
Sermon Notes

September 25, 2022

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Bear One Another's Burdens Galatians 6:1-6

The Fruit of the Spirit in Action

- ❖ A list of character qualities like the Fruit of the Spirit is not enough to propel us forward in the Christian life
 - what does a fruit filled, Spirit-led life look like in action?
 - Paul provides very practical, down-to-earth examples in Galatians 6
 - Paul addresses these words to *you who are spiritual*
- ❖ “Being spiritual” means many things to many people
 - how do we know if we are living an authentic spiritual life?
 - even within the church, many in church history have drawn different conclusions about how to answer this question
 - isolation, relying on liturgy and symbols, ecstatic power encounters with the Holy Spirit
 - Paul looks at “true spirituality” in a strikingly different way
 - the spiritual life is not something for which we need to search or try to define for ourselves

- true spirituality is not an individualistic exercise or a quest for some sort of personal fulfillment
- the Fruit of the Spirit flourishes in true believers for the sake of others
- the spiritual life God creates within us is meant to be shared
- spirituality shows itself to be authentic through the way we live and interact with one another in the Body of Christ

Those Who Are Spiritual

- ❖ Restore one another from sin (6:1)
 - **Brothers** reminds us that this is all about family relationships... we are all in this together
 - **caught in any transgression** refers specifically to a sneak attack of Satan that blind sides someone, catches them off guard and causes them to stumble
 - **restore** is a medical term (like setting a bone)
 - restoring someone may involve a fair degree of pain
 - but this is the only way to help them move forward and return to health, usefulness and joy in the Christian life
 - those who are spiritual will guard themselves against gossip and judgmentalism
 - this is all done with *a spirit of gentleness*
- ❖ Bear one another's burdens (6:2)
 - Luther says this work requires “Strong shoulders and mighty bones.”

- Christians **WILL** have burdens, and sometimes our burdens become **WAY** too heavy to carry by ourselves
 - loss of loved ones, anxiety, doubt, fear, poverty, loneliness, divorce, disability, depression
 - it is not a sign of weakness, frailty or infirmity to realize and admit that you are incapable of handling things by yourself
 - ♦ **this is the way God has designed things to be!**
 - God works to gain glory for Himself as He puts the body of Christ on display
- God Himself has shouldered our greatest burden!
- God has not designed us to keep our troubles to ourselves
- when you do this: you fulfill the law of Christ!
- ❖ Consider others more important than themselves (6:3-5)
 - people who have a high opinion of themselves are not usually likely or willing to come alongside someone and help them carry **THEIR** baggage
 - in the 1st century culture Paul is writing to, it was considered demeaning to help someone else
 - putting the needs of others first often means making sacrifices that we will not be willing to make if we consider ourselves more important than they are
 - ***if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing***
 - I have no value except the value God puts in me
 - keep God's perspective on yourself (Romans 12:3)

- ❖ Share with one another (6:5)
 - emphasis here is on the kind of sharing that takes place between a pastor and the congregation he serves
 - both a minister and the church have something to share with one another
 - Paul makes it clear that a Pastor's preeminent role is to teach the Word to the flock he serves
 - sharing is not a contractual arrangement or an obligation or duty... a voluntary two-way sharing within the family of God

Personal Application

1. Based on what Paul writes in this section of *Galatians* can you identify yourself as "one who is spiritual"? Why or why not?
2. Are you prepared and equipped to restore a fellow believer from sin? If not, what needs to take place in your life to prepare you for serving someone else in this way?
3. How ready, willing, and able are you to come alongside someone else and help carry their burden with them? Along these lines, how are you letting others know you need help carrying your burdens? What stops you from doing this in a God glorifying way?
4. How easy is it for you to consider others more important than yourself? Does anything in your life need to change in order for you to see yourself more accurately from God's perspective?