

# A WALK RESTORING THE MAN WHO SLIPS GALATIANS 06:01–05

## *Introduction*

Note the word *someone*. This means a person who is just like the rest of us; that is, he has desires, passions and urges just like us. He walks and lives in the body just like we do. Therefore, he faces the very same temptations we do, for *all temptation* is common to all men (1 Cor. 10:13).

What is to be done when a Christian brother has succumbed to temptation, stumbled or fallen? What is to be the spirit and attitude of the church? How are we to approach the problem? Are we to...

- ignore him?
- shame him?
- spread rumours about him?
- dismiss him?
- censor him?
- withdraw from him?
- criticize him?
- slander him?
- isolate him?

Note a fact: no sin is specified. The sin may be large or small, black or gray, despicable or acceptable (to man), serious or innocent, harmful or harmless. The point to note is this: a true Christian brother can be caught by sin. The word “caught” is interesting: it means to be taken beforehand, by surprise or unexpectedly. A true Christian is *surprised* when he is caught by sin; he *never suspected* it. In fact, being caught by serious sin was seldom, if ever, a concern; for he belonged to Christ and lived in Christ.

However, when a brother is caught in sin and slips and falls, what should be done?

Scripture is clear: Christian brothers are to restore him. The word *restore* (katartizete) is a word that is used for setting a broken arm or leg or for mending nets or for cutting some growth out of a body (William Barclay. *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 58). Believers are to help the brother:

- set him right
- lead him back
- mend him
- help cut the sin out
- restore him

Yet, there is a right way and a wrong way to help the fallen brother. This is the point that is being stressed and that is desperately needed by believers and the church. All believers are mere men of like passions with all other men, and there are always some being caught in sin. This, of course, means that we need to constantly stay alert and available to fallen brothers.

But again, how we approach a fallen brother is of utmost importance. It is a very delicate matter. The brother will be very sensitive, perhaps embarrassed and easily shamed. He could become so ashamed that he would be too embarrassed to return to the fellowship of believers.

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He could also feel that he would be unwelcome, for what he has done is just not acceptable among believers. He has failed and failed publicly, and he has damaged the name of Christ and hurt the image of the church. He knows the attitude of the church and its believers about the matter.

Therefore, unless he is approached in the right spirit, he could be lost to the kingdom forever. This, of course, means that the ministry of restoration is of paramount importance, for the life of a dear brother is at stake. What the church needs to realize is this: the ministry of restoration, is the ministry of God. It is the ministry to which God has called us. We are to walk restoring men to the Kingdom of God and the fellowship of His church.

- I. First, let the spiritual believers handle the matter (v. 1).
- II. Second, approach the brother in a spirit of gentleness (v. 1).
- III. Third, watch yourself (v. 1).
- IV. Fourth, bear one another's burden (v. 2).
- V. Fifth, confess your own nothingness (v. 3).
- VI. Sixth, examine your own behaviour and work (v. 4).
- VII. Seventh, realize your own responsibility (v. 5).

### **I. *Galatians 06:01 Restoration by Spiritual Believers***

First, let the *spiritual believers* handle sinning brothers. Spiritual believers are those who walk in the Spirit. How can the church tell if a believer is spiritual, if he is truly walking or living in the Spirit? The former passage spells out how.

1. Does the believer bear the fruit of the Spirit? (Gal. 5:22-23).
  - love            • patience       • gentleness
  - joy             • kindness      • self-control
  - peace          • faith           • goodness
2. Does the believer live a crucified life with Christ, that is, a sacrificial, self-denying life? Has the believer crucified his flesh, his sinful nature with the passions and desires? (Gal. 5:24).
3. Does the believer walk in the Spirit — live a life that is consistent with his position in Christ? (Gal. 5:25).
4. Does the believer walk free from super-spirituality, envy, pride, jealousy, arrogance and selfishness? (Gal. 5:26).

### **II. *Galatians 06:01 Restoration in a Spirit of Gentleness***

Second, approach the brother in a *spirit of gentleness*. How desperately this charge is needed! Too often what is displayed is a spirit of...

- hardness
- criticism
- super-spirituality
- spitefulness
- callousness
- censorship
- holier-than-thou
- offensiveness
- contempt
- reproof
- rejection
- disrespect

These approaches, of course, are never concerned with restoring a brother. They are bent more on putting a brother down or destroying him. And the great tragedy is that it forces him to turn more and more to the world, to those who are more understanding of his weaknesses because they, too, are weak.

However, the spirit of rejection is not what Scripture is telling believers to show. Scripture is saying to approach the brother in gentleness: to be tender, warm, loving and caring. Discuss his sinning, yes, but with him not with others! Approach and love him, reach out to him, minister to him, help him, show care and concern and *above all else*, stay after him. Open your arms and welcome him back. Restore him into your fellowship. Let him know that he is forgiven, forgiven by all and accepted by all, warmly and tenderly.

*Gal 6:4 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else.*

*Eph 4:1-2 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

*2 Tim 2:25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.*

### III. Galatians 06:01 Watch Yourself

Third, watch yourself, or you, too, can be tempted and caught in a sin. This is a crucial point, for all believers are tempted with all kinds of sin (1 Cor. 10:13). There is a real possibility that we may be caught in sin; therefore, we are to love and help our fallen brothers just like we would want to be loved and helped. The word *watch* (σκοπον) means to look to oneself, to think about oneself and to give attention to oneself. It means to keep an attentive eye on oneself. If we really consider the matter, then we will reach out in love and gentleness to help our fallen brothers. We have to help them, for we are all ever so subject to being caught in a sin.

*1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

*2 Pet 3:17 Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.*

#### IV. *Galatians 06:02 Bear One Another's Burdens*

Fourth, bear one another's burden. The law of Christ is the law of ministry and love.

*Mat 20:28* "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

*John 13:34-35* "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Christ gave and sacrificed Himself to reach out to man. He bore the sins of man *for man*. We, of course, cannot bear the sins of men; but we can carry the burdens of each other, for we all suffer under the weight of sin — whether the sins are known or not. We can...

- be compassionate
- encourage
- pray
- sympathize
- be warm and tender
- forgive
- empathize
- share the promises of God

*Acts 20:25* "Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again."

*Rom 12:15* Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

*Rom 15:1* We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

*Gal 6:2* Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.

#### V. *Galatians 06:03 Humility*

Fifth, confess your own nothingness. This is the reason so many fallen brothers are locked out of the fellowship of believers and churches. They are looked upon as being...

- unfit
- less spiritual
- less capable
- too tarnished
- weaker
- insufficient

This attitude, of course, is contrary to the Spirit of Christ. Note the words, "When he is nothing." Christ came to save "nothings," that is, sinners. All men are sinners whether they know it or not. Even believers, after they are saved, are sinners. This is too often forgotten, yet believers are both *saved and kept* by the righteousness of Christ and not by their own righteousness. We must always remember this, for the only acceptable approach to God is through the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The point is this: no person is better than any other person, not in righteousness and godliness. All men stand before God as sinners; in fact, they stand as totally depraved sinners. There is not a single man who is righteous, no, not one — not today, not tomorrow, not ever. If a man, believer or unbeliever, wants to stand in God's presence, he has to come by Jesus Christ and his righteousness alone. Therefore, there is absolutely no place among God's people for...

- super-spirituality
- spiritual snobbishness
- spiritual pride

There is absolutely no place for feeling superior or spiritually better than others. Only one person can make that claim: Jesus Christ. Within the church and its believers there is to be only one attitude: that of confessing our nothingness before God — that of confessing our total dependency upon the grace of God — that of confessing the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Note that any other confession is a deception. If we think otherwise, we only deceive ourselves.

When a believer understands this truth, then he is ready to reach out and help restore the erring brother. He knows he is no better; he has to approach Christ just like the erring brother — as nothing, for he is nothing. Righteously and godly, he stands on the same footing as the fallen brother: neither one of them has any righteousness or godliness to offer God. Therefore, they both must approach God through His Son Jesus Christ. Knowing this truth is what will stir love, concern and care within the hearts of believers for fallen brothers.

*Mat 23:12* “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

*Rom 12:16* Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

*1 Cor 8:2* The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.

*2 Cor 10:12* We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.

*Gal 6:3* If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

*Rev 3:17* You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

*Luke 18:11* “The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men — robbers, evildoers, adulterers — or even like this tax collector.’”

*John 9:41* Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.”

*Job 33:9* ‘I am pure and without sin; I am clean and free from guilt.’

*Prov 16:18* Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

*Prov 20:6* Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?

*Prov 30:12* Those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth.

## VI. *Galatians 06:04 Self-Examination*

Sixth, examine your own behaviour and work. The word *actions* refers to conduct and behaviour. Of course, employment or work is involved, but the point of this verse deals with *all our behaviour*. We are to be examining and judging our own lives, not the life of a fallen brother. Scripture is forceful on this point: *every man* is to keep busy examining *his own* actions and life, and no man is exempt. There is so much evil flying around the world and the body is so weak that it is difficult for a person to remain unsoiled and clean. The flesh or sinful nature desires...

- acceptance
- recognition
- position
- honour
- compensation
- approval
- to look
- to taste
- to feel
- to do
- to have
- to experience

Of course, every one of these desires is needful and beneficial until they cross over into the forbidden or are taken too far. Tasting food is good; tasting too much food is bad. Wanting recognition is good; loving recognition is sin.

The point is that temptation just swirls around us — all of us. Therefore, we must be busy examining and judging ourselves and not others. In fact, so much temptation swirls around us, if we lower our guard to examine and judge others, we are immediately caught by sin ourselves. Remember: criticizing and judging others is sin; therefore, by turning away from examining ourselves to judging others, we have sinned.

We must measure ourselves against the Word of God, not against others. Our attitude toward others is to be that of love, care, ministry and restoration — not criticism and judgment.

Note that the believer who constantly examines himself has reason to rejoice in himself and not only in others. It is when our hearts and lives are pure that joy fills us. Nothing fills us with joy as much as a pure conscience. True, we do joy when we see others walking as they should, but deep joy comes from knowing that we ourselves are pleasing God by the way we walk.

*Mat 7:5* “You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

*2 Cor 13:5* Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you — unless, of course, you fail the test?

*Gal 6:4* Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else.

*Lam 3:40* Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord.



## **VII. Galatians 06:05 Personal Responsibility**

Seventh, realize your own duty and responsibility. The point of this verse is to warn the believer: he is personally responsible to the Lord for his own behaviour and shall be judged for what he has done. Every believer has his own burdens, his own weight of faults and sins to bear. It is these that he is to be carrying, looking after, examining and judging. He can never overcome them unless he gets his eyes off the failure of others and concentrates on the burden of his own failure.

*Mat 12:36* “But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.”

*Mat 18:23* “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.”

*Rom 14:12* So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

*2 Cor 5:10* For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. ■