

Paul's Letter to the Galatians

Notes by Doug Hamilton

Reaching Out for Restoration

- Before attempting to apply Galatians 6:1-10 to our daily living, it is necessary to take a look back through some history of the Law.

The Ten Commandments through the eyes of a Jew.

- Matthew 22:36-40 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”³⁷ And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’³⁸ “This is the great and foremost commandment.³⁹ “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’⁴⁰ “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”
- Jesus condensed the Ten Commandments down to two sets of five, loving the LORD God and loving thy neighbor. This was the common perception of the Jew in that day, for the first five commandments focused on direct violation to God and the second five were an indirect violation of God through personal relationship with their fellow man.
 - Loving God: In the first five commandments, by worshipping false gods, by bowing idols, by using His name in vain, by not keeping the Sabbath and by not respecting their parents, they directly brought shame before God.
 - Loving Thy Neighbor: In the second five commandments, by not valuing the sanctity of life, of marriage, of property, of truth and of the heart, we trespass against our neighbor and bring shame to God.
- When there was a violation of the latter, the violator would have to above all get right with his fellow man with whom he had offended. He would have to sacrifice a guilt or trespass offering on behalf of his sin against the other. This was called the restoration process, for it restored the guilty party to the people of God. Once this was done, he would have to offer a sin offering to God, a burnt offering of rededication, a gift of a grain offering and finally the fellowship offering of acceptance.
- If the violator ignored the trespass and pressed on with his fellowship offering of acceptance from God like nothing happened, God would not and could not have fellowship with that person. This is what Jesus meant when he said in *Matthew 5:23-24* *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;*²⁴ *Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* A person can pretend everything is right between them and God, but if they are not restored to their brother, then they are not restored to God. *1 John 4:20* *If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.*
- There were two types of trespass offerings that were made, 1) unintentional and 2) the intentional. The unintentional was ignorantly (Lev 5:3) and thoughtlessly (Lev 5:4) carried out. The intentional were violations that were thought out ahead of time, like deception (Lev 6:1), robbery and extortion (Lev 6:2), swearing falsely (Lev 6:5) and laying claim to something that was not your own (Lev 6:2). Both of these violations had to be repented of in three ways, 1) confession with intent (Lev 5:5), 2) restitution where

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applicable (Lev 5:26; 6:5) and 3) the sacrifice of the trespass offering (Lev 5:6). Without those steps it was not considered true repentance. The Judaizers whom Paul defended his gospel from would have clearly understood the nature of the trespass offering. With that history reviewed we now begin the interpretation of Galatians 6:1. There are certain standards that are to be used when trying to restore a brother or sister in rebellion.

I) We must seek to restore with a spirit of gentleness.

Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

- There are five primary words in the Greek NT that describe sin.
 1. Harmartano: It means to fall short. *Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
 2. Anomia: It is lawless defiance against God. *Romans 4:7 "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.*
 3. Ophilema: It means to be in debt to someone. *Matthew 6:12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*
 4. Parabosis: It means to step across the line: *Romans 2:23 You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?*
 5. Paraptoma: It means to slip or fall on an icy or difficult path. *Ephesians 2:1 "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins..."*
- It is this last word, *paraptoma*, that Paul uses in Galatians 6:1 to describe the sin that the Christian was "caught" in. He is beckoning back to Leviticus chapters 5 and 6, explaining that some in the church at Galatia have slipped on the path of righteousness and are in need of being put back on the right path. Whatever they did, whether intentional or unintentional, there was a need to get right with God by getting right with their fellow man.
- The word that Paul uses for *restore* was a medical term that was used to describe the setting of a broken limb. This was a pretty hard fall! The same type of language is used in *Hebrews 12:12-13 Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.*
- Some of the Galatians were broken in their relationships with each other and God, needing to be made whole. It was not a broken bone that needed set, but a broken soul. It is with the spirit of gentleness that they must enlist themselves in the recovery of the straying, not with aggressiveness.
 - 1Corinthians 4:21 What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?
 - 2Timothy 2:25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,

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Application: Many times our natural tendency when being hurt by another is to lash back. We must strive to be gentle in every step of the way.

II) We must seek to restore with a spirit of humility.

Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

- How much better would it be if we simply remembered that we too have a history of slipping on paths and falling to the ground? We often do we tend to forget that we personally have moments of weakness.

Application: We must have a spirit of humility if we are ever going to restore a straying soul.

III) We must seek to restore with a spirit of accountability.

Galatians 6:4-5 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have *reason for* boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. ⁵ For each one will bear his own load.

- When a commercial airplane loses cabin pressure, the air masks drop from the ceiling and the oxygen begins to flow. You know the routine from the opening safety presentation? They say if you are traveling with a child, first place the air mask on yourself then the child. This is because if you lose consciousness, you will be of no help to you or the child.
- This is the same when it comes to the restoration of a straying soul. What good can we be in restoring one to God if we ourselves are not right with God? How can we help carry the load from our brother when we cannot carry our own?
- *Matthew 7:3-5 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" ⁴ "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?" ⁵ "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."*

Application: Make sure you are bearing your own load before you try to carry the burden of another.

IV) We must seek to restore with a spirit of hope.

Galatians 6:6-8 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches *him*. ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- There is a natural expectation in the agricultural world of reaping what is sown. If you plant corn, you harvest corn. If you plant beans, you harvest beans. If you plant wheat, then wheat is what the harvest should yield. The farmer sows in hope with a future fruitful blessing in mind.

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- What happens when you plant the word of God in the heart of one needing to be restored? You can expect a bumper crop of fruit in the future. *1 Corinthians 9:10* "...Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops."

Application: It might not seem like we are accomplishing anything, but if we planted the word of God and spiritual principles in the hearts and minds of the straying, then wait in hope because God is not mocked. He applies the law of the reaper to every situation.

V) We must seek to restore with a spirit of patience.

Galatians 6:9-10 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. ¹⁰ So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

- It is easy to lose patience when working with unreasonable people. When someone is straying from God in the relationship to the church family, it might take years before they come back.
- James 5:19-20 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, ²⁰ let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

Application: When seeking to restore a person to the Lord, it must be done in a spirit of patience. Crops take time and people can take even longer.

There will always be some brothers and sisters in every congregation that will slip and fall, breaking their relationship with members of the body of Christ and even God. Unless there is true repentance, there can be no restoration. That restoration is best brought about with...

- 1) A spirit of gentleness
- 2) A spirit of humility
- 3) A spirit of accountability
- 4) A spirit of hope
- 5) A spirit of patience

Closing Story: Jack Bower