May 6, 2026

Encouraging the Weak
Galatians 6: 1-6

Paul had spoken at length about the dangers of false doctrine and the need for believers to carry themselves in a way that honors the Lord and encourages other believers in the faith. He was well aware that some would succumb to temptation or find themselves embracing false teaching.

The battle between the flesh and the Spirit is strong, and every believer is prone to sin and miss the mark. Although the believer is saved by grace, the flesh is not redeemed. There is a continual battle with the flesh. When one does stumble in sin, missing the mark God has set, those who are strong have an obligation to respond in a manner consistent with the grace and love they have received in Christ.

It seems apparent that Paul's day was much like our day in this regard. The church is notorious for "kicking others while they are down" and wounding her own, rather than seeking their restoration. As we examine the expectations within the text regarding our treatment of those who have fallen, I want to consider: Encouraging the Weak.

I. Spiritual Restoration (1) – Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Paul speaks of the expectation for the church to restore members who have fallen. Consider:

A. The Situation (1a) – Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault…He speaks of a believer that has been overtaken in a fault, referring to those who have stumbled in sin. It seems apparent that the believer had not sought to engage in willful sin, but rather had succumbed to temptation. Who among us has lived sin free since our conversion? We have all stumbled and missed the mark of God's glory. None would remain within a given congregation if all who had sinned where shunned and removed from the church. We cannot and do not condone sin, but there are countless records of heroes of the faith stumbling, being restored, and going on to be used mightily of God.

B. The Restoration (1b) – Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, **ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness**. Paul reveals the expected response and process in dealing with a believer who has stumbled. Those who are spiritual are expected to restore them in a spirit of meekness. The word restore is a medical term, and it carries the idea of setting a bone that has been broken or putting a dislocated joint back in place.

➢ When a bone is broken or a joint becomes dislocated, we don't immediately seek to amputate the affected limb. Great care is taken to save the limb with whatever effort is necessary. Such should be the case with believers who have stumbled. The church should take no pleasure in removing a member from fellowship. Every effort should be made for restoration and renewed fellowship, if at all possible.

➢ We are to restore those who have stumbled in a spirit of meekness. This speaks of meekness, mildness, and forbearance. There are times when boldness and confrontation are needed, but even then, a spirit of meekness is beneficial. 2 Tim.2:24-26 – And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, [25] In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; [26] And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

C. The Consideration (1c) – considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Paul reveals there is no room for arrogance or self-righteousness among believers. We are all merely sinners saved by grace. We are prone to stumble and fall, just like others. In fact, none have lived a sinless life. If we are walking in fellowship with the Lord, we ought to be thankful for His grace and protection rather than developing an attitude of spiritual superiority. 1 Cor.10:12-13 – Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. [13] There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. We are all subject to temptation. God is always faithful to provide a means of escape, but sometimes we fail to seek the escape.

II. Personal Obligation (2-5) – Here Paul deals with the personal expectations and obligations we have as believers. Consider:

A. Our Responsibility (2) – Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. We are responsible to bear one another's burdens, as commanded of Christ the Lord. We are to help carry the heavy burdens of another. We all have experienced seasons of difficulty, being forced to carry a heavy burden. How would we have made it had someone not helped carry our load? We must be willing to come alongside those who are struggling and attempt to lighten their load. Rom.15:1 – We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

B. Our Humility (3-4) – For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. [4] But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not

in another. Paul warns against spiritual arrogance. Living in bodies of flesh, we too are prone to stumble and fall, giving in to the temptations that are common to humanity. One who thinks he is above falling in temptation has deceived himself. Those who possess spiritual arrogance have a legalistic attitude toward the failures of others. Again, we are not to condone sin, but we must be mindful of our own tendency to fall and miss the mark.

➢ But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. One's focus should not be on the works or life of another, but on their own spiritual walk with the Lord. We cannot walk as the Lord desires of us if we are more worried about the walk of others instead of our own. That doesn't mean that we should not be aware or care about the spiritual walk of others, but our lives will not be judged by the work of another. The Lord will judge us based on the lives we live. If we ensure our walk is pleasing to the Lord, we will be much better able to assist those in need.

C. Our Accountability (5) – For every man shall bear his own burden. Some may view this as being contradictory to what he had just said about bearing one another's burdens. "But he uses a different term here. *Phortion* (**load**) refers to anything that is carried, and has no connotation of difficulty. It was often used of the general obligations of life that a person is responsible to **bear** on **his own**," MacArthur. [i] This ties into what we have just discussed. We are all accountable to the Lord for the lives we live. We will all stand before the Lord and be judged according to our works. 2 Cor.5:10 – For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. We are expected to be faithful unto the Lord, bearing our burdens and serving Him with gladness.

III. Biblical Communication (6) – Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Simply, believers are to encourage one another in the Word of God. Those who have received insight from the Spirit regarding the Word are to share with those who give insight from the Word. In essence, Paul is challenging the church to come together in fellowship around the Word, growing and maturing together.

➢ We all benefit from one another. Iron sharpens iron. Every believer, who is walking in fellowship with the Lord, has much to contribute to the body of Christ. May we all be willing to engage in the work of ministry, coming together around the Word of God in order to fulfill the work the Lord has entrusted to us.

Conclusion: This has been a challenging passage. Those who are spiritual, the mature believers within the church, have a great responsibility to ensure the health and well-being of the church.

We must not waste the blessing we have received, but be willing to invest in others, seeking to restore those who stumble from time to time. Where would any of us be had the church abandoned us every time we made a mistake or succumbed to temptation?

[i] John F. MacArthur Jr., *Galatians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 181.