

**Restoring the Sinning Brother**

Scripture: Galatians 5:26-6:6

Code: 1671

Coming back to our study of the book of Galatians tonight we come to Chapter 5, verse 26 and then Chapter 6 verses 1-6. And the title is how to restore a sinning brother. I'm very much concerned about the message tonight because I believe that this is one of those very basic subjects that is essential to the health of the church. It is critical that we understand this priority. This is the kind of message like the one I preached some time ago on prayer that ought to be repeated frequently, because this is so very germane to the health, progress, and holiness of the church.

Now sin, and this is an introduction, sin is a problem for everybody, even Christians. Now, I know that there are in some theological circles some Christians who claim they don't sin, but that's rather problematic to me. In 1 John 1:8 it says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." If on the other hand we are confessing our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

Now, twice our Lord says speaking through the apostle John, that to deny sin is to deceive ourselves and to make God a liar, for God says we are sinners. Sin is a problem for every believer, just as it is for every man. In James 3:2, it says, "For in many things we all stumble." "For in many things we all stumble." Now Satan and his foes relentlessly pursue the Christian. In Ephesians Chapter 6, in verse 10, just drawing your attention to the statements that are made there. He says, "Finally my brethren be strong in the Lord and the power of His might put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the craftiness of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against..." and then he names the ranks of demons.

So we not only have the problem of sin in a general sense, but specifically we're being hassled by Satan's emissaries. Now in addition to that, the flesh itself, even when it isn't a demon or it isn't one of Satan's planned programs, the flesh itself is activated to cause even the Christian to sin. James 1, verse 14, "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust." And when lust conceives it brings forth sin. Every man is tempted in terms of his own lust, every man. He says to believers, "put away," verse 21, "all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness." It is a problem for the Christian. He has to face sin, both from Satanic emissaries and from his own flesh. Now sin in the life of a believer has three areas of affect. When you as a Christian sin, it affects three dimensions, yourself, God, and the other Christians. And we might include in that last one others all together, because it also affects unbelievers.

First of all, when you sin and when I sin as a Christian, it affects ourselves. When I sin, what happens? Well, let me just give you a...run by a list real quick. One, I lose joy. And there are verses supporting that. Two, I lose peace. All of a sudden, I am at odds with God practically speaking. I lose confidence. Peter says, for example, in 2 Peter 1:10, "That you can make your calling and election sure if you add to your positional inheritance virtue and goodness and all these other things." When your life is holy, the result of that is confidence. When you're living an impure life, you tend to doubt your salvation. So the believer loses joy, loses peace and he loses confidence. He loses also His strong anticipation of the second coming.

John says in 1 John 2:28, "you ought to live a pure life so that you will not be ashamed that it's coming." Some Christians living in sin are really hoping Jesus doesn't come. Other Christians living a holy life are anticipating His coming. One guy said "I'm so anxious for Jesus to come I'm...and I believe He's coming so soon, I'm not even buying any more long play albums." Now some people who are living in anticipation and some people who are living in shame. So a loss of joy, loss of peace, loss of confidence, and a loss of the great anticipation of the coming of Jesus when you're living in terms of a sinful life. And then there's the loss of usefulness. 2 Timothy, Timothy says in Chapter 2, verse 21, "that there are some vessels unto honor and there are some vessels unto dishonor and to purge yourself that you might become a vessel unto honor if you're not purged." If there's sin in your life, you're useless.

John 15 indicates that when there is sin in the life of a believer, there is the loss of fruit. There is the loss of fruit. Instead of having much fruit, it dwindles down to just the bear basics. So when you sin it tremendously and dramatically effects your life. In another dimension, it completely cramps the ministry of your spiritual gift, doesn't it? Because they're ministered in the midst of sin. Now secondly, when you sin and when I sin, it not only affects me, it affects God. It affects God, because you see the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6, he said to the Corinthians, when you join yourself to a harlot, don't you know you're violating at the divine level the union that you have with Him. "For he that is joined to the Lord is," what, "one Spirit."

And when you join to a harlot, you have joined the harlot to the members of Christ, you see. You have in a sense defiled God by such a union. Any sin then defiles God in the life of a believer and I think this is pointed out aptly in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10 where you have Paul's instruction regarding the Lord's table. In verse 16, he says, "The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ, the bread which we break is it not the communion or the fellowship of the body of Christ." And then he says in 17, "we're one body." And he pictures us all united with Christ. The he says in verse 21, "you can't keep on drinking the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons." And these people were going out and living it up in the pagan religions and they were coming in and taking the Lord's table. And he says, you can't keep doing this, because you're dragging God into those things because you're one with Him.

He says in verse 22, you're going to provoke the Lord to jealousy and then you're going to have to be in real trouble. And then he asked the question do you think you're stronger than he is, because if you provoke him to jealousy, he's going to act against you and you're not going to be able to handle it. God judged such people in Chapter 11, verse 30. Many were weak and sickly and some of them were dead. God actually took the life of those believers because they had polluted the relationship with Him.

The Lord's table, mark it, is the common symbol of our fellowship with Christ and with one another. And when those believers sinned, they were forbidden to come to the Lord's table. They could not celebrate a union that they were not holding in purity. Do you see? He says, I don't want you to mock me by celebrating our oneness when you're violating that unity. It's just like in the Old Testament when God espoused Israel to be His wife and Israel ran after other gods and committed spiritual adultery. When you sin, you're committing spiritual adultery. You're unfaithful to Jesus Christ with whom you are joined in union. Who in effect is your bridegroom.

Thirdly, when you and I sin as Christians, we not only affect ourselves and God, but we affect everybody else. Because it's very clear, for example, in 1 Corinthians 12 that we are one body and when one member malfunctions, the whole body's crippled isn't it? So sin in your life really has a tremendous affect on me and on everybody else and consequently on the world, because they're looking at us and Jesus said, "If you are one, they will believe that the Father sent me. But if your unity is destroyed that will be suspect and your unity will be destroyed by sin and it is and it is suspect."

So sin then is absolutely devastating in the Christian's life. Last night, I was up at the college conference and somebody asked me the question what is the...what is your greatest heartache in the ministry. What is the thing that grieves you the most and I said, it's simply this. To see Christians sin who know that they should not sin. To willfully sin and violate the purity of the body, violate the holiness of God, violate the union that they have with Him and lose their own joy, their own peace and everything else that comes along with the really a holy walk to see them do that willfully when they know better. That's the greatest grief that you could ever have.

Sin devastates. It devastates you, it violates God, and it destroys the unity of the body and consequently hampers our testimony. Now, the most important issue facing Christians, watch this, is the issue of holiness. Because you say well, I thought evangelism was. No, you see, evangelism is a function that grows out of holiness, right? I mean, really being effective in the world is going to be the overflow of a godly life, right? So the priority with the Christian is holiness.

Now if that's true on my life and the thing that I am most concerned with in my life is holiness. And if I'm living before God as I ought to be living, confessing my sin and repenting of my sin, God is going to be using me. And evangelism will happen out of that won't it? Now let me ask you this, if the most

important thing for me as a Christian is holiness, what's the most important thing for the church as a unit? Holiness. What is the church, but a whole bunch of us. And so whatever is most important for us is most important for us together. Now I say that because I want you to understand this, maybe in a way you've never understood it before. The absolute number one priority in the church in terms of its practical life is purity, holiness. The great concern is that you be holy, because if you're holy everything else will happen. You'll live and walk in the Spirit. God will produce in your life...I mean just imagine a whole bunch of totally committed pure holy Christians. Man what an affect.

Now if that's true, now mark this, if that it is true and I believe you can substantiate as I've tried to, that holiness is the most important, then what is the priority that every Christian should be really working on? The holiness of his own life, first of all, and secondly, what? The holiness of the church. Now if I'm going to work for the holiness of the church, what does that involve? Well, that really involves me dealing with sin, first of all, in my life and then in somebody else's life.

Now most people say well, I'll work on me, you work on you and let's not get mixed up. I'm not sure I want somebody else working on my sin. Well, maybe that's good, because maybe that's a deterrent. But I believe that the priority of the church is holiness and if the priority of the church is holiness, then that's going to be my priority to work for the purity of the church. That's why Ephesians 5:11 says, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Beloved it is a priority in the church that we react negatively to sin, not neutrally. Now most, in most cases, the church reacts neutrally. They sort of go, oh. And then they sort of fade. See.

We are to react negatively, vocally negatively. That's priority if we're working for the purity of the church. Listen to what Paul told Titus. "These things speak and exhort and listen, and rebuke with all authority and let no man despise you." He says, Titus, you have the right to rebuke sin. Now beloved this becomes a very important feature in the New Testament and I want you to see this thing in context tonight and that's why I'm begging to point just a little bit because I want to establish a foundation. The discipline of the church is for its holiness. You know, you discipline your kids because you want them to grow up and be good kids. And our Lord disciplines His children, is that true? Hebrews 12, "He disciplines all His children, every son he scourges." Why? Because that's the only way He can whip them in to shape.

God disciplines His children. Now the church is His children and God mediates His rule in the church through the Holy Spirit and the life of believers and God will use us to be tools in the act of discipline toward other believers. If God is operating in His Spirit in His church and His Spirit dwells within me, then I can enact the rule of God in terms of this. Now you say, well, why does God want to do this? Why does He enact discipline? The answer is He in Hebrews 12:11. "No chastening for the present seems joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterwards, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness." God wants to produce in His church righteousness. So discipline is needed to produce it in the church, just like it's needed to produce it in the child.

The church then, and when I talk about the church, I mean you and I mean me, because we are it, must be very conscious of sin. First in my own life, then in the lives of others in the church. Now in 1 Corinthians 5, which we'll refer to several times tonight, the church is told to be on guard and to be careful that, watch this, that they keep the leaven of evil from entering. Remember that passage? Watch out for the leaven of evil creeping in. Those Corinthians they didn't watch out for it and it hit them. Now God wants to reveal His glory to the church. What's His glory, His attributes. God is Holy, do you believe that? If God's going to manifest His holiness through the church, He's going to have to do it through a holy church, right?

God wants the church to be holy. In fact, on many occasions our Lord through the writers of the New Testament commands the church to discipline. And while we're in 1 Corinthians 5, Paul says this, verse 1, "It is reported commonly there is fornication among you," that's porneia, pornography, "and such pornography is not such as named among the pagans." What happens is incest. Somebody having relations with his mother or maybe his stepmother, but it's still the same. Verse 2, "And you are puffed up and have not rather mourned that he had done this deed might be taken away from among you."

You see what happened in the Corinthian church is they didn't deal with sin. Here's a guy that's sleeping with his own mother or stepmother and they don't even do anything about it. In verse 4 he says, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you're gathered together and my spirit and the power of our Lord Jesus Christ deliver that one to Satan for the destruction of his physical body that his soul may be saved." He was a believer. Do something? Your glorying isn't good. Your positive attitude is ridiculous in the midst of a horrible situation like that.

Get rid of that old leaven. Verse 9, "I wrote unto you an Epistle not to even accompany with people involved in pornography." Don't have a thing to do with them. "Yet not all together with the fornicators of the world with the covetous, extortioners, idolaters, for the must your needs go out of the world." Some say that means that if you do keep doing that the Lord will take your life and just remove you.

"But now I've written unto you not to keep company. If any man is called a brother, be a fornicator or covetous or idolater or railer or drunkard or extortioner, don't even eat with that kind of person." You've got to watch who you sit down a meal with, right? Pretty strong language even a brother, verse 11.

"For what have I to do to judge them also that are outside? Do you not judge them that are within?" Let's start where we are, like Peter says "judgment must begin at the house of God, but them that are outside God judges." You're going to have to deal with the ones inside. Put away from among yourselves that wicked person. Now here he says to the Corinthians, instead of just being neutral and kind of grinning about your sin, why don't you get into it and do something about it? This is a

command. In Titus, the Lord again speaks through Paul. In Titus 3:10, "A man that is an heretic," that's a false teacher, "after the first and second admonition reject." What does that mean? Well, it's just like eject with an R. Push the button that fires him out. "Knowing that he that is such is subverted and sins being condemned of himself."

2 Thessalonians Chapter 3, Paul speaks of the same thing again, verse 6. "We command you brethren in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you." This is you've got a guy doing this, separate yourself.

Verse 11, "We hear there are some who walk among you disorderly working not at all, but are busybodies." You say, you mean, busybody is something to be disciplined? That's sin. That's sin. Now you see the Bible is very clear about it. In 1 Timothy 5:20, it says, "An elder that sins rebuke before the whole congregation that everybody might fear." Now beloved when the Bible says that much about the same thing, it's laying down some pretty important stress. God wants us to deal in the church with sin. You say well, John, just what sin is the church to discipline? I'll give you a simple answer. All of it. Because all of it pollutes.

There are things mentioned in Scripture like difficulties between brothers are to be disciplined according to Matthew 18. Disorderly conduct is to be disciplined, we just read it in 2 Thessalonians 3. Divisiveness and false teaching is to be disciplined. Titus 3, we just read. Gross sin is to be disciplined, and that's a general category, 1 Corinthians 5. False teaching is to be disciplined, 1 Timothy 1:20. So all categories of sin, whether they're doctrinal or whether they are moral are to be disciplined.

Now you say, well, John that's good, how is the church to discipline? How do we do this? Turn in your Bible to Matthew 18, verse 15. Here's the pattern for church discipline by our Lord. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." The first act that you take when you see a sinning brother is go to him individually. You don't tell on him to somebody else, you go to him. You don't say "did you know that so..." you go to him.

"And if he shall hear thee, you've gained a brother, your brother. And if he won't hear you then take with you one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established." So if he doesn't hear you when you talk to him personally, then you take two or three witnesses. "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church. If he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a tax collector or a heathen man." Tax collectors in those days were charlatans and crooks who bilked money out of the people.

Three steps in the pattern of discipline. Number one, you go to him individually. If he hears you, you've gained a brother. Number two, if he doesn't, you take two or three witnesses and you go to him. If he doesn't hear that, you tell the church and I take it that this emphasis would mean you probably would instruct the leaders of the church, the elders who would act on behalf of the church in terms of going to him. If he still didn't hear, they would treat him like a pagan. What does that mean? Whish, throw him out. That's what it says.

Now, in the midst of all of these steps, you are warning, admonishing. In fact, I love the fact that Paul told the Thessalonians that when you do admonish, admonish them as a brother. There's to be a kind of gentleness in the warning and the admonishing. But if he doesn't hear, get him out. In Corinth, in 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, the Corinthians were to gather together. He says, "When you gather together take action." So it was the church acting as a total. Apparently the first two steps followed with no success. Take action as a church. Get him out.

You don't need that kind of pollution. I'll tell you something else, 2 Corinthians 2:6 calls for total church forgiveness. Sufficient to such a man is the punishment which was inflicted by the many. In other words, apparently the whole church inflicted the punishment. The whole church leadership voted him out. Then in verse 7, "On the contrary, you ought rather to forgive him and comfort him." So when he comes back, I believe the whole church is to receive him with open arms and love. We'll see more about that.

Now you see from all of this that I've just shared with you, that sin in the church is a tremendous problem. It is the problem. It is the only problem. You eliminate sin, you eliminate every problem. And so the church, to be healthy, must deal with sin. And Paul castigates the Corinthians because they didn't do that. They just dilly dallied around and were indifferent to the sin that was going on. And the Lord desires the church to execute discipline. That's a one on one thing. You start with a Christian that you know that's sinning, you go to them in love, if they don't hear you take two or three witnesses. If they don't hear you, tell the leaders of the church, that's a pretty simple format. And it works, we've seen it work.

And I add this, in all the consideration of New Testament discipline there is to be love, there is to be gentleness, there is to be humility, and there is to be an eagerness to forgive and restore. That's part of it. That's part of it. Now all of that leads us to our passage and now our passage will just kind of fall together for us, hopefully.

Paul here is answering this dilemma. Now watch this, what do we do when go to the guy and he says, okay I did sin and I want to get back and get right with God. I want to come back to like it used to be. I don't like what's happened to me. I want...and he agrees with your admonition and he says, help me, what do we do? And that's where Paul jumps in in Galatians Chapter 5 and 6.

What do you do with the sinning brother who receives your admonition, receives your rebuke and says okay, I want to be restored? What do you do with him? Well, we're going to see that. Now as we approach Chapter 5, verse 26, the apostle Paul writing the book of Galatians has defended himself against the Judaizers. They condemned his apostleship as illegitimate. They condemned his gospel of grace as libertinism and that you needed to be circumcised too. They condemned the Christian life of liberty as a violation of all mosaic law and so they blasted Paul and he answers them in Chapter 1 and 2, he defends his apostleship. In Chapter 3 and 4, his gospel. Chapter 5 and 6, the Christian life of liberty.

Then he defends it all the way through. Now as we approach this particular text, he realizes there's a problem. Some of those Galatians, now watch this, some of those Galatian Christians had believed the Judaizers, right? And so you know what they had done? They started in the Spirit. Remember Chapter 3, he says, "You began in the Spirit, how come you got messed up in the flesh?" They started out so good, just walking in the Spirit having a great time. But some of them bought the bill of goods from the Judaizers and they were now living legalistic lives.

The Judaizers came and said you've got to do this, you've got to do this, you've got to do 49 of these and 84 of these little deals and God will be real happy. So they started functioning in the flesh, just doing little works things. Now you know what happens when you try to live in the power of the flesh under the law? I'll give you the definition of what happens. Sin happens, always. Why? Because you can't obey God's law. You can't function. You can't operate at all in the flesh to please God. So what happened? Now watch this. Some of these Galatians bought the thing that the Judaizers were selling. They tried then to live under the law and the consequence was what? Sin.

In fact, Paul even goes so far as to say in Romans 7 that the law actually stirs up, what, sin. It stirs it up. So these people were walking in the Spirit and everything was great and then they bought the bill of goods from the Judaizers. They started walking in the law, in the strength of the flesh, and they were flopping all over the place in sin. So now in the churches in Galatia, Paul faces two factions. You've got the spiritual people walking in the Spirit and having a great time in holiness and you've got these people living under the law falling flat on their nose every step.

And the potential there is a tremendous fracture. And Paul can see two factions in the church. And he can see the spiritual ones sort of becoming proud and as it says in 26, "Let us not be desirous of vain glory provoking those other people causing them to envy." He could see that the...it was a potential problem that the spiritual ones could begin to sort of feel superior and lorded over the ones who were falling all over into sin. They were back in Romans 7 folks. They were trying to do it without the Holy Spirit. And you know they had good motives. We love the law of God. We want to observe the law of God. Like Paul said, and I want to do it, but I can't do it, and what I don't want to do, I do. You know Romans 7?



That's a perfect illustration of a guy in the flesh trying to live the law and he never meets the Holy Spirit until Chapter 8 and all of a sudden he just goes way on away. So they were trying to live in the flesh and they were falling on their faces in terms of sin. Now how are you going to correct this. He says don't be desirous of vain glory, kenodoxos, it means conceited. Don't be conceited thing you have a rightful claim to honor. And by your conceit, you'll provoke envy. So he sees these potentially stronger brothers liberated in the Spirit, lording it over these poor people, flopping all over everywhere and he could see a tremendous fracture in the church and the last thing he wanted was the church split, right? That would have grieved his heart.

So what's he going to do? How are you going to stop it? He's got a great solution. You know what he does? He gives the total responsibility for the problem to the spiritual ones. It's the only place you could give it. And he gives it to them. Notice verse 1, "If a man be overtaken in a fall, ye who are," what, "spiritual." He talks to them. He appeals to those people who are in the position of doing something. Don't you see the beauty of this thing? That's how God can affect unity in the church. It's the strong holding up the weak. The great priority. Some of us think the church is nothing but you just come and sit there and it's nice and you listen and then you go to class and maybe you teach a little thing and it's just sort of a lot of nice little activity thing that you do.

Paul always, in all of his writings, put the burden of the church on the strong spiritual Christians. For example, I'll just prove this to you by showing you...I'll read it to you. Don't have to turn to it. Listen to Romans 15:1. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." It's our responsibility. Listen to what he says in 1 Thessalonians 5. "Now we exhort you brethren, warn them that are unruly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak." And again, it's the same idea. 1 Thessalonians 5:14. The strong support the weak. Beloved, this is the only way the church an ever be healthy is when we who are spiritual take the responsibility for lifting up the fallen.

And so Paul says, I don't want you to be vain glorious. Instead of standing up in pride and looking down on fallen sinners in your midst, I want you to get down where they are and help them up. This is a preoccupation. Great concern of our Lord for His church that we be concerned about holiness, not programs, not all that nickels, noise, and numbers stuff that you read about all the time regarding the church. But holiness, it's important. I could wail away on that. I won't.

Now, let me give you a three point outline. Here it is. Number one, the first thing you do for a sinning brother who wants to be restored is pick him up, pick him up. I knows that's really literary, but that's it. Pick him up. Look at it, Chapter 6, verse 1. "Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fall, ye who are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness considering thyself lest thou," what, "also be tempted." That's pick him up. You know, the first thing a fallen brother needs is to get up. That's fairly obvious.

The activity of believers, brethren, he says. Now notice it says, "if a man be overtaken in a fall," here's the situation, interpreting this idea of overtaken is very interesting, prolambano, it means to catch unawares. Listen to this, if you catch a Christian in the act of sin is what it's saying. Now, I don't think that we have to say that you can't say anything unless you actually saw him do it. If you know it, normally Christians try to hide their sin. Would you agree to that? I mean, that's sort of normal. We usually try to do that. I can't imagine Christians who didn't. I think that's fairly the normal deal, but if we happen to know of one caught in the act as it were, we know this to be a fact and, you see, the Lord puts a safeguard in here by having His apostles say when overtaken in a fall, one that you know about so that everybody isn't going around speculating about everything. It needs to be something which you are confirmed in, that you know about.

A carnal deed resulting from a failure to walk in the Spirit, it issues in sin and you know about it. I want you to just give another glance at that word overtaken. It seems too, to have latened in it the possibility that the sin kind of snuck up on him. The word can have that meaning. It's not so much that he ran out and said I'm going to sin, boom. No, it's the idea that he said I'm going to live the law in the flesh whap, and he couldn't do it, see. It's more default than it is anything else. In fact, that's the word he uses. A fall, he doesn't use hamartia, the word for sin or the word for transgression, but this word fault peroptima, means to stumble or to fall or to blunder. It's the antithesis of walking. To walk is to walk, to fall is the opposite.

And so here's this guy who's trying to walk in the flesh and keep the law and hmmm, he keeps flopping all the time. Though the major idea is not so much willful sin, it's not like parabasis in 3:19. It's the idea of just active sin so much as it's kind of a slip. Maybe his motive was to try to serve God in the flesh and he couldn't do it. It's just as bad. But that's the meaning of the term. Now perhaps in the Galatians case some of these Gentiles were trying to live the Jewish law in the flesh and they kept falling down. Now what's the first step. Well, first of all, if the guy's willing to repent, that's what we said is the first thing. If he's willing to get up that's where it all begins. If he isn't, then you go to him, if he doesn't want to do it, go to him with three, if he doesn't want to do it, you throw him out. You bring it to the church. If he says yes, I want help, the first thing here it comes, "Ye who are spiritual." Now who are they? Well, that's the ones that are strong.

You say okay, who are they? Who are the spiritual ones? I'll introduce you to do them. 1 Corinthians 2:14, now listen, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. They're foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they're spiritually discerned." All right we know that natural people don't understand spiritual truth. Now if you'll look at verse 1 of Chapter 3, "I couldn't write unto you as unto spiritual, but as a carnal." Paul says, carnal people can't even receive good solid meat truth. He says I have to feed you with milk and not with meat.

So in the first place, natural people don't know anything. Carnal people know a little bit, but not very much, but the person who's in a position to do the picking up is in verse 15 of Chapter 2. "But he that is spiritual judges all things." In other words, he's got sights on everything. He interprets well. He knows. Verse 16, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord that He may instruct him, but we have," what, "the mind of Christ." Do you know what a spiritual man is? A man who thinks like Christ.

A man who is Christ conscious. A man who say fulfills the statement of Colossians 3:16, "who has the word of Christ dwelling in him," what, "richly." That's a spiritual man. He has the mind of Christ. He's not thinking independently of Christ. He's thinking what Christ is thinking. Christ dominates his thoughts. That's a spiritual man. So the spiritual ones, those who are ruled by Christ, who have the mind of Christ, who are dominated by Christ, it is their responsibility to pick up the one that stumbles.

Now notice it says to restore such in one. This is interesting because it's a command. And the word restore means to repair or to restore to a former condition. It's used in other Greek writings of mending bones or putting dislocated limbs back into the proper place. It's also used in mending nets. It's used of reconciling various factions of people. So here you have the idea of restoration to former behavior.

Now it assumes this, that he was a spiritual Christian living in the Spirit thinking the thoughts of Christ. You need to bring him back to the place where he was spiritual. You say how can I help him do that? I'll give you a simple way. You help him judge his sin, confess his sin, and repent of it. That simple enough? You say, you know what your sin was? Yes. Do you want to talk to the Lord about it and tell Him you did and confess it to Him? Okay. Now you're going to turn from it and forsake it? Yes. Do you know what you've just done? You've restored a fallen brother.

And you see it's predicated on his will to be restored. So what do you? You help him judge his sin, that is evaluate it. You help him to confess it to God and to repent of it and move out depending on the Spirit. Then you say to him lastly now go to it brother, not in your own strength, but in the Spirit. Now the idea here beloved is not punishment. No, no, this is not punishment. Why? Because this guy wants to get picked up, right? If he was belligerent and didn't want to, then comes punishment. This is the act of restoration for the willing one.

So the unfallen are to assist the fallen. I think this, I think the sooner we get involved in spiritual restoration, the sooner we're going to obey our Lord Jesus Christ, the sooner the church is going to be pure, and the sooner the world's going to see who our God really is. You say well, what should be our attitude when we pick the guy up. You stupid klutz, why do you do dumb things like that. You...I never do that. Why you should follow the way I live. No, you should do it like this. You restore such in one of the Spirit of what? Meekness, humility, gentleness. Why should you do it that way? "Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." Boy you know sometimes Christians can pick up sinning brothers and man they can make them more miserable than they were when they were

sinning.

I read a testimony by a Christian pastor, this is what he said. "I have often thought that if I ever fall into a peraptima, the noun used here for the fault. "If I ever fall into a peraptima, oh God do not let me fall into the hands of those censorious, critical judges in the church. Let me fall into the hands of the barkeepers, street walkers, dope peddlers. Why? Because so often church people would tear me apart with their long wagging gossipy tongues cutting me to shreds."

He didn't have too good of an experience in the church, I guess. Our attitudes should reflect the attitude of Jesus Christ when He picked up a sinner. Did you ever see Jesus pick up a fallen sinner? Oh it's exciting. Look at Luke 9. I'll show you His Spirit in doing it. Luke 9:56, just to give you this thought. "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Here is the Spirit of Jesus not the spirit of destruction of a person, but the Spirit of restoration of salvation. Now watch how reacts to this woman in John Chapter 8.

"A woman taken in adultery," and here we see that principle in action. John Chapter 8, He meets this woman, she was taken in the act of adultery. The very act, verse 4. And they all said well, the law says we should stone her. Remember the story of what Jesus did. He stooped down and wrote on the ground. This would be an interesting debate about what He wrote. Somebody suggests that maybe He wrote down the sins of all the people looking on. And then He said, "He that is without sin let him cast the stone at her," and everybody left. The oldest first, why? They had more stuff written on the ground probably.

And verse 10, "When Jesus lifted Himself up and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, woman, where are your accusers? Has no man condemned you? She said, no man Lord. Jesus said unto her, neither do I condemn you. Go and," what, "sin no more." Now that's the Spirit of restoration. You say well now, John, you talk about all this we have to go to the person and rebuke their sin and reprove their sin. How do you justify that in terms of Matthew 7:1, "Judge not lest ye be judged."

I used to hear that verse a lot. "Judge not lest ye be judged." See, remember that little beauty. Used to get that all the time. Well, you have to understand the situation in Matthew 7. Again, people take everything out of context, but He's talking there to Pharisees who had not the ability to be just judges. They were not fair. They were not balanced. They were not impartial. They were condemning all the time. Theirs was a ridicule. You say well, what about James Chapter 4, verses 11-12, because it says something very similar. It says, "Speak not evil one of another brethren. He that speaketh evil of brethren judges his brethren speaks evil of the law and judges the law." So that statement, "speak not evil of one another," don't judge your brother. Again, you have the same idea. It is a failure here to be fair. It is a person who is proud and because of the exaltation of self, he just condemns everybody else.

It is not the idea of picking up a sinning brother at all. It is a judgmental person. It is a cruel critical, judgmental, ego centered, self-righteous, pious individual who can't be at all fair in any judgment in view in both of those passages. And so that's a different story altogether. That's Phariseism that he's rebuking there. Here he's giving the Christian the responsibility to rebuke sin. When the guy says okay fine, I don't want to sin any more, I want out, then you lift him up. How do you lift him up? You help him to judge his sin, evaluate it, confess it, and forsake it, and walk in the Spirit. And you do it in a Spirit of meekness and gentleness because you should remember that you can be tempted in the same areas. Let's face it, we're all made out of the same stuff.

Now there is a time when such gentleness turns to judgment. There is a time that if the person refuses and refuses to respond that there must be discipline. You must be put out of the church, but if he's willing he's to be picked up. Second point, what do you do with a sinning brother after you pick him up? Point two, hold him up. Hold him up. You know, one thing that I think is important is that once you've picked up a sinning brother, don't just leave him. Hold him up, verse 2. Are you ready for this? "Continue to bear one another's," what, "burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

What is a burden? A burden is anything that oppresses a believer spiritually. Anything that threatens to induce him to sin or keep him sinning is a burden. He says you hold up his burdens. You hold up those things that press on him. You help him carry the load of this temptation. I remember one time when a brother had sinned grievously and he came to me and we talked about it and I picked him up and I...after I picked him up I wanted to hold him up and so I didn't really know how to do this and so I said I want you to do something for me. I want you to make a note that I'll be praying for you every day and we're going to meet periodically. And so I met with him periodically over this same period of time following the sin and we talked about his life and his growth in the Spirit and so forth. And we talked about all of the details of this thing. We continue to do that. And I told him that I was always concerned about his sin and that every time he ever entered into that sin or even was tempted to remember that I was diligently praying for him and that he was going to need, if he did that sin, we had a little pact, he was going to need to come to me and tell me that he did it again.

And you know, it was amazing how that kept him from doing that. The fact that he loved me and respected me, he did not want to have to tell me that he did it. And it became a deterrent. That was one way that I saw to hold him up, to put my life up against his life and to support him. And say, I'm going to pray with you. I'm going to meet with you once or twice a week and I'm going to be thinking about you and I'm going to make a deal with you that when you do it, you've got to tell me about it. That's one way. Hold him up. Any kind of oppression that threatens him spiritually that induces him to sin is a burden that you are to carry along with him.

Oh beloved, can't you see the beauty of what the church is all about? You pick up the sinning brother and then you wrap your arms around him and carry him? This is Christianity. Christianity isn't a

spectator sport. Not at all. Some people think well, I'll carry all my burdens alone. That's fortitude. You know, great right arms. And you know what that is? It's hypocrisy. It really is. It's unfair to do that too because you're not giving us a chance to do what we're supposed to do. How can I bear your burdens if I don't know what they are?

That's why it says in James 5:16, "Confess your faults one to another." Right? You can't carry your load for you if you're not going to tell me. There are others who say well, I don't share those things with people. I take all my burdens to the Lord. You know Psalm 55:22 says, "Cast your burden on the Lord and He'll sustain you." I like that, it's good. 1 Peter 5:7 says, "Casting all your care unto Him, for He cares for you." But did you know that the agency through which the Lord bears a lot of burdens is the church?

That's right. You know, the apostle Paul, he had a lot of burdens and he was prone to be tempted and you know he was tempted to the sin of discouragement did you know that? That's right. And in verse 5 and 6 of 2 Corinthians 7, he says, "For when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no rest and we're troubled on every side fightings and fears." Man he was bearing a burden that was going to induce him to sin. "Nevertheless, God who comforts those that are cast down comforted us," watch this beauty, "by the coming of the Titus."

Yes, it's right to say I give my burden to God, but watch out God may send some human to carry it. Now don't try to do it alone and don't just get it kind of theological about it and send it to heaven and drop it at that. Allow somebody here who's got flesh and blood that the Lord can send along to carry it for you. That's our responsibility. And look at what it does. He says in Galatians 6, "It fulfills," what law, "the law of Christ." What is the law of Christ? Do you know what the law of Christ is? "Jesus had a new commandment I give unto you that you," what, "love one another." That's the law of Christ.

The law of Christ is fulfilled then when I carry my brother's burden. When I help him shoulder the thing that tempts him, the thing that drives him to sin, and that means I've got to get my arms around him. That means I've got to get close to him. You know, sometimes preachers talk together and one of the things that I used to hear when preachers talk is one thing you'll learn son, they used to say to me, is that you can't...in the ministry, you can't get close to anybody. Do you know that if I believed that, I couldn't be in the ministry.

I feel like I've got to get close to anybody who needs to be gotten close to, you know? I mean, how could you say you can't get close to anybody? What are you a preaching machine? I mean, if...I mean, I think I'm close to some people. I feel close to people and I love people that are close to me. And I try to be supportive of them. So this fulfills the law of Christ. How could I fulfill the law of Christ if I didn't get close enough to love my brother.

So he says, not only pick them up and hold them up, bear their burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ's love bears burdens people. Love bears burdens. Look at verse 3. "For if a man thinks himself to be something when he's nothing, he deceives himself." You know, we say how did that verse get in there? Well, I think Paul is probably figuring that the reason some Christians don't stoop down and carry other people's burdens is because they think they're what? They're too good. Well, that's his own problem. He got himself in that mess. I've got other things to do.

And the problem potentially there is that Christians just don't have time to bother with anybody else. They're rather conceited and if you think that you're something when you're nothing...you say well, fortunately, I think I'm something and I am something. Well, yeah, you sure are something. Let me tell you, you're all nothing. You got it. Yeah, it doesn't say when...if you think yourself to be something and you are something, it says when you think to be something and you are nothing.

You're kidding yourself. Now when you think you're nothing, you're something. And that is to be honest. And so he's assuming that some people won't do this because they're just too good for it. But verse 4, he says, "Let every man prove his own work and then shall have he have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden." You know what? This is an interesting statement. Instead of comparing ourselves with a poor fallen brother, we must test our own work for its own innate qualities. He says, instead of just looking at ourselves and saying well, I'm so much better than he is. I must be wonderful, we are rather to prove our own work. In other words, God doesn't grade on the curve. Do you understand that?

God does not grade on the curve. God grades in absolutes. And so you must prove your own life then you're going to have true rejoicing in yourself and not rejoicing just by comparison with another. But you know we do that so much. Man we say well, I'm not so bad, look at him. Don't we do that? I do that. Dumb thing, I do that. I say well, you know, I'm...I know I have my faults, but man did you see that guy? Gees, he's got so many faults you can't believe it. He says, no, you prove your own work and then when you rejoice, you won't be rejoicing because of comparison. You won't be rejoicing in the A you got on the curve. You'll rejoice with the absolute A you got.

And every man's going to bear his own burden. You say I thought it just said you're supposed to bear one another's burdens. That's where the English language gets you into trouble, because those are two different Greek words. Are you ready? Watch. The word in verse 2 is, *barus*, it means a heavy load. A heavy load, brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, the idea there, pick him up. Verse 2, "Then bear his burden, carry his heavy load." The implication is that it's too heavy for him to handle. But the word that is used in verse 5, *fortian*, a light pack. I like this now. We don't want to get too involved in it, but listen, we are to bear the burdens that are too heavy for others to bear, but watch this, there is one burden that we can't share with anybody and it's light enough for us to bear and it's the burden of our responsibility when we face Jesus Christ at the judgment seat.

There's coming a day beloved when we're going to bear our own backpack to that judgment seat. It's light enough for us to carry. Nobody can get under us and support us then. Nobody can say well, I know he goofed it up, but I...it's my fault. No, you're going to carry your own load then. Two different words. On the day of judgment everybody carries his own pack folks, but in this life his on fortian, but in this life we carry the others barus, the other's heavy load.

Well, what makes us really tender, gentle, gracious brothers who restore really as we're supposed to and who carry a brothers burden is that we realize we ourselves amount to so little. So I'm not concerned with how I look compared to somebody else. I'm concerned with how I look period before God. So what's my responsibility? Pick him up, hold him up, ready for the third one?

Build him up. If you don't build him up, you haven't done much good because you're going to fall again. Build him up. That's verse 6. Now verse 6 is very, very controversial verse. And I had kind of a good time with this verse and I have often referred to the verse, I suppose, in my thinking, if not publicly, as a verse that was teaching you ought to pay the preacher. And I suppose the reason that's a popular interpretation is because there's so many preachers who like to be paid. And then maybe that lends itself to the interpretation. But listen to what the verse says. "Let him that is taught in the word share with him that teacheth in all good things."

And so many interpret...in fact, most interpret it as saying that the...Paul is simply giving a little statement to the Galatians to pay the teachers and maybe there was a problem there and they weren't paying their teachers. But as I read that over and over and over and meditated on that, that was a couple of hours thinking about that. I thought that can't be. I mean, why in the middle of all of this does he give a commercial for the salary of the guy teaching. I mean, it doesn't make any sense. I couldn't fit it in at all. I tried everyway I could. I read every commentary and nobody seemed to satisfy my mind.

So I thought it doesn't make sense. Then I thought and it doesn't say a thing about money anyway does it? So I just took my Greek text and I just started tearing apart the whole verse and I found out that it really says this, let him who receives instruction share with him who gives instruction in all good things. Now the word is kateketo again it's the catechumen. Let the learner share with the teacher. Share is the word koinoneo. It means to hold equally. Now that was a problem for me. How could he pay the preacher and still hold the money equally? Because it's to fellowship. You know, once I've given my money to someone, I'm not fellowshiping with it anymore. It's he is. He's got it all to himself, see.

So I couldn't quite fit koinoneo into the thing. Whatever this is, it's a common fellowship. So the learner is to have a common fellowship. This is being taught in the word. Is to have a common fellowship with him that is doing the teaching. Now what is there fellowship over? Well, their



fellowship is in all good things. Does that mean money? I don't know. Maybe it does. I mean maybe everybody's right. I don't know. It certainly doesn't say money. You say well, what's the Greek word? Agathios, that's a plural form of agathos which get Agatha, it means good.

It means good. Now if it's plural what it really translates is this, let him that is taught in the word share with him the teaches in all goodies. That would be the most literal English translation. Now you say what are the goodies. Well, some would say money. No, interestingly enough the word agathos is used primarily of spiritual excellence. The word kalos, k-a-l-o-s, is another word for good that is used to refer to goodness as it takes physical form. So it would seem in my mind that to be consistent, if it was money involved it would be the word kalos, which is good in terms of a physical form. Whereas, agathos for the most part, speaks of a qualitative kind of goodness. Spiritual excellence. It is so used in Romans 10:15, Hebrews 9:11, Hebrews 10:1 and many other places.

So let him that is taught in the word share with him that teaches in all the things of spiritual excellence. Paul is saying this, when you've picked up the sinning brother and you've held up the sinning brother, then you make sure the sinning brother shares all the spiritual truths with his teacher. Does that make sense? To me man, that just fits the pattern because now, you've got the guy picked up, held up and build up. That's the final aspect of restoration, isn't it?

David said, "Thy word have I hid in my heart," what, "that I might not sin against thee." So you pick him up, you hold him up, and you build him up. What a blessed pattern. God help us to take this ministry and fulfill it.

Lord, thank You for our fellowship tonight. Thank You for the tremendous statements of Scripture in regard to this priority of ministry. Oh Lord God give us a desire to function in the area of what matters. Save us from trivia and inconsequential things. Give us a tremendous desire for the holiness of the church, first of all, realizing that it is only as we are spiritual that we could even be used to lift others up. And so may we first look to ourselves to see that we're walking in the Spirit and then may we watch our brothers and love. First to rebuke and when they repent to lift them up.

God, we know we can't maybe go beyond the bounds of this place to begin with, but if we could just have holiness here, oh what a testimony we'd have. May it be so we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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