

# Galatians 6

by Robert F. Adcock

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of restoration and bearing one another's burdens in the Christian family, and calls believers to exercise their spiritual gifts and take up their cross daily to bring glory and honor to God's name.*

**Duration:** 37:31

**Scripture:** Galatians 6:1

**Topics:** "Christian Community", "Humility"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living up to our responsibilities as members of the Body of Christ. He encourages the audience to examine their actions and attitudes towards fellow believers. The speaker references Galatians 6:1-5, which instructs believers to restore those who have fallen in a spirit of meekness and to bear one another's burdens. He also warns against pride and self-deception, urging believers to prove their worth and find joy in their own actions. The sermon highlights the significance of the Christian family and the need for each member to fulfill their role in serving and supporting one another.

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## Transcript

I'd like for us tonight to look in Galatians chapter 6. Galatians 6, and we'll read the first five verses. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let every man prove his own worth, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burdens.

I think that will suffice for the reading. Paul's writing to the church at Corinth draws to our attention the fact that the church, the body of Jesus Christ, is made up of many members. Now, this is a wonderful truth.

It's not those names that are on those church robes that really matter. It's those names that are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life. It's those that have truly identified themselves with the Lord Jesus in the experience of salvation that are members of this body.

And as members of that body, we have responsibility to each other. And as we grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, our understanding of this truth in the Word of God should lay hold upon us stronger and stronger. I like family loyalty, those that are loyal to members of their family.

Strong family ties. Father wrote me a letter last week, and he had quite a bit to say about our spiritual family, how wonderful it was to be a member of the family of God. But this does entail quite a bit of responsibility.

I read not long ago that Madeleine Murray O'Hare, I believe is her name, a woman that is known quite widely for her views concerning spiritual things. She announces herself as an atheist, but she made a comment about you and me. You know, when they say things that are not true, I can sometimes just smile and overlook that, because I know it's not true.

But when people make comments about us, the Christian family, the members of the body of Christ, and we discover, you know, that's the truth, it hurts. She made this statement. She said the Christian army was the only army that she knew of that abandoned its wounded.

And, you know, I'm persuaded that that's the truth. As long as everything is just going along wonderful, there are no waves, there's no storms, there are things pretty nice. But, you know, when someone runs afoul some bad weather and there's a lot of things that touch their lives, very often I think the natural thing to do is just write them off and say, it's too much trouble.

After all, we have other things that are more important to take care of. And that's not true. There's nothing more important, as far as the word of God is concerned, in the family of God than your care for another member in the body.

And that's what this passage is all about. Our attitude toward others is that indeed have run into difficulty in the course of their lives, and a warning to us to not be puffed up and say, it wouldn't happen to me. Don't you be too sure.

You know, we're warned in the word of God this idea of having inflated notions about how strong we are and how we could endure, and we would never do that. You'd be very careful how you feel that way about yourself. A warning in the word of God is to not get any such ideas about yourself.

The word of God says, be strong in the Lord. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I don't know any other way in which you as a believer, and I as a believer, and the Lord Jesus Christ can remain loyal to the cause of Christ apart from the enabling grace and power that he gives to us.

In my own strength, I'm just not capable of being what God wants me to be as a believer. He supplies the power. He supplies everything that is necessary for me to bring glory and honor to his name.

The word burden that is used in this passage, and when Paul wrote this epistle he had, I think, some strong feelings about how we should feel toward one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. The word burden is used in two different senses in this passage. Actually, the Greek text, I looked at it to see what if the words were the same.

Is it a little different? And the difference has a lot of meaning. That's the reason sometimes it pays to avail yourselves of the books, good books, that those people have written, scholarly men that provide us with an insight in understanding the word of God. So, in this instance, we've got a passage that deals with

something that is very important as far as the Christian family is concerned.

It's relevant to our experiences day by day as members of the body of Christ. What people say about us that's not true, we can forget that. But those things that they say about us, those charges that they make that are true, it should cause us to bow our heads in shame and say, God forbid that I would be guilty of that sin, because indeed it is a sin to not live up to our full responsibility to other members in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The very first verse says, Brethren, it's an all-inclusive term that includes every member in the body. If a man, it still includes every member in the body, be overtaken in a fall. And the idea, of course, is that not because by choice someone deliberately seeks out a course and pursues it to the point in their life experience that they find themselves deeply engulfed in some sinful practice.

That's not the thought at all. The idea is that, craftily, subtly, something comes into that man or that woman's life, and they're overcome by it, they're overwhelmed by it, they're engulfed by it, and perhaps just mystified as to why it is I've ever arrived at such a sparse state of affairs in my Christian experience. Shame, overcome with shame, feelings of remorse, and a shame that sometimes will keep them from seeking help from others.

The idea that if I'm exposed it will be to a view to ridicule and making sport of me because of my failings and my down sittings and that sort of thing, which should be completely foreign to any feelings that we have toward one that has fallen into these circumstances. Because, if a man possesses any spirituality at all about him, if he has any spiritual discernment at all, he will know what his attitude should be toward that fallen one. It certainly should not be any attitude of, well, you loathsome, you reprobate, and go through a long list of words that are so derisive, and actually it just only deepens the hurt that that person would feel.

Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. I tell you, we should approach the restoration of an erring brother or sister with fear and trembling. There should be, of course, in the fulfillment of the law of Christ, which is to love one another even as he loved us, there should be that attitude that certainly there is no pleasure to be derived by trying to correct and restore this individual.

If there's anyone that would find anything in the way of pleasure, a pleasurable experience to go and to expose and, in a sense, make someone feel just a little lower because of what they've done, or something that may indeed have been very harmful, if that attitude exists, that person shouldn't go in meekness with a view to seeing that individual restored to a place of youthfulness. Actually, the attitude should be of the same attitude the Lord Jesus would have of that woman that was taken in adultery, in a very active adultery, by the witness of those men that had brought her to the Lord Jesus. Did you detect the tenderness, that spirit of meekness and love that dealt with that matter? No harshness.

You go and sin no more. You go and sin no more. I think behind all of that, there was a full omniscient recognition that there were a lot of lies that had been told in connection with that matter.

There was a lot of hypocrisy that was wrapped up in that, and our Lord Jesus Christ dealt with it in a very wise and wonderful way. I certainly believe that harshness has no place when it comes to seeking to restore those that have been overcome or overtaken in a false. Bear ye one another's burden.

In this instance, this word burden, of course, it means a heavy burden, and sin is a heavy burden, no doubt about that. Sin is something that is, if you think in terms of it as a burden, it's something very oppressive. It is of a tremendous weight.

It drags down, it presses down, it takes its toll upon the individual that is bearing that burden. Sin takes its toll upon a man or woman that gives place to sin in their lives. That man that has given himself to overindulgence with drugs or alcohol or anything of that sort, it takes its toll.

And so often you can think of so many things in this life in which sinful indulgence in things that were so pleasurable, the pleasures of sin are for a season. But ultimately, a tremendous burden is imposed upon that individual because of this indulgence and because of this practice. A heavy burden.

Of course, verse 1 controls the meaning of the burden of verse 2. Remember, this is a member of the body of Christ that's been overtaken in a false. And here's where all of the members, their attitude toward this should be one of responsiveness to that member that has been overtaken in that false. Not like the atheist has accused us of, that we say, well, I thought that's about the way they would end up all along.

I was always suspicious that there wasn't too much in that conversion experience. Make some feeble excuse and just wipe them to the side and abandon them. We should respond and say, that problem that brother, that sister has, that's my problem.

And lovingly, just as the Lord Jesus would go to their side, we should go to their side, and they should feel the tender touch of our hands upon them, and recognize that it is the touch of the Lord Jesus. He acts in and through us to minister to others. We become a sheriff in the bearing of that burden that has touched their lives.

Let those that are strong spiritually, let them come to their side, let them fortify that position to help in a time of need. That's what the Spirit of God would have us to do. That's what would bring tremendous pleasure to the Lord Jesus Christ, to know that we are loving and caring for each other the same way that he loves us and cares for us.

He gave himself for us. The erring brother and sister in Christ is one that Christ died for. He loves them.

He wants us to have the same kind of love for them, and to see that we have a responsibility to share in that experience. Not wipe them by the way and say, it doesn't really matter. We'll find some more.

We'll find some prospects that look brighter than perhaps this one did. Think of all of the wreckage along the wayside, spiritually speaking, of those that perhaps had someone, a loving Christian, gone to their side and sought to restore them in the same way the Lord Jesus would have restored them. Something could have been salvaged there for the glory of God.

You know, one day, brethren and sisters, we're going to give a full account before the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus for the way we've behaved as Christians, how we've served him, and how we have served each other, what has been our attitude toward each other. Do I understand that what affects you is of importance to me? You're a member of the body of the Lord Jesus. Your spiritual welfare becomes of, indeed, prime importance to me.

When one member suffers, we all suffer together. I have a solemn responsibility to be all that the Lord Jesus Christ wants me to be as far as a burden bearer to seek to restore an erring member. Lift him up.

Don't put him down. Don't let that individual become the object of ridicule, the topic of gossip. Remember, he's a member of the body.

You wouldn't treat a member of your body that way, your physical body, your natural body. That member was sick. All the other members become interested in the welfare of that member and that body.

All the attention is devoted to that one member. And, if we as Christians, as a local church, when a situation like this arises, let the whole body of Christ rise as one and go to the side and to the aid of the one that has been overtaken in this fault. That's important.

And so, when others, outsiders, those that are in this world, when they observe the church today and they make statements that are sometimes not too complimentary, we have to sometimes go around the corner and hide our head, hang our head, and say, you know, there's a lot of truth in what he says. We do not live up to our commitment to each other as the Lord Jesus would have us to. We don't like that responsibility.

We don't like the idea of having someone that is a hindrance. Well, listen, limit of a hindrance. Minister to that member and see that member restored to a place of usefulness.

And, you know, we've been told that sometimes when a member in our body has been affected by a sickness, or perhaps it's a broken bone, once it mends, for often it's stronger than it was before. And, I know some Christians that they've fallen. I don't believe in falling from grace, mind you.

They've fallen. They've fallen into sin. They've been overtaken in a sense.

But, praise be to God, they were restored. They were brought back to a place of usefulness, and mind, their appreciation of their salvation and the people of God was greater than it ever was before. I'm not suggesting for a moment that what we need to do is to get away from the Lord so that we can come back and we'll be stronger.

I'm not suggesting that for a moment. I'm only reminding us that in the sharing of our part of the burden, our part of the responsibility for every other member in the body of Christ, that if we look upon that individual as being important to the personal health and welfare of the whole body, we'll do everything that we can to restore them. We won't leave any stone unturned.

Inconveniences as far as ministering to the needs of that individual, time that must be spent, time in prayer before God, to cry out to God and say, O God, one has been overtaken in a fall. The power of Satan is upon this life. We want it broken.

We want our erring brother and sister in Christ brought back to a place of spiritual health and strength in the body. That's the proper attitude to ascend, and not start some buzzing noise about, did you hear about brother or sister so-and-so and how they've been overtaken. Lift them up, don't put them down.

Be considerate, and remember again, never feel within your own heart and in your own mind, because if you do, you're just asking Satan to come and put you to the test. That would never happen to me. That would never happen to me.

I'm too strong for that. But brother and sister, I'll remind you, you're only as strong as the Lord can make you, and I don't think he can make you very strong when you have all of that confidence in your flesh. We're to have no confidence in the flesh.

Walk in the Spirit and fulfill not the lust of the flesh. The flesh is weak. The flesh is defiant.

All that we are in Adam is unfit for the presence of God, can do nothing to glorify God. Let us be reminded of the source of our strength. Let's do all that we can to remind those that have been overcoming a fall.

Brother, sister, you just need that fresh encounter with the Lord in the experience of confessing and forsaking your sins. We haven't abandoned you. We love you.

We want you to be brought back to a place of usefulness. We want to be at your side. We want to fortify you against this attack by Satan, and by so doing, indeed, fulfill the law of Christ.

He loved us so much. He loves us so much, present tense. He loves us, and Jude, when he writes his letter, he says, keep yourselves in the love of God.

That awareness that the love of God is being showered down from heaven upon me. Let my soul be bathed in that consciousness of the love of God, the consciousness of God's care for me. Brother, confess your sin, forsake your sin, and just turn your face heavenward, and let God love you.

You're an erring child that has been brought back home, and we can play such an important role in that restoration of one that has fallen. Now, we think in terms of every man bearing his own burden. The word is a little different.

It deals with, or has the connotation of, your portion of the burden. How do you feel about what you're doing as far as bearing your portion of the burden, the responsibility within the local church? You've heard the saying that in most church gatherings, there are people that come and they're benchwarmers. That's all they do.

They come, and thank God they help hide some of the furniture, the lumber, but that's about all they do. They just put in their bodily appearance. Thank God for that.

There are others that come, and they know pretty much what's going on, but they don't want any part in it. They don't want any responsibility, and there are those, and this is the group that we should seek to be with all of our might. They know what's going on, and they want to share in it.

I want to share that responsibility before God, to maintain a testimony for God. Now, I have a gift, a spiritual gift. God expects me to exercise that gift for the benefit of the whole body, to build up the whole body by the exercise of my gift.

Now, brother and sister, what happens when we don't exercise our gift? Again, the whole body suffers. We shifted our responsibility to someone else. Someone else is carrying the double portion because I'm laying down on the job, and I won't assume that responsibility that God has already relegated to me.

So let every man bear his portion of the burden. Again, one day we'll be at the bimmer, the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus. There we shall stand, and we shall be rewarded, or we shall suffer loss because we were derelict in our responsibility.

Do you want a reward, or do you want to suffer loss? Are we going to take our lives, live them selfishly, seeking after those things, pursuing those things in this life that just brings pleasure for a moment? Or will we take our lives, and will we present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God, and say, Lord, here am I. I'll take up my cross, and I'll bear it daily. I will recognize and reckon this body, all that I am in Adam, to be

dead. And I'm alive unto God through our Lord Jesus, and I shall seek a course in this life that indeed, frank glory and honor to your name, take my portion of the burden as a Christian.

This is so important in our Christian experience. I think Peter, in his experiences and there are so many characters in the scriptures when you examine their lives, for often you can detect that these divine principles, it was brought to weigh upon that life somewhere in the course of their experience. I think Peter had that sort of experience.

He's a very blustery man by personality. You can't help but love him. He's so much like us.

He's quick sometimes to say, my loyalty and allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, unquestionable. Then, in a moment of time, he might deny the Lord. You see, very often he didn't know his own heart, and so often we don't know how weak we are.

Sometimes the Lord exposes that weakness and just brings it to our attention by causing us to be embarrassed. Sometimes he brings us low and draws forth that admission from these lips of ours, from these hearts of ours. Lord, without thee I can't do anything.

I know I'm weak, but I can appropriate. I'm a good appropriator. I want your strength.

I want your power, Lord. I have the power of the Spirit of God to be a witness for God to this world and to live my life for his glory and honor. Peter says in 1 Peter 5, he says, humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.

Cast all your care upon him, for he cares about you. He cares about you. I always think in terms of, brother, he cares about you.

You see, I think first of my brother and my sister in Christ. God loves you. God cares about you.

What affects your life affects my life. I'm concerned. I'll bear my portion of the burden.

I've known in the course of my Christian experience some that would assume some portion of responsibility to the local church, and it wouldn't be long before you discovered that it was a tremendous burden to them. There was no joy associated with what they were doing, and the best advice I can give to someone that finds himself in that position, brother, give it up. It's what we want.

Don't do it any longer. If your service for God has become something that is burdensome to you and you find no joy in it, give it up, because I believe that God has a place for each one of us, and in that experience of serving him and sharing our portion of the burden, there will be sheer joy in what we're doing. It'll be a joyous experience to serve other members of the body of Christ.

If it becomes burdensome, if it becomes something that makes you a hypocrite because you really don't want to do it, you're just going through the motions, give it up and get your own soul right with God before you ever assume any more responsibility in serving God's people. If there's not that joy in your soul in the experience of serving, there's something wrong. He counted it all joy the Lord Jesus did everything that he did in fulfillment of God's will for his life.

He counted it all joy, the suffering, the sadness, and the sorrow that he experienced in providing salvation for you and me. It was indeed a joyous experience. Indeed, all around appeared to be turmoil, and the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief deep within his own soul.

It was a deep-seated joy because he could look beyond all of this and recognize, praise God, there's a wonderful day coming when we shall be in his presence. He knew that there was a throne that awaited him. He knew that he would bring many into the kingdom of God.

In fact, he would be the only means and way whereby a person could become a member of his body through faith in him. That's the example that he left for us. Let it be a joyous experience, bearing one another's burdens in the experience of saying, Brother, I'll do all that I can to help you during your time of need.

I will give of myself sacrificially to see you restored to the Lord. Now listen, someone that has erred and gotten away from the Lord, when they know that that's your attitude, I believe that influences them. They see that expression of love through your life.

They feel the touch of Jesus Christ through you, and perhaps there could have been many more that could have been salvaged. There could have been many more that could have been restored to a place of usefulness far quicker than they were if we had done all that we could be to them. And let it be known far and wide that we're not shirkers of our responsibilities, that we sense and know that we have a responsibility before the Lord to share our fair part or portion of the burden.

These things are weighty. Indeed, there is a lot of responsibility associated with bearing a testimony for God. The local assembly, the church, the church government, the exercise of the elders and the leaders in the local church, bearing our fair share of the burden of prayer.

How much time do we spend in prayer, praying for our fellow believers? How sensitive are we to the needs of the local church? Do we want the local testimony to have a vibrant, fresh testimony to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ? The gospel, do we get out and do we spread that glorious message to this world in which we're living today? If others criticize us, let's be sure that we can say in our own hearts at least, that's a lie, that's not true. But let us respond to it the same way the Lord Jesus did. When he was reviled, he reviled not again, and when he suffered he threatened not, but he committed himself unto God.

But when we hear critical remarks made about other Christians, the church, the members of the body of Christ, and we have to say, that's true, that's true, let's be sure we're not the one that's guilty. That we can say, by the grace of God, that's not me. I haven't fallen into that snare of Satan.

I understand and I seek, by what God provides in the way of grace and mercy and strength, to be all that I can be in helping other members in the body of Christ, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Shall we have just a word of prayer? Oh Father in heaven, we bow before thee and we're solemnly aware tonight that as believers in your Son and members of your family, we bear the name Christian. We are telling others that we belong to Christ, and oh our God we pray that we shall bring no shame or reproach upon that blessed name.

We want to honor the Lord Jesus in our lives, what Paul has spoken to us tonight in the word of God. Has reminded us that we do have awesome responsibility. Lord help our thoughts, help us to have the mind of Christ, help us to react more perfectly towards other members in the body.

Help us, oh God, to be what you want us to be as members of the body of your wonderful Son the Lord Jesus. We commit each dear believer in this room to thee tonight, and pray oh God be precious and loving to them, and help them and strengthen them in their Christian experience. That indeed all of the joy of

your salvation will be their portion, and all of their service for thee will indeed be filled with the joyous experience of knowing that they're fulfilling your will.

This we ask in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks.

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