

## ***The Protection of Community: Two Lives, Two Destinies*** **Galatians 6:1-5**

***“Brothers and sisters, if a person is discovered in some sin,  
you who are spiritual restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness.” (Galatians 6:1)***

***The gospel is for Christians.***

This mini-series is about the Christian’s ongoing need for the gospel. Not just as the message that delivers us from the penalty of sin when we believed what it says about Christ’s sufficiency to save us, but also as the truth of Christ’s sufficiency to empower us to live for Him. ***It must not only be believed for salvation, but also applied for life.***

***Review of critical section about the power of the gospel in sanctification (life-change):***

Paul’s final section (5:1-6:10) demonstrates how this grace works in life. Grace works through liberty. Christ set us free to demonstrate His righteousness in ways that transcend any enslaving set of rules or moral codes (5:1-12). This liberty isn’t so that we can indulge the self-centered desires of our flesh as we did before we trusted in Christ. Using our freedom in that way will cause us to lose our inheritance in the coming kingdom (5:13-21). We’ve been set free to walk in the Spirit (5:16-18) so that we can display Christ’s righteousness through the fruit of the Spirit (5:22-25). But even this transformation isn’t about us; it’s about Christ and others. What we’ve really been set free to do is to love and serve others (6:1-10).

**THE AMAZING ETERNAL BENEFIT AND VITAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY:**

Spiritual maturity sets us on a path to realize our personal destiny, that for which we were made new in Christ to accomplish (Ephesians 2:8-10). It’s a winding path following a continual process best described by Paul in Philippians 3. In Paul’s process of maturing, he describes an awareness of his value system changing dramatically because of who he now was *in Christ*: Those who walk in the Spirit glorify God in their liberty. Freedom from the Mosaic Law does not mean freedom from responsibility. Truly spiritual Christians will fulfill the “law of Christ” by gently restoring those within the community of faith who have lapsed into sin – **You who are spiritual (who walk in the Spirit), gently and humbly restore your sinning brothers and sinners.** This is what I call *The Great Exchange*:

***Only those who live in high trust friendships and cultures  
will experience release to their destiny in Christ.***

- I. Two Lives, Two Destinies: the law of sowing and reaping. Believers who live by the Spirit reap rewards that last forever, they even share their finances with spiritual leaders! However, those who try to control their lives through the flesh reap “*destruction*” (φθορά) – in the NT in an ethical sense *corruption* i.e. moral decay.
- II. Live by the Spirit and you will gently and humbly restore struggling and sinning (flesh-dominated) saints in your community of faith (6:1-5).
  - A. Command to those living by the Spirit (5:16-26): Restore your struggling and sinning (flesh-dominated brothers and sisters in the church (6:1a).
    1. “*Brothers and sisters*” assumes that our fellow Christians are going to stumble in sin.
    2. “*If a person is discovered in some sin*” speaks of being overtaken by surprise or overpowered before one can escape (*paralambano*). The specific context is when sin suddenly overwhelms a brother or sister. But of course the extended application could include just about any life circumstance that overwhelms our brothers or sisters in Christ in the assembly of the saints. “*You who are spiritual*” addresses those who are living by (walking in) the Spirit (5:16-26). This isn’t necessarily a mature Christian, but one who is living under the control of the Holy Spirit and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit is always prompting us to lovingly restore and care for our sinning or hurting brothers and sisters in Christ.

3. *“Restore such a person”* is always the goal. The Lord’s teaching on the process in Matthew 18 has the same tone and goal in mind. The verb “restore” literally meant *to mend a net or set a fractured or dislocated bone*. Restoration to full fellowship with Christ and His people is always the goal. The truly spiritual person gets involved because of love for Christ and others.
- B. Clarifying Instructions to those living by the Spirit as they restore: Fulfill the law of Christ by shouldering the burden of their sin gently, carefully and honestly, and humbly (6:1b-4).
1. **Gently**: Gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit. Jesus is our model. He was gentle with sinners (John 8:1-11, woman caught in adultery), but never soft on sin. **Carefully**: Never think that you’re not vulnerable to the sin you’re trying to help someone else overcome. Be especially aware of your weaknesses and temptations during the restoration process.
  3. *“Carry one another’s burdens.”* The word “burden” means an inordinate load, too much to take. In a military unit it is a burden no one soldier could carry without falling behind.
  4. *“And thus fulfill the law of Christ.”* Freedom from the Mosaic Law (Galatians 1-4) does not mean freedom from responsibility (Galatians 5-6). We have been set free to let the Spirit love and serve through us. Jesus said the loving others fulfills the entire law (Matthew 22:36-40), and gave His followers a new commandment to love one another (John 13:34-35). John sums up the entire message of Galatians in 1 John 3:23: *“Now this is the commandment: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ (Galatians 1-4) and love one another (Galatians 5-6), just as he gave us the commandment.”*
  5. Don’t restore in a **conceited** way, thinking you’re better than you are (6:3). Don’t restore in a **comparative** way, by measuring your spirituality against the sinning saint’s failures rather than against the works Jesus has for you to do (6:4).
- C. Warning: Don’t become codependent with the “constantly overburdened saint” who refuses to carry his or her own load (6:5). The term “load” means the rucksack or individual soldier’s pack he or she is expected to bear.
- II. How the Gospel of Grace Works in Community: Liberated Christians who are living by the Spirit will restore their overwhelmed brothers and sisters, especially those overwhelmed by the burden of sin, by **exercising protective love**. However, before we can offer protective love, we must have experienced protective love. This is why environments of grace that connect the gospel to spiritual maturity are so crucial.

***Process of Protective Love  
Experiencing Grace***

**A three phase Bible study on the process of protective love:**

- **Awakening: Recognizing the pain of not being able to control my life the way I thought I could; stuck with unresolved life issues whose symptoms I am trying to solve without the aid of trusted others.**
- **Exchange: Encountering God’s protective love in trusted relationships, who ask for permission to access my life in exchange for their protection.**
- **Breakthrough: Experiencing breakthroughs from unresolved life issues into the health and legacy God planned for me since before the world began.**