

GM // online listeners

We only have two more sermons left in Galatians, and then we will be starting our Advent series.

Today's passage is Galatians 6:1-10 ... let's jump right into it.

### **Galatians 6:1-10**

- 1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. 5 For each will have to bear his own load.**
- 6 Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. 7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good**

**to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

This passage is Relationships 101.

These truths when applied will produce healthy, safe, long-lasting relationships.

Now the context they were written into is a very divided church.

Which seems antithetical when you look at Jesus.

**If his disciples are supposed to be like him, then shouldn't we be more like the perfect family?**

But that's the rub.

Until heaven, we will never be a perfect family.

As Jesus' disciples we are learning to die more to our sin and live for Him.

This life is a long journey of our hearts slowly changing over time.

**Eugene Peterson called it, "A long obedience in the same direction."**

**When you join a church you aren't stepping into the world of the Care Bears.**

You are stepping into mixed cocktail of opinions, passions, temperaments, hurts, and personal struggles.

Too bad we all don't agree on everything.

Too bad we all don't behave like we are supposed to.

**But despite our differences and bad behavior ...**

**The Gospel Supersedes Our Differences And Holds Us Together**

**Galatians 6:1**

**1 Brothers,** if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Before we get into anything else we have to unpack that very first word ... "BROTHER".

We are brothers and sisters in God's house.

Church is family not a club.

You don't get to pick your family, and your family doesn't get to pick you.

You are born into a family.

As Christians we are “re-born” into the family of God by faith in Jesus.

**And what brings us together isn't personal preferences.  
The Gospel brings us together.**

**Why do we gather? What brings us together?**

**It is only one thing ... Jesus!**

If it becomes anything else ... it will fall apart.

And that's the problem ... we drift into adding other reasons and pre-requisites for gathering together.

And that's when we need the Gospel all-the-more.

**See, it doesn't just bring us together ... it holds us together.**

When you look around a church gathering you see many different types of people.

Age, gender, income, education, political persuasion, hobbies, interests ...

Out in the world all those things tend to divide us.

We typically break into groupings of familiarity or common interest.

**The more an aspect of myself becomes central ... Or the more I build my identity around that one thing ...**

### **For instance ... politics ...**

The more my identity is republican or democrat or liberal or conservative, I will struggle to gather with others that aren't like me in that way.

And the danger is that we can make identities out of anything.

**Your identity could be beard-wearing, outdoorsmen, who likes craft-beer and a man-bun.**

**Not that there's anything wrong with that ...**

But if you build your identity on those things, then its a problem.

Maybe you're a Marine ...

That is great!

**But how much of your identity is built on HAVING to be that?**

I'll throw myself under the bus.

I'm a pastor ...

**How much of my identity is built on having to be that?**

None of those things are meant to be primary in our lives.

As soon as we start elevating those false identities we start separating by differences.

That was why Galatians was written in the first place.

The Jewish Christians started to elevate their dietary restrictions to an identity level.

The difference in this false identity brought division.

False identities are always built around what YOU can do.

By contrast the Gospel gives us a different type of identity.

It ISN'T an identity you can earn.

It is an identity earned FOR you.

And it is an identity GIVEN TO YOU.

The beauty of the Gospel is that it tells us that the only identity that really matters is ...

Son/Daughter of God our Father.

Brother/Sister in Jesus Christ.

**The Gospel reminds us that we are a people brought into the family of God by truth and grace.**

**The Gospel brings us together and holds us together.**

**But we also need it for when we hurt each other.**

**The Gospel Deals With Offenses To Keep Us Together**

Let's look again at Galatians 6:1

## Galatians 6:1

**1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.**

It says, “If anyone is caught in any transgression [sin].”

It doesn't say sweep it under the rug.

When we see it we have to deal with it.

And this is where we can get into a big ol' mess as Christians.

**Some of us go a little overboard when someone's sin comes to light.**

**We act like we found the motherload in a gold mine.**

**Why? B/C we've forgotten the grace of the Gospel.**

The Gospel message exposes our sin ... but it also points us to forgiveness and restoration.

It shows us that sin breaks our relationship with God and people.

But it also shows us how Jesus came to bridge the gap.

**Which is why the goal of the Gospel is restoration.**

**Let me give you a picture of restoration:**

My son Riley split his chin when he was younger.

Before that happened. His skin was together, one, united ...  
just as it should be.

But the split showed that something was wrong ...

The skin wasn't together anymore.

This is what sin does ... it creates a rift between God and  
people.

As Riley's parents we didn't say ... let's just leave it alone  
I'm sure it will fix itself eventually.

NO!

We needed outside help.

We needed a doctor to step in and stitch him up.

**That is what restoration is.**

**We go to the Great Physician, Jesus, who is the only one  
who can mend and heal our relationships when we sin  
against each other.**

**Now, this is harder than it sounds.**

B/C the sin of pride often gets in our way.

If I'm the sinner, my pride keeps me from wanting to repent.

When I'm the one who is sinned against, pride keeps me  
from wanting to forgive.



Both positions are a power play.

Both positions don't want to act in gentleness and humility like the verse commands.

Instead we stand back in judgment and self-righteousness.

**Which is why we so desperately need to dwell in the Gospel ...**

### **The Gospel Opens Our Eyes To See Ourselves Honestly**

#### **Galatians 6:2-5**

**2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. 5 For each will have to bear his own load.**

We aren't called to ignore each other.

We aren't called to stay together as long as everyone is pulling their own weight.

No! We are called to help each other carry burdens.

Sin heaps on burdens of guilt and shame.

The affects are emotional, psychological, and spiritual.

If you've ever been through a breakup or nasty argument ... then you know what I'm talking about.

There is a heaviness you carry.

And until there is restoration, you've got a heavy burden on your back.

**So what does helping others carry those burdens look like?**

First, we don't let them sit in it alone.

Empathy is a beautiful gift of grace we can give to each other.

**Empathy exists where we have common ground.**

**Aren't the best counselors those who've already gone through your situation?**

- **I'd rather get parenting advice from grandparents than a teenager.**

In 2021 the plan is to start a marriage-focused community group.

The couple leading it volunteered themselves.

They aren't perfect, but they've gone through alot of difficult situations in their marriage.

They've come out the other side trusting more in Jesus and leaning on his grace and mercy.

People need that kind of empathy.

**To know you're not alone is a great weight lifted.**

**To know the person with you has already gone through it and is thriving is a whole different kind of weight lifted.**

**The empathetic person has learned to see themselves honestly.**

I enjoy listening to people talk who see themselves honestly ...

They don't boast in themselves ...

They don't boast in others ...

They boast in what Jesus has done in their lives.

They've been through some stuff and they found out the only way through it was Jesus' way: Grace, truth, mercy, forgiveness.

Empathy is one the strengths of community.

We are all going through something ... Or have gone through something.

**But we can't be helpful to anyone else until we are first honest with ourselves.**

My prayer is that we are a church full of honest people.

Personally honest, nothing hidden.

People that feel safe and bold to talk about their current struggles and past failures.

**This is how we carry each other's burdens and carry our own load.**

It is difficult in the moment to be that honest.

But Christians don't live for the moment ...

We are harvesters.

### **Christians Sow In Tears And Reap In Joy**

Everytime we choose honesty, humility, grace, truth, restoration ... we are sowing a seed for a future harvest.

### **Galatians 6:7-10**

**7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will**

**from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

Christians are driven by a bigger picture that overshadows any given moment.

We know that one day we will reap eternal life.

That is the horizon we look to.

One day we will get there, but until then ...

We live our life “sowing to the Spirit”, as the verse says.

Which means ...

The Christian life is growing more in tune with God’s heart, will, and ways.

**Let me show you how this works in real life.**

**I’m going to read you an excerpt from an email I received the other day from a pastor friend named Elliot Grudem.**

***I recently reconnected with a pastor I hadn’t seen since I was a child. He heard about our work through a mutual friend and wanted to hear more about it.***

***Our conversation covered a lot of ground, but most of it was spent marveling at the many ways God***

*intervened in each of our lives in unusual and surprising ways to accomplish more than we could hope or imagine.*

*He then offered the following reflection on nearly 40 years of pastoral ministry:*

*“I have always seen pastoral ministry as Ecclesiastes 11, casting bread upon the waters—long term, unplannable, requiring generosity, indiscriminate, fearlessness, and persistence—and now “after many days” I am always coming across fruit from decades ago.”*

We sow now ... to come across fruit in decades to come.

## **BAND COME UP**

**What will be your legacy?**

**What will be the legacy of our church?**

**Will it be fighting against each other?**

**Or fighting for each other?**

**Will it be heaping burdens on each other?**

**Or helping carry each other's burdens?**

Let us not grow weary in doing good ... for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

**But all this starts with where you and I place our identity.**

**What are you and I holding on to besides Jesus?**

Because anything else we sow into that isn't Jesus will eventually come to nothing.

**Come and lay down every identity, every heavy burden at the cross of Jesus Christ.**

**LET'S PRAY**