

Galatians 6 pt. 1 v.1-5 Further fruits of the Spirit

Paul has spent the past several verses in chapter 5 explaining the nature of the Spirit impacting the human life.

The Holy Spirit brings forth fruits in our lives naturally, not out of any contrivance of our own will but rather because it is God's will that those who are His should bear good fruit on our branches.

Remember our position on the matter. We shunned the idea that if we present these attributes: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control -- then God will be pleased with me.

We flipped that idea on its head based on the notion that good fruit is the natural result of a good tree. SINCE God is pleased with us, because we are His, then we will bear these admirable fruits in our lives. AND, we acknowledged that a cultivated tree isn't meant to eat its own fruit but that fruit is for the benefit of others!

In our text we come to very practical instruction based on the theory of what it means to be a good tree in God's garden, a Jesus follower, one who has crucified the flesh with its passions and desires, and who lives in the Spirit.

We could consider these as further fruits of the Spirit.

V.1 - Paul continues to address the church affectionately, as brothers even. Just because they had issues did not mean they weren't family! Oh how much we would benefit from being persuaded to Paul's position on the church being family.

We all like to say and acknowledge that there is no perfect church, but then we act as if there are and when we don't get our way or things get uncomfortable we are prone to skip town in favor of another church that looks pretty good - then after some time we find that church has some problems too, so we leave again and on and on the cycle of disappointment and abandonment goes. Why? Because the church is made up of...people, sinners - you and I! And we each know in our heart of hearts that we have bad days and we need some grace and understanding from time to time.

Contextually, in this letter, Paul is addressing many churches spread out over a region and he has had to address some very divisive, contentious issues with them.

Remember way back to Galatians 1 when Paul had these words FOR THE CHURCHES: [Gal 1:6-8 NLT] 6 I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a different way that pretends to be the Good News 7 but is not the Good News at all. You are being fooled by those who deliberately twist the truth concerning Christ. 8 Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you.

And somehow, Paul manages to regard these people as family. These are people that he cares for on a level exceeding just Sunday morning acquaintances. They are, to him, part of the eternal family of Jesus Christ - His church. Oh, how that would bear on how we view one another.

He goes on to instruct them that if one of them is caught up in sin then those who are SPIRITUAL have a duty to RESTORE that person gently being careful that they are not caught up in the same sin!

This verse is rich with doctrine and application.

The first item of note is that it is possible for believers, Christians, to sin.

[Gal 5:17 NLT] 17 The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

So how are we to respond when this happens? Some Christians have adopted the attitude of arrogance, harshness, and condescension. They forget so easily that they were rescued out of their sins as well and held from it only by God's grace! I pray the Lord would forgive us when we behave this way toward a dear brother or sister who is caught up in sin.

I am grateful that the Bible gives us very clear instructions on how we ought to respond because if we have our way we can often be hurtful to the dear loved one who has fallen into sin and is looking for some help.

Sin often brings along with it guilt, shame, and regret. In these moments people even close themselves off to others, to God's word, to fellowship. And unfortunately then some high-handed believer comes along to add a double portion of all of that...what a shame, and totally unbiblical.

First things first though - those who are qualified for this restorative responsibility are "those who are spiritual."

What does that mean?

"πνευματικός, οὗ m: (derivative of πνεῦμα 'Spirit,' 12.18) one who has received God's Spirit and presumably lives in accordance with this relationship—'one who is spiritual, one who has received the Spirit.'" Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). [*Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*](#)

(electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 142). New York: United Bible Societies.

“...in reference to persons; *one who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God*: 1 Co. 2:15 (cf. 10–13, 16); [3:1]; 14:37; Gal. 6:1;” Thayer, J. H. (1889). [*A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti*](#) (p. 523). New York: Harper & Brothers.

This is we are considering this as further fruits of the Spirit, because we see that this is not necessarily how we should act on our own power - we too often come off us rough, demanding, polarizing, and ostracizing even in our best restorative efforts.

This is how we WILL act when we are led by the Holy Spirit. Why? Because that’s how the Holy Spirit relates to us! The Holy Spirit is many things to the believer. One of those roles that the Holy Spirit fills is as our great comforter.

[Jhn 14:16 KJV] 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

The Holy Spirit is our comforter, our abiding Helper. And how we respond to other dear believers who have been caught up in sin is by His nature - not our own flawed human nature which is clouded with biases, and bad logic, and the attitude that shouts, “you get what you deserve!”

That ignores the Spirit of Grace that God has toward us wherein we received what we don't deserve, namely, His eternal favor.

We are to RESTORE these dearly loved believers that have been overtaken by sin. This involves so much more than leaving them with some clever catchphrases, or pithy platitudes.

What are things we sometimes say to others who are in need of restoration without meaning it:

- I'm praying for you (when we aren't)
- God uses all things for good (He does, but we don't mean it we're just trying to get out of the uncomfortable conversation)
- You just gotta have faith

Here in God's Word we find ourselves instructed to PARTICIPATE in the restoration of others.

If that feels heavy, it is, but it's not on us to make it come to pass.

True restoration only comes by Jesus Christ - He is the ultimate Restorer:

[Luk 4:16-21 NKJV] 16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 "The Spirit of the LORD [is] upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to [the] poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to [the] captives And recovery of sight to [the] blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." 20 Then He closed the book, and gave [it] back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

But in a glorious moment of God's divinity intersecting with our humanity, we are called to participate in the restorative process.

WE GET to help-

- preach the gospel to [the] poor
- heal the brokenhearted,
- proclaim liberty to [the] captives And recovery of sight to [the] blind,
- set at liberty those who are oppressed
- proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD

WHY and HOW?! Because that is the nature of Jesus Christ that lives presently in the saints. Because we have cast aside our old nature of corruption and hate, nailing it to the cross, and we have adopted the nature of Christ or, more truthfully, He has adopted us to His nature - filling us with the Holy Spirit.

Next we find that the manner in which we participate in the restorative process matters in God's eyes. If we are taking place in restoration we are to be characterized by gentleness, even as Jesus Christ was characterized by gentleness.

This doesn't mean naivety. It is possible to be discerning, wise, and gentle at the same time.

[Mat 10:16 NKJV] 16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

This correlation between wisdom and gentleness finds itself born out in Paul's instruction to those who are participating in restoration as we consider ourselves lest we also be tempted.

We aren't restoring people because we are beyond temptation. We are certainly prone to sinning ourselves - and quite good at it. But we are to keep a clear eye and a clear head as we seek to serve others gently as led by the Holy Spirit.

Do not let the lie of pride deceive you into falling along with the people we are restoring. The characteristics of humility and gentleness - as brought forth by the Holy Spirit will guard against such arrogance.

[Pro 16:18-19 NKJV] 18 Pride [goes] before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall. 19 Better [to be] of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

V. 2 - Continuing in this same line of thought Paul instructs the Galatians to “bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

We know that Christ summarized God's law by teaching that whole fulfillment of the Law is bound up in loving God completely, and loving people.

Paul restates this notion in Galatians 5:14: [Gal 5:14 NKJV] 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, [even] in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Loving people is more than just lip-service, more than just theory - it's the actual sharing of hardship, bearing burdens, carrying weight together.

V.3-5 There are some within the church who believe they have ascended to such a height that they shouldn't be sullied by

bearing the burdens of others. This is straight up pride! To allow Christ's dear saints to be crushed under the weight of sin without lifting a finger is severely hateful.

These people, within the Galatian churches, were all about religion - do this, do that, don't do that, eat this, don't eat that, etc.

But when it came to the real practical living with one another, caring for one another, it appears that they were not involved. Paul clearly instructs them that part of being the Body, the church, is bearing one another's burdens without getting too big for our own breeches, so to speak.

V.3 Paul brings this home when he tells us that we can be deceived into thinking we are more than we actually are, and the implication is that there were those within the church that hung their own self-worth on the work and personality of somebody else other than Jesus - probably the high-minded Judaizers and legalists who crept into the body.

This happens today too. People become impressed with themselves based on who they were trained by, disciplined by,

what school they may have gone to, etc. Even more so when there are those falling around us! Oh how good we look when are dear loved ones are caught in sin!

But, where is the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.) Where is the practical love demonstrated by bearing one another's burdens?

Don't be deceived!

V.4 Paul tells them to take a look in the mirror, examine themselves and then they can rejoice in their own work rather than hoping that somebody else's discipleship, or somebody else's spiritual formation becomes their own.

Or rather - that having seen the brother or sister crushed under the weight of sin that we have helped to bear we become arrogant of our own spiritual maturity and despise our own family in Christ.

"...our business lies more at home than abroad, with ourselves than with other men, for what have we to do to judge another man's servant?... it appears that if Christians...employ themselves in this work they might easily discover those defects and failings in themselves which would soon convince them how little reason

they have either to be conceited of themselves or severe in their censures of others; and so it gives us occasion to observe that the best way to keep us from being proud of ourselves is to prove our own selves: the better we are acquainted with our own hearts and ways, the less liable shall we be to despise and the more disposed to compassion and help others under their infirmities and afflictions.” Henry, M. (1994). Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume (p. 2304). Peabody: Hendrickson.

V.5 Two weights - burdens (v.2) and loads. Burdens are crushing, loads are expected.

Paul tells us that part of our work in the kingdom involves carrying our own load. We each carry our own weight, our own pack.

I can’t carry you into God’s kingdom! Nobody else can either! I wish I could sometimes. The only one who can carry you into God’s kingdom is Jesus Christ. AND, Jesus calls us to WALK!

Ever wonder why we Christians use that term so often - walk? As in, “How’s your walk with the Lord?”

Did we come up with that on our own? No!

The Bible instructs us to “walk worthy of our calling; walk in newness of life, walk according to the Spirit, walk properly, walk by faith, walk in good works...”

Jesus Christ Himself instructs us to take up our cross (our load) and to follow after Him. What does that mean but to walk in His path? He has established the way. We don't have to make a new path. But we must walk, we must bear the load that we have been given, the cross that we have taken up, to follow after Him.

And what we will find as we are bearing our load, following after Jesus, is that there are others on that path too. Dear brothers and sisters who are following hard after Jesus.

What shall we do when they or we ourselves stumble? Let them lie there under the crushing weight of sin? Let them perish? Let them die?

No, but carefully, gently restore such a one so we can continue to walk together.