

Sermon Notes

Series: How to Be A Peacemaker

Date: January 10th, 2010

Title: “Step 7: Address Your Brother’s Sin”

Text: Galatians 6:1-2

WE SHOULD ADDRESS OUR BROTHER’S SIN IN ORDER TO...

1) RESTORE HIM.

- a) And it seems from the beginning of verse one that Paul assumes that all of us are in need of being restored at times. (cf. “anyone” in v.1)**
- i) And why is that?**
 - (1) Well, because, as Christians there are times when all of us are “caught” in sin.
 - ii) You see, sometimes after we sin, God immediately humbles us and we repent.**
 - (1) And when that happens, we’re freed from our sin.
 - iii) But at other times after we sin, we’re either blind to that sin or unwilling to repent.**
 - (1) And in those times we’re “caught” in sin. We’re entrapped by our sin.
 - iv) And when we’re caught in sin, we’re in a very dangerous position.**
 - (1) It’s sort of like a fisherman who gets entangled in his net as he throws it overboard. His own actions have led him to be caught. And as long as he’s caught in his net and hanging on the side of the boat, he is in danger of drowning.
 - (2) And in the same way that we wouldn’t stand by and watch a fisherman drown while tangled in his net, we shouldn’t watch a brother in Christ drown in their sin.
- b) Instead, we should do what Paul says in the second part of verse 1, “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him.”**
- i) The word “restore” there means to mend or repair.**
 - ii) And when something is restored, it’s returned to its original intent...**
 - iii) And that’s what we’re helping to do when we address our brother’s sin.**
 - (1) When we address our brother’s sin we’re aiming for restoration.
 - (2) We’re addressing their sin so they can repent and be restored to us and to God.
 - iv) And by restoring our brother we help them to return to God’s original plan for them.**
 - (1) By restoring our brother their more likely to love God and love others.
 - v) And this shouldn’t be an odd concept to us because we wouldn’t be Christians unless God addressed your sin and restored you through the gospel!**
- c) In verse 1, Paul also addresses the manner in which we are to restore.**
- i) He says in verse one, “you who are **spiritual** should restore him.”**
 - (1) This has nothing to do with how long you’ve been a Christian or your maturity.
 - (2) To be spiritual means to be filled with the Spirit.
 - (3) So when Paul says “you who are spiritual should restore him” he’s saying you’re qualified to address your brother’s sin as long as you’re walking in the Spirit.

- ii) And it's important that we walk in the Spirit if we're going to address our brother's sin because as Paul said, we should restore "in a spirit of gentleness."
 - (1) Only when we walk in the Spirit will we be able to produce the spiritual fruit of gentleness needed to address our brother's sin.
 - (2) Only when we walk in the Spirit can we keep a watch on ourselves as Paul says, so that we address our brother with gentleness rather than anger or impatience.

- d) **“What does it look like to restore our brother in a spirit of gentleness?” Well, I think this can take shape several ways...**
 - i) First, we can restore your brother in a **spirit of gentleness** by addressing his sin with questions and observations rather than judgments and conclusions.
 - (1) For example, when addressing someone's sin you could jump to a conclusion and say "I talked to Bill and I know you've been gossiping about me."
 - (a) But it would be much better to say, "I was really hoping to share something I've noticed in our relationships lately... I'm really concerned about the way you talk to other people about me."
 - (2) Or here's another example... You could make a judgment by saying, "Every time I talk about Susie you get angry."
 - (a) But it would be much better to ask, "Have you ever noticed yourself getting angry when I start talking about Susie?"
 - ii) Secondly, we can restore our brother in a **spirit of gentleness** by reminding him of the gospel as we address his sin.
 - (1) Whenever we draw attention to a person's sin, we need to leave them with the hope for sin.
 - (2) Sin may be ugly. But there is a Savior for sin.
 - (a) There is forgiveness and power to change.
 - iii) And then finally, we can restore our brother in a **spirit of gentleness** by being patient as we address his sin. (cf. 1 Thess 5:14)
 - (1) We need to be patient in deciding when to approach them.
 - (a) Just because we came and confessed our sin doesn't mean we need to immediately turn around and address theirs in the same conversation.
 - (2) And sometimes when we go to address their sin, we may find it requires more than one meeting.
 - (3) And even after we address their sin, we still need to be patient.
 - (a) We need to be patient in waiting for their repentance, and in seeing change.

2) BEAR HIS BURDENS.

- a) **Again, verse 2 says:** Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
 - i) And I believe Paul uses the word "burden" here in a broad sense.
 - ii) Essentially, it's all the "stuff" that comes with being caught in sin.
 - iii) So when we're caught in sin, there are several burdens we face, including ongoing temptation, guilt, and the consequences of our sin.
 - (1) But here's the good news.. when someone addresses our sin.. when someone comes to gently restore us... they help bear those burdens.
 - iv) And to bear someone's burdens means to help carry them.

- (1) You see, when someone's caught in sin, it's as if they're trying to move around while carrying a suitcase full of bricks.
 - (a) In order for them to move forward, they need help carrying their burdens.
- v) And when we address our brother's sin, we help to do that.

- b) Well what does this look like? How do we go about bearing each other's burdens?**
 - i) First, we can bear our brother's burdens by granting forgiveness. (cf. Col 3:13)
 - (1) The Bible is clear that as long as our brother repents, we should grant him forgiveness.
 - (2) And that well help our brother – especially with his burden of guilt.
 - (a) Though he still needs God's forgiveness for his sin, he can know that if he receives our forgiveness there is no reason for guilt in that relationship.
 - (b) The debt that his sin has created has been absorbed and removed.
 - (c) He no longer needs to feel condemned or rejected.
 - ii) Another way we can bear our brother's burdens is to get involved in the difficulties of his sin.
 - (1) Basically, we shouldn't just grant forgiveness and walk away.
 - (a) We should come alongside of our brother and walk with him in a path of change. (cf. Romans 15:1-2)
 - (2) And we can get involved in the difficulties of their sin at the level of their temptations and consequences.
 - (a) So we can offer to keep them accountable or pray for them.
 - (b) We can memorize Scripture together with them or study together how the Bible says we can put off that sin.
 - (c) Or if their sin has financial consequences, we could help them setup a budget or even help them pay a late bill.

- c) And if for some reason we struggling to find an example of burden bearing, we need to look no further than Jesus – because He is our ultimate burden bearer.**
 - i) Cf. 1 Peter 2:24 and Matthew 11:28-30.
 - ii) So when we bear our brother's burdens we're living the gospel before them.
 - (1) We're saying... you don't have to face rejection and condemnation – you can be forgiven...and I will grant you that forgiveness.
 - (2) We're saying... you don't have to continue to be defeated by this sin – you can be sanctified – and I'll help you with that.
 - (a) I'll help you grow and change and become more like Jesus.

- d) And brothers and sisters, when we actually do this...when we bear our brother's burdens, Paul says we “fulfill the law of Christ.”**
 - i) Basically, we show God's love to each other. (cf. Ro 13:8)
 - ii) So bearing one another's burden is no small thing... it's a picture of the gospel... it's a portrayal of Christ's very own love.
 - iii) And again, that's what we're doing if we're addressing sin biblically.
 - (1) We're not attacking or interrogating.
 - iv) We're restoring our brother and bearing his burdens.
 - (1) And THAT is God's purpose when you address your brother's sin.