



WEEKLY SERMON

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Message: The Family of God - #3

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Text: Galatians 6:1-5

In John 15:7 we read, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." We have always taught that Bible reading and prayer go hand in hand. John 15:7 explains how Bible reading and prayer fit together and accomplish a great work as a team. Would you focus your attention on the words, "abide in me" and "my words abide in you." To abide in Christ is to dwell on Christ, to think of Him. Not only are we to live close to Him, but we are constantly thinking of His presence and realizing how wonderful it is. For those who want to get "what ye will" from Him, His words must "abide" in them. The role of the Bible in prayer centers around the word "abide."

The word "abide" means "to remain in you." What remains in you after you have read your Bible? That which remains is what abides in you.

The word "abide" means "to submit to." When you read God's word, how many Scriptures do you submit to? God starts answering our prayers when we start obeying His Word.

The word "abide" means "to put up with." If you abide in Christ and His words abide in you, then you will put up with what He says even though you may have a hard time accepting the words you do not like.

The word "abide" means to "live up to." Live up to the standard of what His Word says.

The word "abide" means to "carry out." Distribute to others what remains or abides from the Word of God.

1. The Word of God is more than a Book to read; the Bible contains the words God wants to hear from us.
2. The Word of God provides stability of thought during unstable times.
3. The Word of God teaches us the proper emotions to display before God.
4. The Word of God provides answers of what God has done for others.
5. The Word of God obligates Him and gives assurance to man.

As you read the word of God, begin to learn to pray the words of God back to Him. Take a verse or a passage and as you read it turn it into a prayer of praise, a prayer of adoration, a prayer of thanksgiving or a prayer request.

No solid growth can take place in the Christian life unless there is prayer growth. No prayer growth occurs until we realize that effective prayer is hard work, and we are willing to work hard. "Prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer is the greater work."

Rodney Griffin wrote "Just Pray." Here are the words to the chorus:

**And prayer is just as big as God is,
Prayer is just as strong as God is strong;
Prayer can reach as far as God can reach;**

**Don't ever give up, just pray, just pray;
Don't ever give up, just pray.**

PS: Some concluding thoughts:

1. When you don't know what the future holds, remember WHO holds the future. God's fulfilled prophetic Word give **ASSURANCE** from the **PAST, PEACE** in the **PRESENT**, and **HOPE** for the **FUTURE**.

2. In Hebrews 4:12 we read, **"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."** When you need counsel, direction, or encouragement, turn prayerfully to God's living and powerful Word. Martin Luther said **"The Word of God is perfect; it is precious and pure; it is truth itself."**

3. **"Beware of Little Things"** - I was walking down a little hill in the woods when I stepped on a little twig. The twig rolled and I fell down. As I got up and went on my way, I thought, if that had been a big log, I would have seen it and climbed over it, there would have been no danger of falling, for I would have been aware of the danger. The very fact that the twig was small was what made it dangerous.

In our spiritual pathway, the Devil places little temptations to defeat us. His little traps or obstructions are often more effective than the big ones, partly because they are so often unnoticed, and partly because even if people do notice them, they may think they are too small to make any difference. Beware of little things! It was only a "little thing" a bite of forbidden fruit, that brought sin and its curse into this old world.

4. Be a good person in someone's life today by encouraging them. As the Holy Spirit encourages you, encourage others. **The church should be a community of encouragement.**

In *His* Amazing Grace
Pastor David Miklas

How to Treat a Fallen Brother in the Family of God

At the outset of this message, I would ask that you please grasp this statement and allow it to sink into your thinking. "**CARING CHRISTIANS in the church of Jesus Christ are to BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.**"

As you are thinking upon that statement, let your mind also become absorbed by what the Apostle Paul expressed to us in **Galatians 6:1-5, 10.**

"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. (2) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (3) 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. (5) For every man shall bear his own burden. (10) As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Would you especially notice **verse 2**? Here we are instructed to, "**Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.**" Do not think for one moment that Christians "**DO NOT HAVE BURDENS.**" The person in the seat next to you during any given service may be in desperate need. Just because we have trusted Christ as our Saviour and our sins are forgiven, does not mean we are without **BURDENS** in this world.

One of a Pastor's ministries to the body of Christ is the ministry of counseling. Now if counseling was your pastor's only calling, he would be very busy with burdened people who just need somebody to listen. Today we find:

There are people close to the edge emotionally.
There are people who see no light at the end of the tunnel.
They have FAMILY problems.
They have HEALTH problems.

They have FINANCIAL problems.

They have FAILURE problems.

There are those who have a terror of the unknown.
There are those who have not done anything bad, nor have they disgraced the Lord, but they carry an unknown burden.
There are those who cannot talk to you without crying.
There are those who get up in the morning dreading the day, or they may go to bed at night unable to sleep.

There are many people, all around us and even in this church, who live that way. The scriptures are telling us to share these people's burdens, literally to "**WALK WITH THEM THROUGH THE STORMS OF LIFE.**"

Would you notice again **verse 5**? Here we are told "**...every man shall bear his own burdens.**" On the surface there appears to be a contradiction between **verse 2**, "**Bear ye one another's burdens...**" and **verse 5**, "**...every man shall bear his own burdens.**" However, there is a difference in the meaning of the word **BURDENS** in each sentence.

In **verse 2** the word for "**burdens**" refers to a **HEAVY LOAD, TRIALS** that are difficult to bear. They are **BURDENSOME.**

In **verse 5**, the word "**burdens**" refers to little loads you carry on your back. This would be the word for a soldier's backpack.

I have certain burdens that only I can bear. I cannot pass my responsibilities onto others. I must fulfill that work or responsibility myself. For example:

I have to **BE** a Husband and Father in my home.
I have to **DO** the work that God has called me to do.

Here I must bear my own burdens. Every soldier has to shoulder his own backpack. Far too many try to give their responsibilities to someone else, either by quitting or by not fulfilling their obligations. In so doing, not only have they missed the blessing, they have also disobeyed God.

Verse 5, I believe, is talking about the responsibilities of the ministry and the responsibilities of life which are mine to endure.

Verse 2, I believe, is talking about the **TRIALS** and **PROBLEMS** of life that are beyond my ability to endure, and I **NEED SOMEONE TO HELP LIFT THEM FOR ME**.

It is here where we see the beauty of the church fellowship come into action. If we really **CARE**, we ought to go out of our way and help others to **BEAR THEIR BURDENS**.

Now, I believe the particular burden Paul is referencing is found in **verse 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.” This is the burden of helping those who have **STUMBLERD** and **FALLEN** into sin.

Someone has said, “A fallen Christian must have **SOMEWHERE** to go and **SOMEONE** to talk to. He does not need **CONDEMNATION**; rather he needs **CONSOLATION**.”

Let me ask you:

If the **APOSTLE PETER**, who had taken a fall by lying and cursing the Lord, was part of this congregation, how would you act towards him? Think about that.

If **LOT**, Abraham’s nephew who had fallen into sin with his family in Sodom, was part of this congregation, how would you act towards him? Think about that.

If **ACHAN**, who had stolen the accursed thing from Jericho, was part of this congregation, how would you act towards him and his family? Think about that.

If **DAVID**, who had fallen into sin with Bathsheba and then repented, was part of this congregation, how would you act towards him and his family? Think about that.

If **JOHN MARK**, who had a falling-out with the Apostle Paul, but later came back as a friend, was a part of this congregation, how would you act towards him? Think about that.

I could go on and on with the names of many other people, both from the Bible and from those who have been a part of this church over the years. The question is, how do you treat a fallen brother in Christ?

Listen to this statement:

“As fundamentalists we have a tendency to crucify our living saints, worship our dead ones, and shoot our wounded. This is most clearly demonstrated in the last area - our response, or lack of it, to those who have been spiritually wounded because of a sin in their life. We wrap our arms of love and acceptance around the drug addict or the prostitute who comes to Christ, but “pass by on the other side” when a brother or sister in Christ succumbs to the temptation of Satan. We treat these fallen brothers as if they have leprosy and leave them isolated from the protection and care of the church. Somehow we have ignored a theology of restoration. “

The question we need to ask is who is our **Fallen Brother**? Is a fallen brother one who has:

Robbed or killed somebody,
Committed adultery or fornication,
Cheated on his income tax,

Gossiped, slandered, and lied, or
Carried anger and bitterness in his soul?

It could be. It could also be a person who has **SLIPPED** away from God. He is saved, but he has gotten away from the **WORD** of God, the **WORK** of God, and the **FELLOWSHIP** of God.

Perhaps he has done so because of **DISAPPOINTMENT, FAILURE, or WEARINESS.**
Perhaps he has done so because a **TEMPTATION** has overtaken him, and now it has become a lust that has moved him into a sinful pattern.

Please listen carefully to this statement:

"I am not saying that when a man abandons his wife and kids and runs off into immorality, that we should bring him back to his church leadership position.

Forgiveness is ONE issue. LEADERSHIP is another issue.

The Bible teaches that some failures disqualify a man from certain positions of leadership. If a leader falls into **MORAL** sin, of course we are to **FORGIVE HIM.** Naturally we are to **HELP HIM.** But are we to put him back into the pulpit? **NEVER!** We have an obligation to a lost world. The work of God is far more important than the worker. However, we have a responsibility to reach down where the fallen person is and love him and care for him as Paul says, "restore such an one." His relationship is far more important than his position of labor."

Folks, this world is filled with fallen, wounded Christians. If I pastored a church filled with only restored saints, who had previously fallen from the demands of the Lord's work, these saints would more than fill the largest church auditorium in America.

In **verse 1**, please notice the word "**OVERTAKEN.**" The word means "to come upon, to take unawares." It refers to a Christian being caught-up by some sin or some fault in life **BEFORE HE IS AWARE** that he is doing wrong. He did not anticipate his **FAILURE** nor has he sinned **WILLFULLY and KNOWINGLY.** Hold it, let's be careful here.

It is so easy to point a finger and say, "Look at so and so, they should have known better."
This is not necessarily true.

It is so easy to question, "Why doesn't that believer realize what they are doing and saying?"

Please notice the word is "**OVERTAKEN.**" It refers to a sin catching us **UNAWARES.** In order to fully understand Galatians 6:1, one must connect it with Galatians 5:19-24.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, (20) Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, (21) Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (24) And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (25) If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

The one **OVERTAKEN** in a fault in Galatians 6:1 is no doubt one **OVERTAKEN** with one of the faults, or works of the flesh mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21.

The one who is **SPIRITUAL** in Galatians 6:1 is the one who possesses the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. In other words, when the one who has the **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT** overtakes the one who has the **WORKS OF THE FLESH** and has committed one of these works, he receives instructions in Galatians 6:1 as to what he is to do.

I call your attention to a second word in **verse 1.** It is the word "**FAULT.**" The word means a "blunder, or a failure to achieve." It refers to a "**slip or lapse rather than a willful sin.**"

By way of illustration, here is a person who desires to do right yet does wrong. His sin is not a deliberate violation of God's will and His word, but one where, in a literal sense, he is walking along and trips over a sin. Is he aware of what he has done?

Perhaps yes, if he immediately goes to God and confesses it.

Perhaps no if he continues to function until the burden becomes great and then he needs help to overcome it.

With the words **FAULT** and **OVERTAKEN** in mind, Paul gives us three simple instructions on how to help one bear His burden.

FIRST: He tells us **WHAT** we should do, **RESTORE**.

SECOND: He tells us **WHY** we should do it, **BECAUSE OF THE LAW OF LOVE**.

THIRD: He tells us **HOW** we should do it, **WITH MEEKNESS**.

FIRST: He explains WHAT we should do - RESTORE. The text says we are to **RESTORE**. This is a rather confusing word, because it carries four different meanings to four different groups of people.

The **doctor** knew this word. It was a **MEDICAL TERM** used to refer to "**SETTING A BROKEN BONE**." The only way to set a broken bone is with tenderness. If it is not set properly, it is going to create problems.

The **fisherman** knew this word. It meant "**TO MEND THE NETS**." If nets are not mended, you cannot use them. If Christians are not restored, God cannot use them to be fishers of men or to serve others.

The **soldier** knew this word. It meant "**TO EQUIP AN ARMY**." Unless we help to restore those who have sinned, they will never be able to win the battles of life. Their armor has been damaged. Therefore, we are helping them to restore their battle equipment.

The **sailor** knew this word. It meant "**TO OUTFIT A SHIP FOR A VOYAGE**." Each of us has to face the storms of life. But if the Christian is not restored, he will sink beneath the waters.

Listen! **There is NO reason to HANG the DIRTY laundry of fellow believers OUT IN PUBLIC for everyone to see and talk about.**

The Bible does not say, "REJOICE when one is tripped up."

The Bible does not say, "REVEAL one another's fault."

The Bible does not say, "REJECT one who has fallen."

The Bible does not say, "If somebody falls into sin, REJECT, JUDGE and CONDEMN him."

The Bible does tell us to **RESTORE**. Remember this: **Love does not cleanse - grace does that. Love does not condone sin, but love covers sin.**

James 5:20 tells us, "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

In I Peter 4:8 we read, "And above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins."

Proverbs 17:9 says to us, "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends."

I firmly believe sin must be **CONFESSED** and **FORSAKEN**. But sin must be dealt with in the most **private** way possible. The **circle of confession** should be limited to those who must know because they are the ones who are either connected with the confession or the ones who can help **REBUILD** the fallen brother.

Listen, I believe we have too much gossip on the telephone as well as in the parking lot. We have too much talk going around that poses no useful solution to a problem. If we really mean business for the Lord, we will be restoring our brethren and winning the lost to Christ, rather than gossiping about the fallen brother and letting the watching world die and go to hell.

So...to answer the question: **What should we do with a brother or sister who has been overtaken in a sin?** The key word is **RESTORE**. Remember, our opening point? Here it is again. "A fallen Christian must have **SOMEWHERE** to go and **SOMEONE** with whom to talk. He does not need **CONDEMNATION**; he needs **CONSOLATION**."

SECOND: He tells us WHY we should do it - BECAUSE OF THE LAW OF LOVE. Again please notice Galatians 5:2, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Bearing one another's burdens is "fulfilling the law of Christ."

You ask what "the law of Christ" is. The answer is found in John 13:34 where Jesus said to his disciples on the eve of the crucifixion, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Folks we do not **RESTORE** people because of **LAW**. We do so because of **LOVE**.

How often are we **TOO QUICK to JUDGE and TOO QUICK to CONDEMN**? If some person does not meet our standards, we often have nothing to do with them. But we need to engage them, if they are our brothers and sisters in Christ and they need help. Notice Paul addresses his readers as "brothers" in verse 1. Restoring another Christian is a **FAMILY MATTER**.

We are to **LOVE** the members of the family.
We are to **CARE** for the household of faith.

Please notice again verse 10, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

THIRD: He tells us HOW we should do it - WITH MEEKNESS. We are to restore in a "Spirit of meekness." The point Paul is stressing here is: "Consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Remember this: "What we think of ourselves determines **HOW WE TREAT OTHER PEOPLE**." I want to repeat that. "What we think of ourselves determines **HOW WE TREAT OTHER PEOPLE**."

If you say, "I feel in my heart, if I had been tempted and tested as he, I would have sinned likewise. It could have been me who fell or stumbled." Then you will treat a person with meekness and with gentleness.

But if you say, "Well, that could never happen to me, I would never do a thing like that!" Then my friends, you are not only going to have trouble, but you will not likely be in a position to help this fallen one. Heed this scriptural warning from I Corinthians 10:12, "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The hidden cause of refusing to help people is **PRIDE**. Notice again verse 3, "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. This proud person is saying "I don't need any help." "I would never do a thing like that!" Paul warns us that we had better have **MEEKNESS** because we may be tempted. "**THE VERY THING I SAY I WILL NOT DO, USUALLY TURNS OUT TO BE THE THING THAT I END UP DOING.**"

Listen! We have all made mistakes while dealing with sin in the lives of other Christians. We have all made mistakes while helping people with burdens and sins. We have:

TALKED about others.
CRITICIZED and **GOSSIPED** about others.
RUN DOWN people of whom we have little or no knowledge of what is happening in their lives.
DESTROYED a brother who has been overtaken in a sin.

Mainly because we have approached them incorrectly.

I have as a **parent**, with my children.

I have as a Pastor, with my people.
I have as a Christian, with another brother in Christ.

And so have you. I think you can agree with me and even identify with the difficulty. "I may have been right in my observation, but wrong in the way I went about seeking to correct the person who had sinned." Someone has said, "The time has come:

to stop shooting our wounded,
to reject judgmental self-righteousness, and
to bind up the wounds and pour the oil of healing on their hurt.

The time has come to demonstrate the love that is to characterize all our relationships. **REMEMBER, BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD, WE COULD BE THAT WOUNDED SOLDIER!** Thank God, it is not God's manner to treat us in such an unkind way.

In bringing this message to a close, let me call your attention to an incident right after the resurrection of Christ. In Mark 16:7 the angel said to the women at the tomb,

"...Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples AND PETER that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you."

Did you notice the two words, "AND PETER." What a statement. The women have come to the tomb. They find the stone rolled away and an angel dressed in white at the sepulcher. He is a messenger from God. What is that message? "Go tell the disciples AND PETER that Jesus is risen." Why did he single out Peter? I believe the answer is obvious. Remember at our Lord's crucifixion:

Peter had joined himself with the wrong crowd.
Peter had warmed himself by the Devil's fire.
Peter had walked afar off, and had denied his Lord.
Peter had even cursed.

Peter was a fallen saint, not fallen from grace, but fallen in grace. Nevertheless, he was fallen. How sweet it is and how tender it is that God's messenger brought God's message especially to Peter. God loves all of us, but He has a special and unique love for some. He is literally saying, "Go tell the disciples and the fallen one."

These two little words not only show His love for the fallen in general, but they show His care for each fallen individual.

Peter, the Christians may not care anymore, but I do!
Peter, the Christians may not be concerned about your restoration, but I am.
Peter, the Christians may have given up on you, but I have not.
Peter, the Christians may not have forgiven you, but I am letting you know that I have forgiven you.

Jesus gives the message to the angel to give to the women, "Tell His disciples AND PETER."

Remember our opening statement? Here it is again: "CARING CHRISTIANS BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS." "CARING CHRISTIANS REACH OUT TO THE FALLEN ONES." I wonder if there is some burden you need to share? May God help this church, it's Pastor, and it's people:

to LOVE the fallen,
to PRAY for the fallen,
to RUN to the fallen,
to LIFT UP the fallen,
to WELCOME the fallen,

**to STRENGTHEN the fallen,
to CARRY THE BURDEN of the fallen, and by God's grace,
to RECLAIM AND RESTORE the fallen!**

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "**How to Treat a Fallen Brother in the Family of God**" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "...**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"

Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**"

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know? Please send an e-mail to, pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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