

Restoration

Throughout our lives we will know people who are in need of our help. When they fall they'll need someone to pick them up. Then they'll need someone to hold them up; finally, they will need someone to build them up. The first step in helping to restore others is to be in a proper spiritual state; then we can be used to help others in their time of need. Paul begins this section on 'Restoration' with that reminder.

Paul writes,

²⁶Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

¹Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore** such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted

²**Bear one another's burdens**, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

³For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

⁴But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.

⁵For each one **will bear his own load.**"

(Gal. 5:26-6:5)

Verse 26 speaks of the state of selfless Christian maturity.

²⁶Let us not become boastful...

boastful, conceited -- kenodoxoi, means "vain-glorious" or "empty of honor."

It refers to self promotion -- a state of being self-absorbed.

Selfishness is the opposite of humility.

As C. S. Lewis pointed out,

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself:
it is thinking of yourself less."

Instead of being self promotional we must not think of ourselves at all.

From time to time believers need to be restored to fellowship with God and others. This is the job of those who are spiritual. They are humble, self-less shepherds who seek after sheep who have strayed from the flock. These are the ones God calls to restore fallen brethren.

I. The Ministry of Restoration

The ministry of restoration is simply picking up someone who has fallen.

1. Restoration is necessary when there is sinful behavior.

if anyone is caught in any trespass

Caught – overtaken – by sin – “Caught by the trespass itself”

Trespass – paraptoma – the basic idea of stumbling or falling.

Seems to be a sin, not of premeditation, but more of stumbling or falling. Later on sin may get a grip on him, making it harder to get up.

Keller writes,

“This indicates that the sinful behavior is a pattern, and a particular sin has, in a sense, gotten the upper hand with this person. It is a habit of sinful behavior that the person will not be able to overcome without help and outside intervention.”¹

...you who are spiritual, **restore** such a one

Restore – karartizo – to mend or repair;

- Used metaphorically of restoring harmony of quarreling factions of a dispute.
- It was also used of setting a broken bone or putting a dislocated limb back in place.

Writer to the Hebrews used the term:

“...strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed” (Heb. 12:12-13).

¹ Tim Keller, Galatians for You, (North America: The Good Book Company, 2015), p. 166.

A friend of mine went skiing and broke his leg. After three months of wearing a cast the first time he put weight on his foot it broke again. You can imagine his frustration of having to wear another cast for three more months.

Sometimes restoring someone has setbacks or unscheduled issues. The one who needs restoring is spiritually out of place, dislocated, even broken and in need of being reset. Just like the one who resets a bone, restoration is not for the novice or faint of heart.

2. Restoration is the responsibility of Mature Christians

...you who are **spiritual**, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness

There is a difference between spiritual and unspiritual Christians.

Spiritual Christians purpose to restore a believer caught in sins.

Immature Christians will merely expose a fallen brother's sins,
without the motive of restoration.

MacArthur writes,

“A Christian who is critical or judgmental as he attempts to help a fallen brother does not show the grace of Christ or help his brother, but instead stumbles himself.”²

When they learn about the fallen brother, do they tell others?

*Gossip is sharing information with someone
who is neither a part of the problem nor the solution.*

Simply revealing sins may embarrass or humiliate the one involved. Without careful and loving confrontation, it may be more difficult for the sinning brother to leave his sinful behavior. His reputation may also have been damaged causing additional problems.

3. Restoration must be done in a gentle manner.

² John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Galatians*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1987), p. 179.

...restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness

Spiritual Christians also are gentle restorers.

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”
Pr. 15:1

The apostle James wrote of godly wisdom contrasted with earthly wisdom,

Are there some wise and understanding men among you?
Then your lives will be an example of the humility that is born of true wisdom. But if your heart is full of rivalry and bitter jealousy, then do not boast of your wisdom – don’t deny the truth that you must recognize in your inmost heart. You may acquire a certain superficial wisdom, but it does not come from God – it comes from this world, from your own lower nature, even from the devil. For wherever you find jealousy and rivalry you also find disharmony and all other kinds of evil. The wisdom that comes from God is first utterly pure, then peace-loving, gentle, approachable, full of tolerant thoughts and kindly actions, with no breath of favoritism or hint of hypocrisy. And the wise are peace-makers who go on quietly sowing for a harvest of righteousness – in other people and in themselves.”

(James 3:13-18; Phillips Version)

Gentleness is not only an attribute of wisdom, but is one of the fruit of the Spirit. A gentle ‘restorer’ is concerned for the feelings of the one “in sin.” Exposing someone’s sin in a harsh manner may cause bitter sentiments, and often puts up roadblocks in the way of his being restored to fellowship.

Gentleness makes a ‘Welcome Home’ sign instead of a “Shame on you!” or “How could you do such a thing?” It allows the offending brother to come to his senses and return to a loving fellowship of believers, who miss him and want his best.

Jesus told the story of the Prodigal Son,

In that parable Jesus told of a son who strayed from home. His father welcomed his son home and threw a great party, ‘killing the fatted calf’ in celebration of his return. But the older brother was self-righteous and refused to enter the party. Despite his father’s pleading he wouldn’t put aside his resent at what his younger brother had done, and celebrate his return. Needless to say, the older brother demonstrated his lack of maturity and total unwillingness to help in his brother’s

restoration, being filled with himself, his own self-righteousness, and self-promoting.

4. Restoration must be cautiously implemented.

...each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

When someone has had areas of past failure he is at greater risk for temptation in that area. He may be more understanding of the one caught in sin, since he, himself had also been in the same bondage. However, he may also be in danger, having a predisposition to the same sin. A former alcoholic should exercise caution in rescuing someone from a place where drinks are sold. Someone who has struggled with pornography should be extra-cautious in dealing with a brother caught up in the same lewdness. It is also very important to have men working with men, especially in dealing with marital conflicts. Paul makes a list of areas included as sins worthy of breaking association with someone. These could also be problems of weakness for those seeking to restore a fallen brother.

“I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any ***so-called brother*** if he is an **immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler** – not even to eat with such a one” (1 Cor. 5:9-11).

It’s important to have the attitude that “I could also stumble in this person’s sin,” to keep the one restoring from pride, anger, self-righteousness and unloving responses. There is also spiritual danger to the ones involved. The realization that there is a spiritual battle and is a great need to approach restoration with much prayer. Confronting with confidence that the battle is the Lords and that the outcome is in His hands, is in the way of victory.

Areas to consider in restoring a fallen brother:

- Demonic forces bring temptation and bondage to the one caught in sin.
- **Only God can change a heart** and bring them to radical repentance.
 - **The apostles glorified God** for ...granting to the Gentiles also the

repentance that leads to life” (Acts 11:18)

- **Paul testified,**
“I kept declaring ...that they should repent and turn to God,
performing deeds appropriate to repentance” (Acts 26:20).

- That person may not be a Christian, only acquainted with the gospel.
- Some people will only change when faced with consequences.

Someone will change
only when it is more painful not to change
than it is to change.

“But when he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!’”
(Luke 15:17)

A Pattern for Restoration:

1. Help him recognize his trespass as a trespass.
Admitting his sin is the first step.
2. Help him confess his sin before God and turn away from it in repentance,
sincerely asking God’s forgiveness.
3. Pick him up, Hold him up, Build him up.

²Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.
...**⁵For each one will bear his own load.**”

(Gal. 5:26-6:5)

Restoration means being a “burden bearer” – “burdens too heavy to bear”

Restoration means building him up so he can bear his own load

– personal responsibility and growth.