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Sermon on Galatians

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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. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 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. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:1-10 ESV)

Grace, Mercy, and Peace unto you from God our Father and our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

How easy it can be? That is the thought. How easy is it for us to get frustrated, drop everything, and give up? How easy is it for us to become angry and make insults at our neighbor? How easy is it for us to judge every action, every discussion, every word that comes from the mouths of our neighbors? How easy is it for us to abandon our neighbor when they so desperately need our help? And how easy is it for us to proclaim the good news of Christ, tell our neighbor that we follow Christ Jesus, our loving, forgiving, and merciful savior and treat people as if we followed and worshiped that devil rather than the one and only true LORD. How easy is it to be nice? How easy is it to forgive our neighbor? How easy can it be?

In Paul's letter to the people of Galatia the apostle Paul begins by saying, "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." (Galatians 6:1 ESV) I do not know if you know this or not but just and FYI (For your information) that word "transgression" is different than sin. The equivalent Hebrew word for transgression is פֶּשַׁע (peh-shah) which used in the scriptures of the Old Testament is a regular verb for breaking allegiance. It expresses active, willful rebellion rather than accidental misstep. Where Sin is more of a general term. So Paul is using the term transgression to show a person willfulness to break away from the LORD or to willfully Sin against the Lord. In the Gospel of Matthew we read, "And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, It will be more bearable on the day of judgement for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for this town." (Matthew 10:14-15 ESV) I use these two verses in the Gospel of Matthew to give a

hopefully more clear idea or perspective on the term “transgression” As said before transgression is sin but more specifically active of willful sin. Thinking on that. why as stated in the Gospel of Matthew that it will be worse for the towns and countries who, “will not receive you or listen to your words” meaning those who reject the Word of the Lord than for Sodom and Gomorrah? Did the prophets go to Sodom and Gomorrah? No. the Word of the Lord was not preached to them. They were not taught Law and Gospel. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah did not know God. And to know if you are a sinner, one first must know God. For if you are not aware of the Lord then the idea of right and wrong, good and evil ultimately is inexistant meaning unaware. For how can a person know evil without knowing good. For all people are wicked sinners. It is like a parent who teaches their child to not touch the hot stove. If they do not have a parent to tell them not to touch the hot stove than what is stopping them? How will they know not to touch it without first being taught?

But realize all of you have heard the Word of the Lord. All of you have been taught. We know God which is why our brother Paul all those years ago wrote to us, transgressors a warning. For we have much more to lose than any unbeliever ever would. We could lose the presence of the Lord. For the Lord is not in hell. So Paul teaches us when we see our faithful brother or sister in Christ leaving the presence of the cross to head towards the presence of the flesh. But how do we do this? How do we help our faithful brother or sister in Christ, without as Paul says, “you too be tempted.”

Paul in the same verse gives us more of an answer by saying, “you who are spiritual (those who have been given the Holy Spirit who imparts faith, reveals Christ, etc.) should restore him in a Spirit of gentleness.” I first thought to myself, how can a sinner restore anyone or anything with a gentle Spirit. Look at society today, all you have to do is say the Word No or look at a person sometimes and they look at you as if you were the boogeyman. “Don’t touch the hot stove,” “don’t put metal in the microwave.” “don’t stick a metal fork in the plug-outlet.” or even, “Hey, I have seen a lot of police on the road be watchful.” These are just a few examples of friendly warnings you may have told someone and yet they still rebel, get defensive and think that they know better than you. So, how do we as Paul writes, “restore him in a Spirit of gentleness.” when they can be so defensive and rebellious at heart? And I was repeating that part of the verse that said, “restore him in a Spirit of gentleness.” And I probably read that part of the verse around ten times before the light bulb finally lit in my brain. The problem I was having was. I was reading that phrase as if I read it, “restore him WITH A SPIRIT of Gentleness.” Rather than, “restore him IN A SPIRIT of Gentleness.” See the difference? When I was reading it first with the idea of, “WITH A SPIRIT” I was thinking how do I restore my brother or sister in Christ. I was putting the idea of “self” having to fix the problem which its not. But it is not about the self but rather on the idea of what Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew. “You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16 ESV) We reflect him. His light is seen through us. When an outsider (unbeliever) sees you angry they see a God who

you believe in as angry. When an outsider sees you as blood thirsty and thriving for revenge they see the Lord the one you believe in blood thirsty and thriving for revenge. When an outsider sees you as unforgiving, they see the Lord who you believe as unforgiving. This is what Paul is talking about when he says, “restore him in a Spirit of Gentleness.” Show that very light to this bleak dark world show the outsider that you belong to a forgiving God by forgiving your neighbor. Show the outsiders that you belong to a merciful God by being merciful to your neighbor. Show the outsiders that you belong to a loving God by loving your neighbor. For did not Christ show us this? Yes he definitely has and continues to do. Realize Christ did NOT reveal himself as a king. Christ did NOT reveal himself as a governor. Christ did NOT reveal himself as a rich man. And Christ did not reveal himself as prideful. Christ revealed himself as a lowly humble servant. For we were not made to be rulers but servants.

For servants are nothing without a master and servants are the lowest of low but take joy in being called a servant. For a servant understand that they are the low of the low. It's like the movie shark tales with will smith when Oscar is called into his bosses Sykes office and his boss Sykes tells him where he is on the social ladder. At the top there is don Leo who is a shark, then after him comes his boss Sykes, then under him are regular fish, then under the regular other fish are the crustacean and bottom feeder then under them is rocks, under them is whale poop, and then there is Oscar. As bad as it sounds we should see ourselves at the last tier of the social ladder, we should have an idea that even whale poop has more value than us because Paul writes, “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” (Galatians 6:2-3 ESV) Specifically in verse three here Paul says, those privileged to share in this ministry may regard themselves as the world regards the church, as nobodies. For without the Lord's grace, and if He does not grant the increase, our willing and running, our planting, sowing, and watering are all nothing. All good comes from Christ and Christ alone. When you have gone out proclaimed the Gospel to your neighbor. Your neighbor was gained not through you but through the works of the Lord.

And looking on verse two where Paul writes, “fulfill the Law of Christ.” What is the Law of Christ how do we fulfill the Law of Christ? Here are two scripture verses to help give you an idea. “You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.” (Leviticus 19:18) “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:12) did you figure it out yet? The answer is, to love. And we show that love by bearing one another's burdens The Greek word there is, βαρος (bar'-os) meaning, weight, burden, or load. The idea of that word is that you are carrying something so heavy that you are physically going down, falling. And what do we all carry that is so heavy that it pulls us down? Sin. We are all sinners. As I said before and I will say again we are the transgressors Paul writes to. We actively and willfully Sin against our Lord. Since we are all sinners my neighbor and your neighbor is as equal to you. And that is something important to realize because our opinion of ourselves shapes our conduct towards others. Those thinking they have fewer faults than others tend not to sympathize with other's shortcomings. For if you think

of yourself as someone who is higher up than you my friend have deceived yourself and are a liar same as the original liar who we call Satan as we read from the prophet Isaiah, "How you are fallen from heaven, O day star, Son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nation low! You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; above the star of God I will set my throne on high; I will set on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the most high." (Isaiah 14:12-14) This is why I said, find joy in being a servant. Found in the servant is love. And our servant Christ Jesus who had all right to destroy us transgressors but he shown us and still shows us His perfect act of servant hood. His perfect act of love. His perfect act of the forgiveness of transgressions. His perfect act of mercy on a people who do not deserve it all performed on the cross.

I will end with a prayer. Our Almighty and loving God we your faithful who call upon your name ask you to circumcise our hearts. Sow love where there is not. Give us the understanding of becoming a humble servant. A servant who shows who the master is by their actions. Lord you have given us your grace but still we go out and sin in this world as you know. We ask you Lord guide our lips, our hearts, our minds, our bodies, our souls. For we are your light. The unfaithful look to us. And we pray when they look to us that they do see your light, that they do see your forgiving heart, your perfect faith, all the love and kindness that you bestow upon us your faithful. We pray through your holy and loving name Lord. Amen.