

Healthy Church Life Part 1

The apostle through the Holy Spirit has revealed the fruit of the sin nature and the fruit of the Spirit. He now moves on to the subject of interacting with each other in the body of Christ. How is a healthy church supposed to operate in the context of the reality of our battle with sin? The following teachings will mark a sharp contrast with the teaching of the Judaizers -legalists who are sowing division.

1. We are to bear one another's burdens. Galatians 6:1-5**A. Restore the fallen. 6:1**

The phrase "caught in a sin" is not in the sense that we as Christians are to be on the lookout for anyone who steps out of line and be quick about telling it to everyone (like those who wanted to stone the woman caught in adultery). However, the church does have a responsibility to a brother or sister who has been caught by the sin. The one who has been captured and deceived and is now sincerely seeking restoration. This is indicated by confession and repentance.

Those who are living by the Spirit, as evidenced by their lives, are to gently restore them. This is restoration in the sense of mending, repairing their life through the ministry of the church. Depending on what has happened and the depth of the sin this restoration may include counseling or discipleship. It may include reassuring them that the Lord forgives them. It could include the idea of restitution to anyone they have hurt or deceived. The goal is not to punish, but rather with God's wisdom mend their life and any relationships in the church.

Restoration, be it a classic car, an old building, or a relationship, takes time and hard work. And in the church, it is to be done with gentleness.

This instruction is given with a warning to be careful that in the midst of restoration, those helping the sinner are not themselves captured in the same sin.

B. Support one another. Galatians 6:2-3

The burdens referred to are those things that we cannot carry alone. Big problems that require the help of others. What kinds of things might this be?

One of the heaviest weights one can bear is spiritual or moral failure. Such one who has confessed and repented needs encouragement to be restored. The Pharisees and the legalists of today are not interested in helping in such things. (Matthew 23:4)

While doing this, those doing the restoring are to resist a prideful heart thinking they are better than the one who has sinned. We should never say, "I could never do anything like that..."

Jude 20-23

C. Take spiritual responsibility for yourself. 6:4-5

Instead of looking at others and seeing ourselves as better than them spiritually, we should spend more time looking at ourselves and test our own actions and attitudes.

What are some things we should look at in our own lives?

We should adopt the prayer of king David! Psalm 139:23-24

Carry your own load. Verse 5. In contrast to the earlier verse of carrying each other's burdens, the meaning of which is something that is too large for one person to carry. The word "load" refers to a backpack sized load. Something every soldier in the military would have to carry for themselves.

What are some thoughts that you have about what these things might be especially in the context of this passage, chapter, and book?
