

# EXPERIENCING GOD'S GRACE

## PART 10: STRONGER TOGETHER

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John Stott writes, "the first and great evidence of our walking by the spirit or being filled with the spirit is not some private mystical experience of our own but about our practical relationships of love with other people. Since the first fruit of the spirit is love, this is only logical. But it is easy to talk about love in an abstract and general way; it is much harder to get down to concrete, particular situations in which we actually demonstrate our love for one another."<sup>1</sup>

### I. GALATIANS 6:1-18

#### **Bear one another's burdens (6:1-5)**

*"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. <sup>2</sup> Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup> If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, <sup>5</sup> for each one should carry their own load."*

<sup>1</sup> (Stott, Larson, & Larsen, 1998, p. 54)

### **You reap what you sow (6:6-10)**

*"Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. <sup>8</sup> Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup> Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."*

### **A final warning about these false teachers (6:11-18)**

*"See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand! <sup>12</sup> Those who want to impress people by means of the flesh are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Not even those who are circumcised keep the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your circumcision in the flesh. <sup>14</sup> May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. <sup>15</sup> Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation. <sup>16</sup> Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule-- to the Israel of God. <sup>17</sup> From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. <sup>18</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen."*

## **II. COMMENTS**

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(6:1) The word "caught" here implies that the person was actually seen committing the sin or that he was caught or snared by the sin itself.

(6:2) The kinds of burdens Paul had in mind in this verse were the kind that the person having the trouble had difficulty dealing with.

(6:4) Believers first must be sure their lives are right with God before giving spiritual help to others.

(6:5) The phrase "carry his own load" is not a contradiction to verse 2. "Load" has no connotation of difficulty; it refers to life's routine obligations and each believer's ministry calling.

(6:10) The word "opportunity" here refers to a distinct fixed time period rather than occasional moments. Paul's point is that the believer's entire life provides the unique privilege by which he can serve others in Christ's name.

(6:11) The phrase with "what large letters" can be interpreted in two ways. First Paul's poor eyesight forced him to use large letters; or second, instead of the normal cursive style of writing used by professional scribes he used the large block

letters frequently employed in public notices to emphasize the letter's content rather than its form.

### **III. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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1. What specific guidance does Paul give for restoring a fellow Christian who is caught in a sin (6:1-5)?
2. Give several examples of how Christians might carry each other's burdens (6:2).
3. What did Paul mean by "Each one should test their own actions" (6:4a)?
4. What do you suppose Paul meant by "Then they can take pride in themselves alone...(6:4b)"?
5. Paul says, "Let us not become weary in doing good" (6:9). Is he telling the Galatian Christians to go back to legalism by doing good works?
6. What did Paul mean by "for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (6:17)?
7. Optional group leader's question(s).

## IV. APPLICATION

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In order for Christians to be stronger together, we are to:

- L\_\_\_\_\_ for those believers who are carrying a heavy burden.
- L\_\_\_\_\_ to their story.
- L\_\_\_\_\_ them by lifting their burden in some way.

### Sources used in this study

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