

What Life in the Spirit Looks Like Galatians 6:1-6:10

Last week, we looked at life in the Spirit. In verses 5:16-25, Paul uses four verbs to discuss a Spirit-controlled life. Each verb has a similar meaning:

- (1) walk in the Spirit (v. 16),
- (2) led by the Spirit (v. 18),
- (3) live by the Spirit (25a), &
- (4) "walk" (better: "keep in step with the Spirit," 25b)

The Spirit is the Sanctifier who can subdue the flesh and enable us to bear fruit.

So, what does life in the Spirit look like? What does it result in?
You get different reactions to the question by various people:

- Devotional types: "quiet times"
- Legalist types: "keep the rules"
- Mystical types: maybe hearing God audibly
- Charismatic types: "speaking in tongues"
- Miracle seekers: "power encounters," "signs and wonders"
- Strange experiences: "laughing in Spirit," "vomiting in the Spirit," "slain in the Spirit"

Well, here's my big idea: **Chapter 6 comes after chapter 5! I know it's crazy, 6 coming after 5! I've got a Ph.D.; I figured that out!**

What I mean is that chapter six follows a great section on the Spirit in chapter 5. It is a continuation of these thoughts showing us a main evidence of the Spirit's work, namely:

Life in the Spirit involves a real, practical love for one another. It results in true biblical community. This passage speaks of our responsibilities to one another in the body of Christ.

Paul follows the all-important passage about life in the Spirit with a very practical section. He says nothing about signs and wonders, and doesn't go into the detail about spiritual gifts, but talks about how the community of faith operates when the Spirit is leading them.

This is often overlooked: life in the Spirit involves healthy relationships within the body of Christ.

- **David Wilkerson:** "We need to see more signs and wonders" ... a lady who has been evicted, it would be a sign & wonder if you would take them in.

This is Christianity – loving one another. We live in this Harry Potter culture, where people are isolated. Some are busy, but lonely: what researchers call “crowded loneliness.”

You need community. Friday night at leadership party, I asked what has been the biggest blessing since we've started? No one said "the preaching." Virtually everyone said relationships.

That is a sign of God's mighty work.

The Spirit changes us to love (Notice **5:22**). We don't devour people (verse **15**), or provoke and envy each other (verse **26**).

Chapter 6 describes what it looks like to love one another in the church.

But we must keep in mind that *challenges in chapter 6 ARE NOT NATURAL; they're supernatural.*

- **Notice 6:1** – “You who are spiritual!” (this refers to walking by the Spirit). We must rely on the Spirit to do these particular challenges.

There are four of them, with verses 9-10 serving as a bit of a summary and encouragement.

4 Challenges for Spirit-Led Believers

1. **Restore the broken brother gently (1) – 4 parts**
 - A. **The Context of Restoration: Family.** “Brothers” – This is how a family expresses love. The church is a family. You need a family to care for you spiritually.

We are family. God is father. “You’ve got a weird looking family?” We know. God likes variety. There is nothing like the family of faith. **I love my kids and I don't want to see them destroy their lives. I want to humbly correct them.**

B. The Need for Restoration. “Caught in transgression” – that is, there’s no doubt about his guilt.

It is as though the enemy is out setting traps. We will inevitably fall into one of these traps. We need our brothers and sister to open the trap and set us free.

Read James 5:19-20.

Some are more concerned with their pets than straying church members. I lost Titus, our miniature schnauzer, one time. He was with the boys who were working out. You would have thought the world was coming to an end. Others, just take a "well it's not my business" approach when a brother is straying.

The church is not just charitable organization like the Red Cross, or civic club, or Rotary or Kiwanis. Those groups do some great work. But by its nature, the church is something different. We are brothers and sisters, who’ve been born again, adopted into God’s family, knit together by the Holy Spirit in a common fellowship.

We must seek the spiritual welfare of one another.

C. The Nature of Restoration “restore him”

This means to put them back in order, to **repair something**.

- **Picture 1:** It was the same word used for *setting a fractured bone*. We are to put the broken back together, like a doctor.
- **Picture 2:** It was the same word for *mending fishnets* (Matt. 4:21). In the same way, the goal is to put the broken back together and release them out.

I would say that these sins are sins that are destroying people; these are not conscious issues. Sins that are breaking their spiritual bones; their spiritual net.

Other more common problems would be like a brother or sister is **addicted** to something, you should seek to help them. If someone is **working an excessive amount of time**, and neglecting family – then you should come along side of them to help him. If a man is

involved in a **relationship that is shady**, then confront him gently.

Be a person who cares for your brothers and sisters, not one who is trying to be everyone's accountability partner.

Ultimately, only Jesus can forgive and restore, he puts back together our old broken down jalopy of a spiritual life. And that's our job, to point them to Jesus.

We can't do that by ignoring or being silent.

Like Jesus and the woman caught in sin in John 8 who was caught in adultery and the people wanted to stone her, we are to put them back on their feet by God's mercy. Jesus was not interested in destroying this woman; he was interested in restoring this woman.

- If you are here, and you feel as though your spiritual life is broken down, like a car on the side of the road, we want to help you get revved up and on the road again.

D. The Nature of the Restorer: Be Spiritual, Gentle, Careful

- i. **Be Spiritual** "One who is spiritual" (notice fruit of the Spirit, 5:22).
 - Don't go on the rescue mission if you are not living by the Spirit.
 - Our culture loves to quote **Matthew 7:1**, but they are oblivious to **Matthew 7:5**. *Once you take out the log of your eye, then you go take out the speck of your brothers eye.* Jesus isn't saying never be concerned for the spiritual welfare of your brother. He simply is saying see to yourself first, then act. He is ruling out pride. *Only the person who humbly repents, can go help out those who are struggling.* Jesus is opposed to arrogant self-righteousness.

ii. Be Gentle

Luther, who is probably not remembered for "gentleness," once told a pastor charged with setting a lapsed brother back on the right path this: **"Run unto him, and reaching out your hand, raise him up again, comfort him with sweet words, and embrace him with motherly arms."**

- Gentleness: 1 Tim 3, 2 Tim 2:25
- Jesus - Matt 11:29
- 2 Corinthians 10:1 - gentleness is not weakness; but strength under control. The idea of taming a wild animal. That's what the Spirit does.

iii. **Be Careful**, “Don’t get tempted.” Tempted by what?

- **By Spiritual Pride.** This is not about being the righteous police. Don’t start going around trying to find stuff on people. More on pride in vs3.
- **The Sin Itself.** Be careful entering some people’s world, trying to rescue them. I heard about a guy that went to talk to his friends who are out getting hammered on the weekends, **to tell them they don’t need alcohol and country music to escape their problems;** instead **they need Jesus;** but he ended up getting drunk himself. “One who is spiritual should restore.”

So, if a person is in sin, **restore them gently....** The problem is that many think they are **independent;** but not so, we are **interdependent** – we are body. **The whole body of Christ is affected by one another’s sin.** Your sin always affects others.

2. **Bear the burdens others humbly (2-5)**

Help – 6:2 – those who are living in sin need our help (v. 1); those who are burdened need our help (v. 2).

If a Christian brother or sister is weighed down by some burden, then we have a responsibility: do something quickly.

Don't let **them** be crushed. Don't let them be destroyed. This means that we must be alert, and quick to act.

Some wonder what you are supposed to do with your life... Here is a **A Daily Mission: Be alert to the burdens of others & devote yourself to making them lighter.**

This is a totally selfless act that only happens by the Spirit. By nature we are only focused on our lives. We learn a lot here:

A. **Burdens are a reality in a fallen world.** It is assumed that you’ll have burdens. Spiritual struggle, mental illness, physical

illness, financial crisis, demonic oppression, addiction, family crises – whatever. “In this world you will have trouble...”

B. There is a myth that we are to be self-sufficient. No, we are insufficient to bear some burdens. We offer them to God, “cast your burdens on God and he will sustain you.” But this doesn’t mean he is the only one we should share this burden with.

Often the answer to your prayers is other believers.

- Even the best of people need help. Mose, **Numbers 11:14** - "I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me." Also, **Ex 18**, Jethro to Moses "Look for able men.... they will bear the burden with you"

C. This is a command, not a suggestion to all believers (not just pastors). To be an obedient Christian, operating under the control of the Spirit, we must help others carry their heavy burden. That’s what it means to love. That’s what it means to be the church.

D. This is how we fulfill the law of Christ. That is, this is the ethic of Christ. “Love one another as I have loved you.” He gives us his Spirit to do this!

E. There is a hindrance to burden bearing: pride (3-4)

Verse 3: What a verse! Some people “think they are something...”

A Stewardess once told Muhammed Ali to prepare for takeoff by buckling his seatbelt. He said, “superman don’t need no seat-belt.” To which she responded, “Superman don’t need no airplane”

1 Cor. 3, “neither he who plants or waters is anything”

- A convicting illustration in Nehemiah: "...but their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord" (Nehemiah 3:5). Are you to "noble" to serve Christ?
- Jesus: "The Pharisees tie up heavy burdens on people, but they won't move one finger in helping." (Mt 23:4)

Verse 4: It looks like a contradiction to v. 3, and v. 5 looks like a contradiction to v. 2, but they're not.

V. 4 is basically this: Don't compare yourself to your neighbor, in order to boast in yourself. Live in light of God's evaluation.

- Don't get puffed up because one is lower than you, either by way of sin, or by way of burden.
- Paul says, stop feeding your pride by comparing yourself to others. Measure your life by the laws of Christ.
- See 2 Cor 10:12, 18

There is no room for competition: **look at 5:26.** The legalists were saying, "I'm doing better than them... What are you doing?" Magazines promote superiority – look at this church...

Move beyond self-centeredness, comparisons, and envy. Focus on faithfulness to God, humble yourself and help others.

E. There is a distinction between heavy burdens & light loads (5)

"baros" (verse 2) means literally a heavy weight or stone that someone is required to carry for a long distance.

"phortion" (verse 5) translated "load" in ESV is used elsewhere for a soldier's daypack, or a pilgrim's backpack.

- One translation is "everyone must carry their own load of responsibility."

Everything in your life is not a crisis. **Call 911, helicopters, men repelling from ropes, call the news, convene a meeting...**

No. put your backpack on. It builds character, and dependency on God. Don't treat loads as burdens.

Let's play a little game: Burdens or loads:

- Young Dude: Dude never gets up for work or school – he's failing school and is about to lose his job. And he says "help me get out of the bed." **Burden or load? Load.** "Should I

make you some pancakes, and rub your back, give you a kiss, and iron your clothes? Get up. Go to work. I'm not touching your back." "If a man won't work, he shouldn't eat," Paul says. Eventually you will be so hungry, you'll work.

- **Broke Dude**: Guy spends all his money on beer, cigarettes and lotto tickets and wants you to give him money. **Burden or load? Load**. I'm not empowering your lifestyle.
- **A couple is married, has three kids, and one of the parents dies in a car wreck**. The remaining parent and the kids have needs. **Burden or load? Burden**. Obvious.
- **Man and woman get married**, husband leaves (maybe jail/adultery), and leaves the wife with the kids... caring for the mom and kids. **Burden or load? Burden**.
- **Older member gets sick** and is having a hard time living: meals, transportation, help with living expenses. **Burden or load? Burden**.

There are legitimate and illegitimate needs. We must carry our own load, but we must help with burdens.

- Some treat everything like a load. You don't tell anyone or ask for help.
- Some treat everything like a burden. You occupy hours of people's time by things you should take care of yourself.

This is one of the purposes for **growth groups**: to take care of the burdens of others. One reason you need a group is to receive care, and one reason you need to be in a group, is to give care.

Frodo and Sam, "I can't carry the ring but I can carry you" - He was always there for his friend.

1. **Share All Good Things Generously (6:6)**

Here Paul talks to those who teach and those who receive teaching. Notice their responsibilities.

A. **Responsibilities of the Teacher**, "the one who teaches"

It is clear what the teacher is to do: teach the Word of God.

He is to *sow the Word of God*. Where do you see that?

The word “taught” and “teaches” both come from the same word “katecheo” which is where we get **catechism**. It refers to the fundamentals of the faith.

The problem Paul had with the false teachers is that they deviated from the fundamentals of the faith. They departed from the apostles’ teaching, from the word of God.

- At IDC, we are not into gimmicks, and we are not trying to entertain people (though we want you to enjoy worship). We want to do this “Katecheo” – teaching you the truths of Scripture. Why? As a pastor, I am commanded to do so. As a Christian, it’s what you need.
- We want IDC to be a Bible-saturated church, both in large group and small group. And we want to be a missional church – doing justice, caring for the poor, planting churches, evangelizing the world. Verse 10, alludes to this idea of “doing good to everyone” Unfortunately, it’s rare to find a church that does both.
- And we want to have Bible-saturated worship, hence, the Scripture reading.

A. **Responsibilities of the Receiver**, “share all good things with the one who teaches”

They are to learn of course, but he mentions here their responsibility of supporting its teachers materially. **This means you should give me a season tickets UNC, Duke, NC State games! JK.** This would seem to mean— with **food, money**, and whatever good things are appropriate are own to live.

It is true that Paul worked as a leather-worker, and didn’t always receive from the church (but he did at times, like in the case of the Philippians, see also 2 Cor. 11:8). But he did think it was proper to provide for those who labor in the Word. **“Those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living by the Gospel”** (Notice also the planting/sharing analogy in 1 Cor. 9:11-14).

If Galatians is the earliest epistle, then this is the earliest reference to the providing for the minister (T. George).

App: Today, that might not have to **do with compensation** of leaders but maybe **real estate**, or something **to help the church**. I was greatly encouraged watching the story of **Mars Hill Church**, how a guy provided a large sum of money to renovate an old building. Mars Hill went from 40 people to like 800. **“It was an absolute game changer,”** he said. And the couple, ending up painting the whole place themselves. They gave with no strings attached, just simply, “We believe in what you are doing. We want to help.” Mark said that Mars Hill may have folded otherwise...

Would you pray for space for IDC? We want a space where we can teach the Word of God to a lot of people and do effective ministry, and for a ton of people to meet Jesus.

We have seen God provide already, but we need more help.

Let’s go a bit further. Why did Paul include this instruction here? **These teachers must be in need, otherwise, Paul wouldn’t have mentioned it.**

Think about it. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church that they planted. Maybe the people stopped supporting the ministers that Paul left in Galatia... Maybe they became infatuated with the new theology of the false teachers, and stopped supporting those who were accurately catechizing.

Don't miss Paul's ultimate concern; it isn't money. Paul's burden was for the furtherance of the gospel, and he knew that the God-ordained means for accomplishing this was the steady proclamation of the Word of God by faithful men of God.

Think about those who need your support today, who are in their own Galatia, trying to contend for the Gospel in the midst of persecution. We call them “missionaries” and they need our support.

- This year we have an **International Missions Offering**. It’s about eternity. **It’s about the Gospel.**

- Don't do it because of a denomination, or tradition, or the pastor – but because we love the Gospel. We love to see people from every tribe know Jesus.

4. Sow in the Spirit Intentionally (6:8)

"The Christian has only two "fields" in which he can sow, that of his own flesh and that of the Spirit. (MacArthur)

This is a divine law: you reap what you sow.

If you sow in the Spirit, you will reap the Spirit. If you sow in the flesh, you reap the flesh (5:16-25).

To "sow to the flesh" is to pander to it, give in to it, coddle it – instead of crucifying it!

The old adage is true: "sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny."

The seeds are mainly thoughts and deeds.

"Every time we allow our mind to harbor a grudge, nurse a grievance, entertain an impure fancy, wallow in self-pity, we are sowing to the flesh. Every time we linger in bad company whose insidious influence we know we cannot resist, every time we lie in bed when we ought to be up and praying, every time we read pornographic literature, every time we take a risk that strains our self-control we are sowing, sowing, sowing, to the flesh" (Stott)

Some Christians sow to the flesh every day and wonder why they do not reap holiness and victory and blessing! Let me provide some examples.

- When a couple gets caught up in the sensuality of the moment and engage in sexual activity outside of marriage, then they are sowing seeds of destruction. They are destroying their own life as well as others.
- When a man fantasizes about taking control of an organization and decides to scheme and cheat to get to the top, then he is sowing seeds of destruction, not only for others, but for his own soul.

- When a woman secretly despises another woman in the church, without ever seeking reconciliation, she is sowing to the flesh, hurting her own soul, and the fellowship of the church.
- When a husband and wife allow bitterness and resentment to build in marriage without every trying to resolve their differences and forgive one another, then they are sowing seeds of the flesh, hurting themselves and the whole family.

Stott says, "Holiness is a harvest; whether we reap it or not depends almost entirely on what we sow."

God Is Not Mocked. This is a warning. Don't take this lightly. **"Don't be deceived."** Regardless of who you are, you reap what you sow. Your sin will find you out. "Their end will correspond to their deeds" (2 Cor 11:15). God will punish those who spite him.

You need to get in another field. Sow to the Spirit. Live in the Spirit. Walk by the Spirit.

- You need to sow thoughts and deeds done in the Spirit.

The books you read, the people you are with, the things you do for entertainment, the thoughts you possess are acts of sowing. Are they of the flesh or spirit?

- Only then can you reap the reward of the Spirit! This ultimate reward is **"eternal life."** Those who are born of the Spirit give evidence by sowing and reaping in the Spirit.
- You cannot reap what you do not sow. You wonder why we aren't growing greatly? We can't expect a harvest where we haven't planted seeds.

Don't Give Up! (9)

Notice an encouragement and a word of instruction. This seems to be sort of a summary, but Paul also stays with the metaphor of sowing and reaping.

He summarizes the section with the generic statement "do good" twice.

A. The Encouragement: “Do not grow weary... You will reap eventually...”

Ministry is a tiring thing; it is easy to get discouraged.

- It is not always a glorious thing: it’s more like farming than being a rock star – not glorious work.

- “We plant, another waters, God makes it grow” (1 Cor. 3:6).

Proverbs 20:4 – “The sluggard doesn’t plow in the autumn; he will seek at harvest and have nothing.” It’s not time to stop working. Keep sowing, and watch God work.

- There is a harvest out there! Jesus said, “the harvest is plentiful!”

- We reap what we sow, and in due season – and often it is years before we see fruit.

William Carey arrived in India in 1793 with a burden to preach the Gospel to those who had never heard his name. For seven years he proclaimed the Gospel, week after week, month after month, with not a single convert. Through years of struggle and doubt, he was often discouraged, but not defeated. On Dec. 28, 1800, he baptized, in the Ganges Mountains, his first Hindu convert, a carpenter named Krishna Pal. This was the beginning of the harvest that God granted Carey and his coworkers at the Serampore Mission in India. (in George).

Even though the phrase “due season” is properly applied to **this life**, we should also note the **future tense** here – the larger application is that we will reap in the eschatological future, that is in heaven.

- The bottom line is: don’t give up. Be faithful.

A. The Instruction: “Keep Doing good”

Notice “doing good” twice:

- Verse 9, “well doing”

- Verse 10, “do good to everyone, especially those of the household of faith” (10)

Notice the Universal and particular challenge

- Sow the seeds of goodness to everyone, especially those in the church. Just don't let it stop there.
- Remember **5:13-14**, “one another” (church) AND “our neighbor” (everyone)
- The challenge is: **look for opportunities** to “do good.” Just as you stay alert to bear the burdens of others, be alert for opportunities to bless people.
- Continual good doing is a result of saving faith. It will be rewarded on the day of judgment.
- So what is doing good? Betz, says, “the phrase 'do good' refers to everything the Christian is responsible for doing.”
- Words and deeds - we want to do good in the city...
- Jesus mentioned clothing naked, feeding hungry, visiting imprisoned, welcoming the stranger...

In Gal 5–6 Paul instructs the Galatians to do a number of specific things:

- expel the agitators,
- love one another
- love your neighbor as yourself,
- keep in step with the Spirit
- restore the fallen,
- bear one another's burdens,
- examine yourself in light of the judgment seat of Christ,
- provide material support for those who instruct you in the faith.

In this verse Paul summarized all of these duties under the general rubric of “doing good.

Don't quit, IDC! Many of you have been working hard since we began this summer! Don't grow weary. Keep resting in Christ, drawing strength from the Spirit.

Summary:

Let's put it all together, now. Let's be a people marked by:

- **Gentle Restoration**
- **Humble Burden-Bearing**
- **Generous Sharing**
- **Personal Holiness**
- **Practical Goodness**

This is life in the Spirit.

And weren't these qualities embodied in Jesus?

- **Jesus restored us from our broken relationship with God; "he restores our soul"**
- **Jesus carried our greatest burden, the crushing weight of sin. He kept God's law in our place, and then died in our place, removing the penalty of sin that was upon us, so that there is no condemnation. Now that this burden has been removed, all other burdens are small in comparison.**
- **Jesus shared with us in unequalled generosity.**
- **Jesus constantly sowed in the Spirit.**
- **Jesus was a prophet might in word and deed, who went about "doing good"**

Jesus gives us the example, and he gives us the power to live out these things.

Now, we come as the people of God around the Lord's Table, to remember his death. By dying for our sins, Jesus brought us to God, and to one another.