

“Walk! Together.”
Galatians 6:1-10
June 3, 2012

Intro: One of my friends in seminary is a stud for the gospel, but I’m not sure it would be wise to classify him as a romantic... Honeymoon: Not the beach? Not a remote island? Not a cottage in the mountains or by the sea? He took his new bride on a four week journey on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. I can just imagine how that pitch sounded: “Baby, grab the tent and some bug spray, and some extra deodorant, we are going on a four-week honeymoon hike.” . . .

Do life together. Walk together. Journey together...

The Point: Develop authentic relationships where mutual care exists.

[Context of the Book. Paul is swinging haymakers of love at the false teaching in Galatia...]

- Let me give you a heads up and say that this is an others-centered text. Let’s admit that it is our natural inclination to focus on ourselves, even when it comes to selecting a church, and even when it comes to life in the church. Our consumer culture creeps into the church. There are plenty of church hoppers and church shoppers out there, and they are primarily driven by questions such as these:
 - What’s in this for me? What can they offer me? How can I be blessed by attending this church? I don’t really care for this, or I don’t really care for that. The music, the preaching, the crowd, the approach is not really *my* style.
 - Well, how about another set of questions: What can I give to this church? How can I be a blessing? Could I use my time, talents, and treasure to further not my agenda, but God’s agenda through this church?
- This passage in Gal 6 is about being a genuinely helpful Christian for the sake of others. And if you have ever done anything nice for someone, and I hope you have!, then you know that whenever we give of ourselves to help or bless someone else, there is always joy and a blessing that is returned to us. That’s why Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give, than receive.”
- So how does this text encourage us to give of ourselves? #1
- He says, walk together and demonstrate mutual care through accountable relationships.

I. Demonstrate mutual care through accountable relationships (6:1, 6-7).

- “Brothers, (the Greek means “siblings in a family,” so we understand he is talking to brothers and sisters in Christ), Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.”
- When Paul says, “if anyone is caught in any transgression,” the word “caught” seems to imply that this could be unintentional wrongdoing. So many times, we are blinded to our own error. We quickly and naturally justify our actions and proceed, not realizing that we have crossed the line and stepped out of the bounds of God’s will for our lives, which is what it means to transgress.
- Maybe expound... prob not (on unintentional sin)
- Now, if we should point out unintentional sin in the lives of one another, we should obviously address the intentional sins in one another’s lives...
- When we see a brother or sister struggling with sin in their life, here our options: ignore it, dismiss it, justify it, broadcast it, help eradicate it. Help them by lovingly talking to them about it!
- We do so because we want to assist our friends along spiritually.
- This does not mean we all enroll in the academy to be Sin Police Officers. The idea is not that we would where a badge to enforce God’s righteousness at all times in all places, nor is it the picture of a spiritual referee who would blow the whistle anytime we blow it...
- The idea is one of two or three people or a group of people, committed to one another, saying, “I love you enough to let you know when you are beginning to deviate from God’s best for your life.” To put it in stronger terms, “hey, the road you just turned on could be filled with pain and destruction and I love you

enough to call you back to the path that God wants you to travel down, one that will glorify him and bring much joy to your life!”

- “You who are spiritual...”
 - Indwelt by the Spirit and walking in the Spirit (context)
 - Those who are spiritual will not have a sense of superiority.
- “should restore...”
 - This is why, the goal... The goal is always repentance that leads to restoration. The goal is to bring the person back to their original condition before they fell into that particular sin.
 - Do you see how this really builds on last week’s sermon? The goal is that we are pushing one another to grow in godliness, to bear the fruit of the Spirit and walk in the freedom Christ died to give us. The goal is spiritual restoration and flourishing
- How do we restore? “in a spirit of gentleness” with humility
- Those are spiritual see their own sin, have removed the log out of their eye, and with a heart of love and sincere concern they take the truths of the gospel and teach us, counsel us, rebuke us, and encourage us with God’s wisdom.
- We just meditated on Eph 4:15: all you need to counsel someone is the Spirit of God and the Word of God. That’s it!
- “Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.”
 - Whenever we go to help someone with their sin, we go as those who are capable of the same sin, no matter how great it may be.
- So let me ask you: If you are in a CG, do you have a concern for each other’s spiritual condition? We want to promote a culture at RHC where people live with the attitude and know, “Man, I want to see you thrive. I want to see you grow. I want to see you move forward in the faith.”
- If you are not in a CG yet, do you want to see people around you grow? Do you also have a concern for the spiritual condition of those around you? I’m sure you do, so how are you going to get involved in their lives. Let me encourage: CGs provide a great context for this to take place.
- In our CGs, we meet together to hang, catch up, talk life, discuss how the Word applies to our life, pray together, and encourage one another through accountable relationships.
- We try to accomplish this in a formal sense by setting aside time in our CGs where we encourage and hold one another accountable.
- But this mutual care/correction should also be happening consistently in a more organic way. This is one of the benefits of walking together. As we see one another’s lives and the way that we live out our faith respectively before God, we are going to be encouraged, challenged, corrected, rebuked, and taught by each other’s lives.
- For example, ___ may see that ___ consistently bears the fruit of kindness and compassion. At the same time, ___ may see that ___ is really demonstrating the Christlike character of boldness and speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Or if you can believe this one 😊....
- Now, I know that all of this talk about going below the surface and even helping one another see and turn from our sin makes most of us very uncomfortable....

Here are a few encouragements:

- **1) Remember that the gospel** levels the playing field. (We are all made for one purpose, all have sin in our lives, all need the same grace of God to make us clean and forgiven in the sight of God) If you think you have it all together, CGs are not for you...This church is not for you, but don’t leave yet 😊
- **2) Practice transparency** by being available, approachable, and vulnerable (self-paced vulnerability). If you are willing to share your struggles, others will be more likely to share what’s going on in their lives.
- **3) Focus on the goal.** Restoration. As Jon unpacked last week, the goal is growth toward maturity in Christ. We should all be after the same thing. Our motive is to glorify God by putting off the old man and putting on the new.

Trans: Now, before we move on: let’s ask the question why this is so important?

- If we knew how important each day, each decision we make was to God, we would welcome serious accountability in our life. Check **vv.7-8**

- Is that straightforward enough? If we sow actions, thoughts, deeds that are according to our flesh, the natural, sinful man apart from grace, we will reap corruption.
- BUT if we sow actions, thoughts, deeds that are according to the Spirit, we will reap eternal life.
- Do you get that? I'm not a gardener, but I know if you plant tomato seeds in your back yard, you should not expect jalapeño peppers to pop up, right? If our actions are not rooted in the Spirit, we can expect to reap corruption rather than life.

Trans: We need to practice accountable relationships that push us toward sowing to the Spirit and walking in godliness. #2

II. Demonstrate mutual care through bearing one another's burdens (6:2-6).

- In the Greek, the first word in the sentence is "one another." He does this for emphasis... Literally, "one another, keep bearing burdens."
- We should consistently be helping shoulder the load of our neighbor's burdens. I mean, is anyone carrying burdens today?
- Some burdens are pretty light. It's still nice to have a little help. Other burdens are heavy. The worst kind feel like they are going to crush us. Paul is speaking more about heavier burdens here. We all, from time to time, have burdens that we should not carry on our own. Consider this. There are probably people...
 - In your CG right now with financial needs.
 - In your CG right now with job challenges
 - In your CG right now who have issues with their families.
 - who are wrestling with tough decisions.
 - who have family members and friends who are sick.
 - Who are going through special circumstances that require extra grace. new moms having babies, people moving into a new home, etc.
- Burdens are all around us, and these burdens can weigh heavy on us. And of course, as we've already discussed, the primary and nastiest burden we carry is the burden of our sin.
- Do you regularly bear the burdens of those around you, specifically those in this church, in your CG?
- How well do you know the people around you? We're striving for deep, [family-like relationships, because we are a family.] God is our Father, and we are brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - Do they know each other's joys & sorrows? Do they rejoice when others rejoice and mourn when others mourn?
 - Do you communicate joys & sorrows to others? Sometimes we get upset that no one cares about what we're going through, but in reality, no one knows what you're going through because you haven't shared it with anyone!
- When we start doing this, verse two tells us that we will "fulfill the law of Christ."

The Law of Christ

- Well, Paul just told us in 5:14: **"For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (Galatians 5:14)** Wonder where he got that from? Go ahead and give that safe church answer: Jesus!
- **"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: [but Jesus raises the ante on what love looks like...] just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another." (John 13:34)** Who's in on this?
- Let's put some handles on love... 1) Pray. & Let them know it. 2) Spend time, listen, empathize and extend comfort (Rom 12:15) – "mourn with those who mourn" 3) Share encouraging words: write a note, make a phone call... 4) Offer a helping hand. Physical effort...
- **1 Peter 1:22** says, **"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart"**
- & This will flow from your relationship with Christ.
- We see this particularly beginning in **Verse 3**: "For... when he is nothing, he deceives himself."
- Paul highlights a significant barrier to helping someone bear their burden, and it is a form of pride manifested by an inflated view of oneself. The person in verse three is someone who thinks they are too

good, above helping the person in need. They believe their time, their agenda, their energies are just too important to stoop to the level of helping that person carry that burden.

- But verse 3 tells us, there is nothing special about us. Apart from God's grace, we have nothing to boast about, and if we think we do, we are self-deceived.
- Like Trip Lee said: "Take your eyes off me, I'm just dust from the ground, Put your eyes on him, Christ the Son with the crown, I ain't no superstar...I'm nothing special, just a vessel, service makes me happy."
- That's what we are to avoid. What should we do? Verses 4-5 tell us to be responsible for our own actions. Look at what he says **(4-5)**:
- Paul is not saying we should boast in ourselves. In fact, in the next chapter he declares in the clearest terms a few verses later, in **6:14**: "But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."
- He is saying we should "give evidence of praiseworthy qualities" in our lives, and I believe he is warning against comparing ourselves against others. So he says, "bear your own load." In other words, "Carry your own backpack."
- The point is: we have responsibility for one another, and we have responsibility for ourselves before God for which we will one day give an account.
- Now, I hope what Paul is saying in these is not lost on us, and we can't emphasize this enough: your relationship with God will necessarily effect your relationship with others. Period. End of the Story. It's an indestructible law in God's universe.

III. Demonstrate mutual care through doing good to one another (6:9-10).

Paul finishes the passage in vv. 9-10 by saying, "And let us not..." Let us do good...

- This point covers the first two. It is good to share life together through accountable relationships, and it is good to bear one another's burdens, but of course, it is not limited to those needs.
- Peter summarized the life of Christ in Acts 10 by saying, "He went about doing good." (10:38)
- If you listen carefully, and are sensitive to the needs of those around you, you will not lack opportunity to do good to those around you.

App: We have some upcoming opportunities for you to do good at RHC.

Upcoming Serve Opportunities at RHC

- Kids Games (Charlestown: June 25-29)
- Soccer Nights (Medford: July 9-13)
- Community Fun Night (Medford: August 3)

Conclusion: (Two key questions):

- **How would you assess the depth of mutual care and relational oneness happening in your Community Group?**
 - On a grading scale of A to F, how would you grade your Community Group in the area of relational depth? Accountable relationships? Bearing burdens? Serving one another by doing good?
- **How would you assess the depth of mutual care and relational oneness happening in your life individually?**
 - Do you let others into your life? Do you have strong, growing relationships with other Christians, or to be more specific for our context, in this church?
 - Do you live out your faith like a member of a family committed to mutual care and accountability?
 - Do you bear the burdens of others?
 - Do you look for opportunities to do good to others?
- If you are not in a CG, my assumption is that your grade could and should be considerably higher.

What is it going to take to see this happen at RHC? It's going to take time (tweaking your weekly calendar). It's going to take effort to get to know people. It's going to need to be built on love and true concern and desire to see the other person flourish. It's going to take a willingness to do whatever it takes to see the other person grow. ***RHC is a family committed to growing together by walking together.*** Let's pray.