

Message Notes:

Text for this week: Galatians 6:1-2

Byron begins with a story that describes the rise and fall of Ted Haggard as a spiritual leader.

- Great success for 20 years
- Everything changes in November of 2006
- Humiliating turn-about

Three “tempting” ways people respond to the spiritual failure of people around them:

- Withdraw / Pull Away / Ostracize
- Gossip / Slander
- Confront Harshly / Lash Out Angrily

Today’s message looks at a Biblical response to failure by others: Galatians 6:1-2. Five components to a Christian response.

- spiritual
- restore
- gently
- watch yourselves
- carry each other’s burdens

With all of the talk about restoration after sin, one key question sticks out:

- Before restoration — everything — depends on the heart of the one “caught in a sin.”
- Is this person humble, contrite and repentant? Or, are they obstinate, resistant and rebellious?
- Byron offers a couple of Biblical examples: The Samaritan woman at the well and one of the thieves on the cross.

This is always the way it works. Before restoration:

- awakened / aware — “I have a problem”
- convicted of sin — “This breaks my relationship with God”
- contrite about my sin — “I am sorry for the ugliness of my sin”
- repentant — “I want to turn from sin and toward God”
- Jesus — “I turn to Jesus for my redemption.”

The problem: Sometimes the one “caught in a sin” is stubborn and resistant to confession and repentance.

Quote about restoration: “Restoration does not mean that consequences disappear. It does not mean trust is instantly returned. It does not mean a person automatically receives the same leadership role again (or even at all — in some cases). And it certainly does not mean that the people wounded by sin must pretend they were not wounded. Restoration means something deeper: that sin does not get the final word over a repentant person.”

Discussion Questions:

Byron begins his message with the story about a famous pastor whose sin was exposed in a very public way. Because of this, he lost his high-profile ministry.

Have you ever personally seen or heard of such a fall? What did this do to you?

- Side Note: We should never blame Jesus for the failure of Christians, in the same way that we do not blame Mozart or Bach when someone else performs their music poorly. That would not be the composer's fault. Similarly, we do not blame the recipe if someone doesn't follow its directions and produces a trashy meal.

What do you think about the three "tempting" ways people respond to the spiritual failure of people around them?

- (1) Withdraw / Pull Away / Ostracize; (2) Gossip / Slander; (3) Confront Harshly / Lash Out Angriely
- Can you think of other ways people respond?
- Which of the above is the best way? Which is the worst? Why?
- Which of them is closer to what we see in Galatians 6:1-2?
- Spend some time talking about the contrasts.

Spend some time speaking about Galatians 6:1-2, and the five components to a Christian response from this passage.

- spiritual — led by the Spirit
- restore — restored like a torn fishing net or reset like a broken bone
- gently — the Greek word is "meek"
- watch yourselves — because this could happen to you, too.
- carry each other's burdens — this ought to be the way Christian churches treat everyone who fails.

Byron emphasizes the following:

- Before restoration — everything — depends on the heart of the one "caught in a sin."
- Is this person humble, contrite and repentant? Or, are they obstinate, resistant and rebellious?
- Restoration (absolutely) depends on the heart of the sinner — is it soft or hard? Why does this matter?

Byron outlines the pathway to restoration with God.

- awakened / aware — "I have a problem"
- convicted of sin — "This breaks my relationship with God"
- contrite about my sin — "I am sorry for the ugliness of my sin"
- repentant — "I want to turn from sin and toward God"
- Jesus — "I turn to Jesus for my redemption."
- What do you think about this process?

Comment on this quote about restoration: "Restoration does not mean that consequences disappear. It does not mean trust is instantly returned. It does not mean a person automatically receives the same leadership role again (or even at all — in some cases). And it certainly does not mean that the people wounded by sin must pretend they were not wounded. Restoration means something deeper: that sin does not get the final word over a repentant person."