

A Church Unified- Galatians 6:1-3

Good morning everyone.

So happy to once again be with you and to be able to share in the mysteries of God today as we open up His word. If you are new here this morning we welcome you and are so glad you are here and if anyone needs a bible please raise your hand and an Usher will be glad to come around and give you one.

We are going to be in Galatians 6 verses 1-3 this morning.

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”

Lets pray,

Unity has really been on my heart lately. For the last few months I have been praying for the youth of our church that they would be unified together, that they would see the importance of working alongside each other and motivating one another in the Gospel of Jesus. And as I was preparing to teach this morning I could not get unity out of my head, specifically these verses here in Galatians.

So then, this morning’s message is going to be called, “A Church Unified.”

I don’t think its any new discovery to know that Unity is important... no matter what you are doing...

When you think about sports- what is **synchronized swimming** without unity- just wierdos frolicking around in the water.

Or even when it comes to our jobs- if there wasn’t any unity on the construction site I’m not sure if any houses would be built

And we look at our nation- “**United we stand, divided we fall**”- oh how I wish there was unity in our country

Take it from nature all around us-

Not long ago I opened up my mailbox after being gone for a couple of weeks and over that time some ants had made up their home. At first I was disgusted, but I began watching them realizing how hard they work for each other. Some carrying sticks together way bigger than they were and others carrying food. I even found this picture of these ants creating a bridge together to allow other ants a way to cross over. All supporting one another in this unified

manner. As I watched for a while, I didn't see any ants on the sidelines being lazy and watching tv. I didn't see any ants arguing with one another about who could do it best. Instead, they were just working to help one another out.

- Fun fact about ants, did you know that they have two stomachs, one for their personal food and another stomach to hold food for others! Now that's unity right there... some of you even have a hard time sharing from the plate right? Haha
- Its recorded that ants can move an estimated 50 tons of soil per year in one square mile. Only done by working together.

I was fascinated by these little ants- and I felt really really bad when I had to get them out of my mailbox.

Solomon too was fascinated by ants and he wrote in **Proverbs 6:6-8** "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest."

Solomon realized how lazy we as humans can be- and our laziness turns us into people who care about our own comfort rather than the comfort of those around us.

Take a lesson from the ant- who values the importance of unity

When Paul wrote his letters we could always see repetitiveness for the things that are really important in our relationship with Jesus and eachother- I would think that one thing he made clear is that their needed to be unity in the Church.

There are so many verses in the bible that communicate the importance of unity- We don't have time to unpack all of them. But we will venture together in talking about the basics of seeing unity in the church.

Here in Galatians 6 we will see what I think are 3 ingredients to grow the Unity of the church

1st- Unity needs the Holy Spirit

2nd- Unity needs Humility

3rd- Unity needs Love

Alright so lets look at the first one...

1. UNITY needs THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lets look down at **verse 1 of Galatians 6** "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

I think a lot of people read the beginning of this verse and they think it gives them the green light to go tell whoever that they are in sin and that they need to get right with the Lord or else, but let us pump the brakes a bit and see what Paul means by this text.

Paul gives us a scenario where if there is someone who is OVERTAKEN or OVERCOME in a sin or trespass, this is not talking about a habitual sinner, but a believer who made a

mistake and is overwhelmed by their mistake. Someone with a repentive heart, then one who is **SPIRITUAL** should restore them.

Paul wanted to make sure that when there was any type of correction or restoration in the church it was done through the working and **power of the Holy Spirit**. Too many people are quick to shake **their bibles at people** in clear judgment... but you see a lot of times we fail to realize that its us... or I... that's needs to be restored, I need to confess my sins...

Remember Jesus tells us in **Matthew 7:3-5** "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Jesus doesn't say we shouldn't offer to remove the speck from our brother's eye, but He does say that **FIRST** we need to remove ANYTHING that may be in our own eye. Before we can take on the task of helping a brother or sister we first need to make sure our lives **are filled with the Holy Spirit**- if you are filled with the Holy Spirit as you help someone in need it will show- it will reflect in your character and in your conversation.

Here in Chapter 6, Paul is continuing this theme of walking in the Spirit from the previous chapter when he talks about the fruit of the Spirit.

If you look back at **VS.22-26** of Chapter 5 let's read together- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **If we live in the Spirit, let us also WALK in the Spirit**. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

This is what will be reflected in you. We should not be anyone who provokes another but we should exhort and encourage through these fruits of the Spirit.

As much as I can, and I don't do it as often as I should; but at the end of the day I try to reflect on whether I was walking in the Spirit or walking according to my flesh- I ask, what fruits of the Spirit did people see in me? Was a kind today... hmm maybe not as kind to my wife as I should have been... was I loving today? Hmm definitely not when I was driving that's for sure... did I have self-control today? Strike three I watched too much tv or ate to many twinkies. Haha whatever it is. Because our aim is to be like Jesus, to be filled with His gift of the Holy Spirit. And even as Paul said in **Philippians 3:12**, **its not that we have already attained, or am already perfected, but we need to press on**. Being quick to repent before we are quick to judge others.

And that repentance and claiming the need for the Holy Spirit shows us our next ingredient of Unity...

2. Unity needs HUMILITY

Before even the beginning of time there was perfect harmony- God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and His Angels that He had created... But we know that one angel developed a sense of need to be greater than the God of the Universe... this angel fell to his doom all because of PRIDE. And now pride has caused a separation from the Lord and a separation from others around us for past generations and generations to come. Unity was broken. And To me it almost seems as though the ROOT of all sin is this enemy of PRIDE.

I read this week from

John Piper who said it well, "Pride, or self-exaltation, or self-reliance is the one virus that causes all the moral diseases of the world."

So... when Jesus came in the flesh to dwell among us He did not want to destroy the law as it says in Matthew 5, but instead He came to fulfill the law. Meaning, that Jesus was not in contradiction to the Law of Moses in the OT but He instead fulfilled the law or kept the law by being completely perfect, having not broken any. Not even the notorious sin of Pride... Instead Jesus gave us the 2 greatest commandments to abide by. These commandments would sum up the 10 received by Moses on Mount Sinai... #1 To love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength. And the #2nd, To love your neighbor as yourself...

Unfortunately for many, there is no commandment saying that we must love ourselves with all that we are. Pride is in fact the opposite of these commands given to us by Jesus who was the greatest example of loving His Father and loving the whole world.

I mean, Out of everyone who could have dealt with pride it would have been Jesus- He was God= so He could have bragged about everything He created or everything that He was, He was all knowing= I mean, I know lots of people who brag about knowing everything but its pretty obvious they don't know everything, He is the King- everyone loves displaying their outward image or any sense of royalty... **but not Jesus.**

Instead, Jesus was humble- born in a feeding trough, raised by average man and woman, hated by His own countrymen, not having a pillow for His head, dying a cursed death on the cross.... It was the humility of Jesus, not the pride of Jesus; that showed His unconditional love for you and me.

Here in Vs. 2-3 Paul recognizes that pride can destroy unity in the church. Lets read together. **"Bear one another's burdens, and so FULFILL the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."**

Growing up my dad used to take me to a track meet called the Prefontaine classic down in Eugene Oregon. This was a track meet where some of the BEST in the world would compete... in fact I saw history made when 13 people ran under a 4 minute mile... it was

amazing. But I've grown up enjoying track... And the videos online that always get me a little teary eyed are the ones where athletes help each other to the finish line. There was one I saw from a 10k in Maine where the runner whose name was Jesse, was clearly in 1st place with only 100 meters to go for the win, when suddenly his legs gave out and he fell to the rough road. He tried to muster strength to get up on his own but fell again... that's when the runner right behind him sacrificed his first place finish, he bent down and picked up Jesse and helped him get to the finish line. **Not only that, but he pushed Jesse through before him for a first place finish.**

The runner passed up \$1000 prize for the sake of another, now that is a true act of humility.

And I think that begs the question in our own lives- **"What are you willing to sacrifice for the sake of helping others?"**

Paul tells us that if we would bear one another's burdens we are fulfilling His law to love others as ourselves. And it is evidently clear that PRIDE is what keeps us from helping others in need.

Another place in the gospels where we see this law is **in Luke 10:25-37** when Jesus is talking to a Pharisee who asked Him what he must do to inherit everlasting life. Jesus asks Him, you shall abide by the law, how do you interpret it? And it's amazing the Pharisee interprets the law perfectly, he responded "to love the Lord God with all your heart soul mind and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself." The Lord responded **"DO this and LIVE."** But it said that the Pharisee wanted to justify himself and so he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor." Jesus precedes to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan... He tells him that after a certain man was beat half to death and laid on the side of the road both a Priest and Levite saw him, but they just passed by and did not help him. Instead it was a Samaritan who took his whole day and night to bandage him up, to take him to an Inn and pay for his room so that he may live. This was a slap in the face to a Pharisee because Jesus is basically saying, "You are so focused on yourself that you would not consider another, but this Samaritan who is an ENEMY of the Jews was willing to help him. That man who helped carry that burden will have life. Jesus said to the Pharisee, "Go and do likewise."

Jesus warned His disciples of the danger of the mindset that the Pharisees had, in Matthew, Jesus; speaking of the scribes and Pharisees said-

"They bind heavy burdens hard to bear and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their fingers" (Matthew 23:4).

These men who call themselves God fearing actually put more weight upon others shoulders, instead of helping bear their loads they add more to them.

Our culture have put heavy burdens on our generations that are so hard to lift. And those burdens start with pride- they even cater towards pride.

We all have seen billboards, or advertizements, or movies, or magazines that show us what “outward” beauty should look like... and because of that, from young to old men and women are obsessed about how they look and who will notice.

I read an article this week entitled: *Body image, self-esteem and the influence of society*

In which they wrote: “The greater our discontent with how we measure up when compared to the social or media supported norms, the more negative our body image, and the greater the risk for extreme weight or body control behaviours occurs. We’re talking...

- Extreme dieting
- Extreme exercise compulsion
- Eating disorders
- Extreme or unnecessary plastic surgery
- Using steroids for muscle building

Did you know that from a poll in 2016 there were 1,000 selfies posted just on Instagram alone every second... that is 93 million selfies in one day, every day. And I thought this was interesting- that is equivalent to 2,583,333 rolls of film used in one day. I’m sure some of the youngsters here are trying to figure out what film is...

Now, I’m not against selfies, because Jill and I take the occasional one to memorate where we are or what we are doing... however, so many people want their picture to be PERFECT and I mean absolutely perfect so that everyone out their in the world can see how perfect their lives are...

In an article asking if selfies were a mental disorder they gave an example of a young student from UK who was in search of the perfect selfie. He would snap 200 pictures a day, he did not leave his house for 6 months, he lost 30 lbs and dropped out of school. He told the news “I was constantly in search of taking the perfect selfie and when I realized I couldn’t, I wanted to die. I lost my friends, my education, my health and almost my life,”

No matter what the world tells us, we cannot obtain perfection. There is no reason to boast in who we are apart from God. There is no Joy in putting all of our attention and obsession into ourselves...

There are things to boast in- Paul said in a few verses later in **chapter 6 vs. 14** **“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** **And again in 1 Corinthians 1:31 “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.”**

Because everything given to us, is given by God. All good things are from the Father in heaven.

Church, let us humble ourselves and look out not only for our own interests, but for the interests of others.

I think that David Guzik Said it best, **“If I esteem you above me, and you esteem me above you, a marvelous thing happens: we have a community where everyone is looked up to, and no one is looked down on.”**

Once we have the filling of the Spirit, and we humble ourselves, I truly believe we will begin to love one another to fulfill the law of Christ.

SO onto our 3rd point

3. Unity needs LOVE

Love is the driving component, it's the wind in the sails. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13... Without love we are just a clanging cymbal or without love we are nothing. What is a boat without a rudder, or a car without an engine...

So too, if we don't unify ourselves in LOVE then it can turn into legalism. It's the essence of legalism, only doing things for one another because you want to be a good person... or only helping someone in need because there are people watching you... its not fueled by love, its fueled by wanting to please man and show that you are worthy.

Of course we know that its “by GRACE we are saved, through faith; and its not of works lest anyone should boast.”

It's not what WE do, but it's what Christ ALREADY did.

Do we understand that?

Jesus already paid the ULTIMATE sacrifice... humbly broken bear on that cross... All for the sake of His unconditional LOVE for us.

And Paul tells us again in 1 Corinthians 4:7 “What do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?”

Meaning, Jesus has LOVED us and we too need to give to others His love through us... He has given us GRACE and we should bestow grace, He has shown us MERCY and we should administer Mercy.

Let me tell you about a burden that Jill had one time, Jill is my wife by the way and its always dangerous to give an example of your wife in while you are teaching... but... its one of my absolute favorite stories, I tell it all the time and it fits so why not... blow caution to the wind. Haha. Really the story is a bad reflection on me... so we were at Walmart one night, walking around. We were both in a goofy mood. And the employees of Walmart were stocking up for the next day, so they had those pallets of food in the middle of the Aisles. Well we passed by a pallet of Cereal, Jill wanting to be funny acted like she was going to pull the raisen bran from the bottom of the stack. Well, she accidently faked it to much and the whole stack of cereal fell right on her shoulder. She had nothing she could do to help the situation... if she tried to put any of the cereal back it would all come crashing to the floor. The only option she had was to cry out for help... “brett, come help me... this burden is too hard to bear.” But when I turned around to look I just couldn’t help but laugh. It was hilarious. All of this cereal resting on her shoulders and she had no way out... And you would think as a good loving husband I would run over there and protect her... but I didn’t, I watched and laughed until she finally stepped out of the way and all the cereal came crashing down.

That is NOT a good example of Love. Now, of course I love my wife dearly and I’ve never officially apologized... probably because it was just so funny.

But anyway... reading coming back to verse 2, when we bear one another’s burdens we are fulfilling that law of LOVE.

When we see a brother or a sister in need, we should rush to their aid. Being careful that we don’t add to their load by being judgmental or condemning, but out of love and gentleness we begin to restore them.

And these burdens they bear may not even be a trespass that they are overwhelmed with but it could be the hardships of life. Maybe you know someone who just found out they have cancer- we should run to their aid in an intercession of prayer. Maybe someone’s loved one has passed away or another was let go from a job. We the church need to step in, laying down our personal needs and looking out for those around us.

Romans 12:15 “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”

We are in this race together, and there are times when we rejoice and times when we weep... but we do it together.

When we are operating with all of these ingredients of unity, to be filled with the Spirit, to be humble and to walk in love for the Lord and one another we will see the fruits of Joy in the body of Christ.

There is nothing more fulfilling and joyous than to help a brother in need, not because of man's praise but because we were MADE to help one another, we were made to love each other.

Paul tells the church in **Corinth Chapter 1 vs. 24** "Not that we have dominion over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy: for by faith you stand."

Unity in the church is for the sake of Joy. Paul is saying, we are not better than you or vice versa, but we are fellow workers for the sake of joy. That we will be full.

Maybe you are here this morning and you know you are not filled with the Joy of the Lord... Maybe you know in your heart that you haven't been applying these ingredients of seeing unity in the Church, or unity in your family, or unity in your marriage. I think that many of us need to ask the Holy Spirit to evaluate our hearts, "Lord, is there a plank in my eye? Lord can you remove it, I want to start fresh."

You know, in vs 4-5 here in Galatians 6 Paul finishes with, "But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load."

This is not in contradiction to bearing one another's burdens... what Paul is saying is that ultimately, we need to bear our own load, don't expect others to carry anything for you. I will one day stand before the Lord and give account for what I have done, not what others have done.

And so its NOW when we examine ourselves and deal with any sins or burdens that we need to give to the Lord.

Lets pray this morning...

Now, not only is unity important for the sake of the church, but its extremely important for reaching others for Jesus. When there is genuine unity in the church, others who don't have a relationship with Jesus will find more rest here than they thought. Because that's what Jesus said, "Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you REST."

So let us be a church that values unity, that values relationship. Be filled with the Spirit, Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord and love one another to fulfill the law of Christ.

