of life with its lusts and deception and to begin to live consistently in a way that reflects the new Christ-like nature God has given him/her (*Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:5-17*).

- Help the disciple develop godly thought patterns (*II Corinthians 10:5; Psalm 119:9-11; Philipians 4:8*) if he/she is to have a renewed mind and be successful in living a life that corresponds to the new nature which is created by God in holiness of the truth (*Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23-24*).

- Any changes that a disciple commits to must be done in order to please God and not to gratify him/herself or please one's parents, one's spouse, one's child, or anyone else (*II Corinthians 5:9, 15; Colossians 1:10; I Thessalonians 2:4, 6*). This requires a commitment to obey God's Word and not to depend on or be ruled by feelings or others, regardless of how strong or persuasive they may be (*II Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 1:10; 5:16-17*).

4. What Are the Essential Elements of Biblical Discipleship/Counsel I Should Use When Restoring Another Believer?

Apply four essential elements from in your discipleship:

A. Understand the Problem/Situation/Temptation/Difficulty.

- Gaining God's perspective on any difficulty is important when addressing/ solving problems biblically (*Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 5:3-5, 8:28-29; James 1:2-4*).

- Both look honestly at yourselves in light of God's Word (*Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 6:42-49; I Corinthians 11:31; Galatians 6:1-5*).

- Learn to Ask the Disciple Questions: Understanding a problem requires that biblical inquiry be made (*Proverbs 18:2, 13, 17; II Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:19*) and truthful answers be given (*Ephesians 4:15, 25*), in order for the total spectrum of the problem to be revealed (*Mark 7:20-23; James 1:22-25, 4:17*)

B. Biblical Hope.

In His Word, God has promised that He will not let anyone be tried or tempted, suffer "stress" or anxiety, or face any problem beyond a believer's endurance. Instead He will provide ample help and direction in every situation as the believer deals with the problem His way (*I Corinthians 10:13; Romans 8:28-29; Hebrews 4:15-16*).

C. Biblical Change. Learn how to lay aside (or "put off") the old self-centered habits and destructive thoughts (such as anxiety, bitterness, and resentment). Instead, "put on" biblical patterns of thought, words, and action (*Romans 6:6-7, 12-13; Ephesians 4:22-32; Philipians 4:6-9; Colossians 3:5-17*).

D. Biblical Practice. Take action to put God's solutions into practice in everyday activities. If one hears the Word and does not put it into practice, he/she deceives him/herself and your problems become escalate. But doers of the Word are promised by God to be blessed and experience His peace and joy in spite of any turmoil around the believer (*Psalm 85:8-10; Isaiah 32:17; John 15:10-12, 16:33; Hebrews 5:14; James 1:22-25, 3:14-18; I Peter 3:8-12*).

5. How do I identify Problems from a Biblical Perspective?

In analyzing problems from a scriptural perspective, recognize there are three levels of every problem.

1. The Feeling or Perception Level

An individual will often seek help or ask for counsel when there is a disruption or discomfort of feelings, most notably a lack of peace and joy. Following a scriptural pattern, be wise to carefully explore the feeling level of a problem in order to define the nature of the problem being presented (the what, when, where, and how of the problem as depicted in *Genesis 3:8-13, 4:6; I Kings 19:9-14; Proverbs 18:13, 17; Luke 24:13-35; John 20:11-18*).

2. The Doing Level.

Help the individual identify specific thoughts, words, and actions which violate biblical principles and commands. A person focused on self tends to allow his/her feelings to dictate his/her actions, regardless of what effect this may have on others. Living by one's feelings inevitably leads to doing the wrong things (unrighteous living), which leads to more problems and further violations of biblical truth/principles.

For our instruction (*Romans 15:4*), numerous examples of this self-centered pattern of behavior are given in Scripture (*Genesis 3:6-13, 4:5-8, 37:11-33; II Samuel 11:1-27, 13:1-33; II Chronicles 26:16-21*). However, God's Word says that all of one's thoughts, words, and actions should result from a commitment to please God by obeying Him (*John 14:15,21; II Corinthians 5:9-15; Colossians 1:10*). When an individual begins to obey God, regardless of his/her feelings (*Romans 6:12-13; II Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 5:17*), then God's promised blessings are available to him (*Genesis 4:7; James 1:25*). Foremost among these blessings are lasting peace, joy, and righteousness (*Romans 14:17*).

3. The Heart Level.

Scripture teaches that out of the heart comes anger, bitterness, resentment, and all other evils that are defiling (*Matthew 15:18-20*). The way a person responds to his/her problems reflects the motivation and condition of his heart (*Mark 7:21-23*). No human being (including one discipling and providing biblical counsel) can fully understand the heart of any other person (*Jeremiah 17:9*), but God examines each heart thoroughly (*I Samuel 16:7; Jeremiah 17:10*). When restoring and discipling another believer, present him/her with the truths found in the Word of God, knowing it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict him/her of sin and to teach him/her the way to live a life pleasing to God (*John 16:8-13; Gal. 5:16-17; Heb. 4:12-13*).

(Note: One who discipled and provides biblical counsel to the one he/she is restoring should encourage the disciple from looking to and/or depending on human counselors as the authority. He/she should teach that the authority is the Word of God (*II Timothy 3:16-17*), and the true Counselor is the Holy Spirit (*I Corinthians 2:10-13; John 16:13*). In this discipleship relationship, help the disciple to consistently examine him/herself (*Matthew 7:5; I Corinthians 11:31; II Corinthians 13:5*) so that he will have a pure heart before the Lord (*I Samuel 16:7; Psalm 51:10, 17; 139:23-24; I Thessalonians 2:3-4; Hebrews 10:19-22*), that it might be well with him (*Deuteronomy 5:29*) and that he may be blessed (*Matthew 5:8*).

6. How Can I Know that Problems Can be Overcome?

While trials and tribulations are a part of life, God has a purpose for all of them (*Romans 5:3-5, 8:28; James 1:2-4*). No matter what difficulties arise, God has promised that a believer in Christ can be an overcomer in every situation (*Romans 8:35-37; I Corinthians 10:13; I John 5:4-5*) as he responds in obedience to God's Word (*James 1:25*). Even though obedience to God may not be easy (*Romans 7:18-19*), it can be done as a response of love for what Jesus Christ has accomplished for a believer (*John 14:15; Romans chapter 6; I John 5:3; II John 1:6*). Following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, a child of God is to remain obedient even during times of suffering (*Hebrews 5:8; I Peter 2:20-21*), looking beyond present circumstances to the glory that will be revealed (*Romans 8:18; II Corinthians 4:16-18*).

As Solomon wrote in *Proverbs 27:6*, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend," a friend who will love you enough to even wound you sometimes because you need it.