



“The Persuasiveness through the Gospel”

Galatians 5:26-6:6

Theme: We must submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit while persuading those around us to do the same.

Introduction: This section flows directly from the previous section as an application of what it looks like to “walk by the Spirit” – to maintain the qualities of the “fruit of the Spirit.” Instead of constantly incumbering one another with obligations, regulations, rules, or artificial acts of righteousness, we are to concentrate on assisting one another in our struggle to “walk in the Spirit” in following Christ. The flesh constantly rears its ugly head in every one of our lives so that none of us can claim we have “arrived” or attained to a *settled* state of godliness in our practice. We can have a streak of victories over the flesh to find ourselves overwhelmed by a temptation – cp. [1 Corinthians 10:12-13](#). It is a weak and superficial church where the culture is to produce a veneer of godliness concealing the reality of the struggles that are constantly ours and of those around us. When the expectation exists that everyone is always “good,” there descends upon us a spirit of judgmentalism, censoriousness, and intolerance that denies the Gospel and entrenches the superficiality of fellowship and the free exercise of the “one-anothers” that demonstrates the reality that we are indeed the disciples of Jesus – cp. [John 13:35](#).

The biggest problem that each of us faces is the struggle against sin. Anyone who asserts that they do not struggle with sin is self-deceived – cp. [1 John 1:6](#). We are all wrestling with the inability to know perfect conformity to Christ. Paul expresses the aspiration to be more consistent in his evidencing the power of Christ’s resurrection by walking in newness of life – cp. [Philippians 3:10-14](#). Of course, the greatest asset provided by God in making us successful in this pursuit is the Holy Spirit as we see in the previous section. However, there is another asset God intends every believer to know in this struggle – other believers. We are told that the Church exists in order that we might minister to one another – intentionally helping another follow Christ more. Paul said to the [Ephesians 4:11-13](#) & [15-16](#).

This next section addresses the reality that we rely upon each other as well as the Holy Spirit to help one another follow Christ more. We are to deliberately attempt to do two things: **We must submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit while persuading those around us to do the same. ...**

I. THE PREREQUISITE TO PERSUASIVENESS – **5:26-6:1**

A. The Danger of Walking in the Flesh – **5:29**

1. Before we can help persuade those around us to join us in walking by the

Spirit it is necessary that we realize the constant threat of hypocrisy and self-righteousness that neutralizes the power of God's Spirit.

2. Paul mentions three disastrous consequences of failing to walk in the Spirit: *“Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.”*
 - a) The Immodesty of Hypocrisy - *“boastful”* [κενόδοξος] - lit. “to have a head of glory” or exaggerated self-conception making oneself the standard by which others should be judged.
 - b) The Intolerance of Hypocrisy - *“challenging”* [προκαλέω] - lit. to call out to someone to come forward or to provoke or publicly challenge someone.
 - c) The Insecurity of Hypocrisy - *“envying”* [φθονέω] - conveys the idea of disliking someone because they are what you aren't or have what you don't.
3. Whenever we strive for holiness, we run a risk of prematurity in assuming that we have arrived - and a proud sanctimony develop that begins to censor those around us who “fail” to measure up to our own piety.

B. The Duty in Walking in the Spirit - 6:1

1. Instead, Paul admonishes us - *“Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual ...”*
2. There is a duty associated with being *“spiritual”* [πνευματικός] - a reference to those who possess the Holy Spirit as opposed to those who are walking according to the flesh - **1 Corinthians 3:1**.
3. Our task when we observe someone *“caught in any trespass”* is not to censor them, but seek to *“restore such a one ...”*
4. To be *“caught in any trespass”* [προλαμβάνω] - refers to “doing something before anticipated” or “to be surprised or overtaken” - meaning that this person has fallen into sin and needs help.
5. To *“restore such a one”* - [καταρτίζω] - describes causing him to be in a condition to function well; to “mend or repair” - to get back up on their feet spiritually and resume walking according to the Spirit.
6. However, the spirit with which this is done is consistent with the “fruit of the Spirit” - *“in a spirit of gentleness”* [πραΰτης] - **the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance**¹ - the opposite of the boastfulness confronted by Paul in the previous verse - cp. **1 Thessalonians 5:14**.
7. Instead of being a place where the wounded are shot, the church must be a place where they are cared for, bandaged up and *“restored”* since it

¹ William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 861.

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might only be a moment in time before we ourselves need to be “restored” – “*each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.*”

8. Paul uses a very intense word for “*looking to yourself*” [σκοπέω] – “paying special attention” – to “keep you eye on something” – cp. [Romans 16:17.](#)

Part 2

Read Galatians 5:26-6:6. The idea of perfection is a delusion immobilizing God’s people and generating a commitment to the lowest common denominator! We think that until we are perfect, we are not eligible to be categorized as “spiritual.” We exempt ourselves by generalizing the specific admonition of taking the log out of our own eye before we seek to remove the splinter from our neighbor’s eye – Luke 6:42. Of course, this does not conflict with the text before us today. This confrontation of hypocrisy is just that – a confrontation of hypocrisy, not a debilitation of sincere and genuine believers from help other believers overcome a fault. It is when we set ourselves up as the standard and assert our own righteousness above the righteousness gained by faith in Christ Jesus that Jesus says we have nothing to offer others. Last week we discussed **The Prerequisite to Persuasiveness** in following Christ. We saw the danger of walking in the flesh – resulting in the **Immodesty of Hypocrisy** (being “boastful”), the **Intolerance of Hypocrisy** (“challenging one another”), and the **Insecurity of Hypocrisy** (“envying one another”). We continue our study of this text today by looking at the Priority in Persuasiveness ...

II. THE PRIORITY IN PERSUASIVENESS – 6:2-5

A. The Compassion for One Struggling – v. 2

1. As we consider ourselves and our own vulnerability, we will not be condescending, condemning, or contemptuous toward those who are struggling, we will have compassion for them.
2. One of the reasons we must be considering our own weakness is because it is inevitable that we will be on the receiving end of admonition at some point in the future.
3. The responsibility is to love one another even as Christ has loved us – cp. [John 13:34.](#)
4. Job demonstrated that attitude of a godly person as they know the rebuke of the Lord – either directly or through the ministry of a brother or sister who comes and brings correction – cp. [Job 5:17; Hebrews 12:5-6.](#)
5. This is what is known as “*the law of Christ*” – it is the law of love by which the entire law is fulfilled – cp. [Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:10.](#)
6. A principal way by which this “*law of Christ*” is “*fulfilled*” is when we

“bear one another’s burdens.”

7. *“bear”* [βαστάζω] – to sustain a burden or “to support” – cp. [Romans 11:18; 15:1](#).
8. In the same way that Jesus came to help us out of a condition of sin, we ought to seek to assist those who have fallen to get back on their feet by assisting them with their burden [βάρος] – the weight of their temptation, weakness, and sin.
9. A persistent, oppressing temptation is one of the heaviest burdens a Christian can have.²

B. The Consciousness of Our Struggle – v. 3

1. Paul revisits the vulnerability that each of us has to our flesh – *“For if anyone things he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”*
2. A reason that people can be overwhelmed by their weakness to the flesh is because other believers view themselves as superior to those who stumble – thinking they are *“something”* when they really are *“nothing”* in comparison to the actual standard of righteousness that is Christ Jesus Himself.
3. Such a pompous and pious believer *“deceives himself.”*
4. We are told that we are to treat others as we ourselves would desire to be treated – [Luke 6:31](#).
5. A reason that believers fail to approach other believers could be because they would not want others to approach them if they are in sin – their commitment to the righteousness of Christ is that lax.

C. The Concern with Our Own Struggle – vv. 4-5

1. These verses are a challenge to carefully consider whether we are smug toward other believers by carefully looking at what we are facing ourselves.
2. Paul lays the obligation to be constantly evaluating ourselves and whether the Lord is truly doing a work of sanctification in us – *“But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reasons for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.”*
3. The options are two: 1) *“boast”* with reference to what Christ does in you; or, 2) *“boast”* in self-proclaimed superiority over others who are “worse” sinners than you
4. Each of us have our own “burden” – *“For each one will bear his own load.”*

² John F. MacArthur Jr., [Galatians](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 180.

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- a) The term for “load” is [φορτίον] – a reference to something able to be carried or transported.
- b) Each believer is to “bear his own load” because Christ is enabling you to bear it – cp. [Matthew 11:30](#).
- c) In this context it refers to the sustained “walking in the Spirit” to evidence the fruit that Christ produces in us to His own glory.

III. THE PRIZE OF PERSUASIVENESS – 6:6

A. The Ministry of the Word

1. Too many people interpret this verse completely out of context and make it refer to financial support of pastors (a concept clearly taught elsewhere, but not substantively present here).
2. This speaks of the primary means by which we strength one another when a person is “caught in any trespass” and one seeks to “restore such a one.”
3. A person cannot be corrected by logic, philosophy, intimidation, or manipulation ... it must be through the instruction by God’s Word – *“The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him.”*
4. The Scriptures are what enable sinners to be properly confronted, corrected, and restored – cp. [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#):
 - a) What is the Standard – “instruction ...”
 - b) How one has Strayed – “... reproof ...”
 - c) What is the Solution – “... correction ...”
 - d) How one can Stabilize – “... instruction in righteousness” .

B. The Mutuality in the Word

1. The ultimate goal is the ability to gain greater depth of fellowship and mutuality in Christ Jesus – cp. [Matthew 18:15](#).
2. The word “share” [κοινωνέω] – is the word for “fellowship” or to have something in common; to “participate.”
3. When the Scriptures are the means of a person being “restored” – both parties equally share the *“good things with one”* another.
4. One party is not viewed as “superior” to the other, both parties are equally needy of grace mediated through the ministry of the word.

So What?

1. God has designed the church to be a means of grace – we need each other; do not see it as optional.



2. You must see your essential duty of intentionally helping others follow Christ more.
3. Love is not defined as tolerance but the desire for others to be consistently in pursuit of Christ together with you.

**We must submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit while
persuading those around us to do the same.**