

Some Family Business • Galatians 6:1-5

INTRO • Read John 13:34-35 • A Better Influence

1. Peppermint Patty says to Charlie Brown , “The first day of school, and I got sent to the principal's office. It was *your* fault, Chuck.”
2. “My fault?” He replies. “How could it be *my* fault? Why is everything is *my* fault?”
3. Patty says, “You're my friend, aren't you, Chuck? You should have been a better influence on me.”
4. As so often in his comic strip, *Charles Schultz* one again nailed human nature.
5. We like to blame others for our errors. We pin responsibility on parents, the system.
6. The Apostle Paul suggests a new way for we who are In Christ.

¹ Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

1. The first word is key. “Brethren = Brothers.” As daughters & sons of God, we're *family*.
 - a. What Paul says here is a *family thing*. We're *loyal* to each other.
 - b. Like family, we may not always get along perfectly.
 - c. But when one of us is in trouble, the others rally to help them.
2. Lost in translation to English is a picture given by the word, “overtaken.”
 - a. Someone's running from something, but it *catches* him.
 - b. Like the cheetah that runs down the antelope; the lion that catches the zebra.
 - c. Neither antelope nor zebra *want* to be caught, they run their hardest -
 - d. But cheetah and lion are swifter.
3. All of us *have been* or *will be* overtaken by something; a moral failing, a sin.
4. We know it's wrong & want to quit, but *keep doing it*.
 - a. These struggles used to be called “*besetting sins*.”
 - b. Even the great Apostle Paul struggled with it and shared his frustration in Roms 7 -

¹⁵ What I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ...

¹⁸ I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹ For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. ²⁰ Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ... ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

- c. Anyone who's been a Christian for a while identifies with Paul here.
 - d. There's a strange paradox that happens: We *hate* that we *like* sin.
 - 1) We hate the idea of sin-generally. We long to end it.
 - 2) Yet we're attracted to specific instances of it.
 - 3) Temptation keeps getting the better of us.
 - e. So with Paul we say, “What's **WRONG** with me?”
5. Here in Galatians he calls us to assist each other in overcoming these things.
 6. Specifically, those walking in the Spirit are to help.
 - a. It wouldn't be wise for those struggling with their own thing to help.
 - b. The maturing believer discovers life has seasons.
 - 1) We struggle with something, God gives us victory,
 - 2) That's followed by a time of peace, then the Spirit reveals something new to overcome.

- c. It's in those seasons of peace we help others overcome in their struggles.
- d. Then the brother or sister we help today becomes the one who helps us tomorrow.

7. Paul says –

¹ Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one

- a. "Restore" was used of *cautiously* setting a broken bone; or *carefully* mending a fishing-net.
- b. It's *tenderly* returning something to full use.
- c. So Paul says that we're to restore one another –

in a spirit of gentleness,

1. You know what often happens when someone is overtaken by sin?
2. People either *ignore* them, pretending nothing's happened, or they *condemn* them.
3. We're to do neither of those → Rather, the spiritually sound are to **gently restore** them.
4. And **THAT** means *this* needs to be a place where grace and truth are in balance.
 - a. **Grace** for those struggling with sin so they can be honest about it without fear they'll be condemned.
 - b. **Truth**, so no one gets the idea sin's okay.
 - c. While we **yearn** for holiness, we know we're not.
 - d. So though sin's not *approved*, when it happens, our loyalty to one another moves us to **love them out of it**.
5. To do what Paul says here means we're **committed** to each other.
 - a. I'll only confess my struggle if I know you won't reject me or treat me as damaged goods.
 - b. I have to know you believe God's grace can & will bring me into victory
 - c. & that I won't be branded with a scarlet letter.
6. In his ltr James says, "Confess your trespasses to one another, & pray for one another that you may be healed."
 - a. We read that & say, "Wish I could share my struggle but would it end up on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook?"
 - b. Will I be the *next scandal* dominating the news for 15 mins.
7. Many of us have had a moral struggle we knew **if we could talk to someone** it would help, but *didn't* because it seemed too great a risk.
8. **Freedom comes in confession**, taking what's hidden out of the darkness & it into the light of truth & grace
9. Satan *wants* us to hide our sin. It's seeds grow best in the dark.
 - a. But those seeds that grow in the dark will one day bear bitter fruit in the full-light of day.
 - b. What the devil begins in secret he plans to eventually expose.
 - c. His ego is so massive, he can't wait for the day he parades you as a trophy of his ruin.
10. **Christians: Let's be who we are, the Redeemed of the Lord.**
 - a. Let's **help** one another be more like Jesus instead of stomping on each other when we fall short.
 - b. Let's not pretend everything's hunky-dory when we know someone's struggling.
 - c. If you're the one who IS struggling and others come to gently restore you, don't bolt. Don't pretend.

1. V1 ends with Paul saying to those doing the restoring →

considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

2. Our adversary is sneaky. He has long experience in all this.
3. He can't read our minds but he knows human nature real well & can make a good guess at what we're thinking.

4. In helping someone overcome sin, we might think, "Well, look at that! God used me. I must be pretty mature if I could help them like that."
5. Guess where that thought came from. Your adversary. >> Because **pride** opens wide the door to sin.

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

1. As we read, the law of Christ is His new commandment = That we love one another.
2. Here's one of the ways we do that, by **bearing** one another's **burdens**.
3. Paul uses rich words.
 - a. **Bear** means to endure something unpleasant.
 - b. **Burden** is a weight one *suffers* under. It's a *boulder, not a pebble*.
 - 1) You don't carry this in a pocket.
 - 2) It takes both hands & you have to shift your entire body to cope with it.
 - 3) In other words, the best way to deal with it is to → Get help.
4. These burdens are many:
 - The grief & sorrow of losing a loved one
 - A debilitating illness
 - A moral struggle Paul'd just referred to in the previous verse
5. Bearing one another's burdens means having more concern for others than our comfort & convenience.
6. I'll say something now sure to upset some.
 - a. Idolatry isn't just when people carve an image and worship it.
 - b. An idol is ANYTHING other than God we make the ruling principle of our lives.
 - c. Idolatry is alive and thriving in Modern America. // And Christians aren't immune.
 - d. When convenience, comfort, ease, is the primary interest driving our decisions, it's an idol.
 - e. How many are NOT in church this morning because convenience kept them home?
 - f. How many won't attend a small group so they can avoid the messiness of relationships?
7. We'll never need to bother shouldering another's burden if we carefully avoid learning about them.
8. Folks: Like *any* family, the Family of God is messy! It can be hard at times.
 - a. A burden's coming in **YOUR** life one day // You'll need others to help bear it.
 - b. Help others w/theirs *now* so when it's your turn, they'll be there.
9. Now Paul speaks to something that all too often *stalls* the practical love vs1&2 prescribe = Pride.

³ For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

1. Pride isn't so much thinking we're **better** than others as that we're more **important**.
2. So, we deserve more attention & care.
3. When we were in 2Cor a little while ago, we saw that God's grace leaves no room for pride.
4. God's favor is a **gift**, not something He **owes** us because of what we **do** or who we **are**.
 - a. Grace *annihilates* pride because it understands God's love & blessing **CAN'T** be earned.
 - b. So there's **NADA/Nothing** to boast of.
 - c. Everything we are that's broken & pathetic = Is of us,
 - d. While everything that's of value & virtue = Is from God.
 - e. In ourselves, we're a hot mess. But In Christ we are a Gloriously-Loved Hot Mess.
5. V4 is an exercise to combat pride →

⁴ But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

1. Bringing this over from Greek to English is extremely difficult.

2. What Paul says is this:
 - a. Stop *comparing* yourself to *others*. Rather, carefully *inspect* of how *you're* doing.
 - b. Instead of evaluating yourself based on how others are doing,
 - c. Ask, "Am ***I*** growing in Grace & Truth? Am I becoming more like Jesus?"
 - d. Paul just spelled out the things to look for & make progress in, in 5:22-23.
3. We ought to be able to say, "I'm more like Jesus *today* than I was a year ago. And by His grace, I'll be even more like Him a year from now."
 - a. There's every reason to rejoice in that! God's glad for it; so, so can we be.
 - b. But we dare not celebrate *only because* there are others who've made *less* progress than us.
1. Then Paul pens something that seems a reversal on what he just said.

⁵ For each one shall bear his own load.

1. Does that contradict v2 where he said, "Bear one another's burdens"?
2. No, because he uses a different word here.
 - a. In v2, "burden" is a weight that's too much for one alone. It causes suffering.
 - b. Here, it's a *light load*.
 - 1) It's the same word Jesus used when He said, [Mat 11:30]

My yoke is easy and My burden is light."
 - 2) The word was used for a soldier's pack & spoke more of its *contents* than its weight.
 - 3) A soldier's kit were *necessities* for life on campaign.
3. What Paul means is that **there are some things we can't give to others.**
4. **We're responsible for our own spiritual growth; we can't delegate that to others.**
5. It's absurd to assume Paul would turn around after penning v2 & *contradict* himself in v5.
 - a. No, he's *clarifying* → While we're to help others with heavy burdens they suffer with,
 - b. There are some things we alone take responsibility for.
6. We go backpacking for a week in the Sierra.
 - a. Our packs are loaded with all the necessities to hike, eat, & sleep.
 - b. There's no frills because every ounce counts.
 - c. We drive to the trailhead, park the truck and hop out.
 - d. You put on your pack, & once you're all set, I hand you mine saying, "Here, carry mine too. After all, the Bible says that we're to bear one another's burdens."
 - e. You be more than right to fire back, "Scripture-Twister! The better verse here is, 'Each shall bear his own load.'"
7. ***I'm*** responsible for ***my*** spiritual growth. I can't expect my wife to make me grow, blaming her when I'm not making progress.
8. I have duties as a married man to be a good husband. I can't pawn that off to someone else.
9. Parents are responsible to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They can't pass that *load* to schools, the internet, or the 1-eyed babysitter called TV.

CONCLUSION // The Sequoias

1. The Sequoias of California tower 300 ft into the sky.
2. Yet they have only shallow roots reaching in all directions to capture surface moisture.
3. You never see a sequoia standing alone because wind has already knocked it down.
4. Sequoias only grow in clusters, where their roots intertwine giving support to each other against storms.
5. Nature provides a picture of what the Family of God must be. **Storms are coming. We need one another.**

6. Jesus modeled our need for this kind of support.
 - a. He asked Peter, James, & John to stay & pray with Him as He faced the crushing burden in Gethsemane.
 - b. If Jesus needed support, how much more do we? → But P,J&J fell asleep.
 - c. How many times have we read that story & said *we'd* not have failed Jesus? → Do we?
7. In Matt 25, describing future judgment, Jesus said God will separate people into 2 groups.
 - a. To those entering heaven He says, [Mat 25:34-40]

^{34b} 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we [do all that] ... ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'

- b. In the vs that follow, Jesus flips it and tells the doomed their nature as the lost was revealed in their failure to help those in need.
8. Jesus comes to us *in* each other. Loving & serving one another He counts as loving & serving Him.