



Sunday school at 9:30, Service at 10:30, Potluck Communion 11:45.

News:

Ladies Night Tomorrow at 6:00 ~ Wednesday Night Classes 6:30-8:00

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Worship... Finances... Offering... Sermon... Communion...

GALATIANS 6:1-5 ~

I Thessalonians 4:11, πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια (prās-sān tā ē-dē-ä), "mind your own business." How?

By actually minding the business that you're in.

If my brother is my business... then, I must correct him?

Only the "spiritual" Christian gets to play cop.

It's sarcastic, but it still means a mature Christian manifesting the Fruit.

Beyond that, it is an assigned task. In general, stay alert to your own failings.

"There, but for the grace of God, go I."

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate, or the prayer/suggestion box in the entryway, or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

We are all imperfect people trying to get through life the best way we know how. It takes maturity to recognize that you are genuinely no better than anyone else. “Do not be wise in your own estimation” (Romans 12:16).

In obeying Jesus and fulfilling His Law of Love, we are to be involved in the business of others.

Bearing another’s burdens is a type of Agapê.

The difference between correcting others in verse 1, and bearing their burdens in verse 2, is the manner in which God’s love is shown.

In the first, Agapê = discipline. In the second, Agapê = comfort.

Burden bearing, as opposed to correcting, comes without judgment, or correction, or condemnation.

Christian maturity is impossible for someone who still thinks too highly of themselves (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14, Psalm 138:6, Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6, I Peter 5:5, etc.). Pride ruins relationships.

The way we stay humble enough to love others without imposing our standards upon them is to accurately examine ourselves.

You will face Jesus alone. You will give Jesus a face-to-face accounting of what you did with the love He gave you to share.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

Worship... Put aside all distractions. Close your eyes if necessary. Imagine the Lord is here in our midst, because He is here. Sing to Him. Praise Him. Worship Him.

Finances... You are our only source of income. It's your church, because God has given it to you, and you get to decide whether to keep it or not.

This is not a plea or even a request for money – this is merely information for you the possessors of this church family. Even with very tight budgeting, in the first quarter of 2025 we are \$12,011 in the red.

Offering... It is an act of worship, not a time to socialize. Listen to the music and contemplate our giving back to God a portion of what He has blessed us with.

Sermon... Our sermons are long, challenging, and deep. My colleagues limit their messages, making them shorter, easier, and shallower because they believe Christians can't handle much on a Sunday morning.

I, on the other hand, respect you enough to give you more, which is still far less than you would get in a single seminary lecture. We're here once a week. I don't think 40-50 minutes of concentration on the deeper things of God is unreasonable... Do you?

Last week's pithy sayings...

"Never compare yourself to others."

"It is not about you; it's about Him."

"You will be judged on how much of God's love you can redistribute, not on how well you kept the rules and policed others."

"You will face Jesus alone."

Galatians 6:1–5, ¹Brothers and sisters, even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you are not tempted as well. ²Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks that 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, but to himself alone, and not to another. ⁵For each one will bear his own load.

Paul just said in the previous chapter that we studied last week that sibling rivalry in the family of God is completely unacceptable and is the opposite of loving one another and it is, therefore, a direct refusal to obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only does this disobedience to His commandment to love others ruin the unity of His Body on earth, it ruins your personal relationship with Him, and it ruins the testimony of both you and of the church to the lost.

Stop thinking more of yourself than is warranted. Don't act superior to others, don't compete against others, don't envy others. As Paul wrote in I Thessalonians 4:11, πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια (pṛäs-sān tā ē-dē-ä), "mind your own business."

How does the born from above Christian mind his or her own business? By actually minding the business that you're in. That business is being an active part of Christ's Body on earth so that He can build the Kingdom here.

That means your business is to focus on His business and His business is to love God enough to obey Him, to love the church enough to have unity, to love the lost enough to represent Christ to them.

What does all of that have to do with the first 5 verses of chapter 6? Whenever a pastor, including pastor Paul, makes a clear and succinct statement of Truth, someone will say, what about this?

God just told us that we are to worry about manifesting love instead of worrying about whatever would distract us from manifesting love, particularly, our own love of self. So, someone blurts out, if that's the case, and I do love my fellow Christian, then I cannot stand idly by while they sin. That's not love.

In other words, I am my brother's keeper and so, if my concern is for my brother and my sister, then I need to keep an eye on them and correct them when they engage in any wrongdoing – for their benefit... of course.

God through Paul tells us in verse 1, Sure, if a person is transgressing, someone who loves them

should help them get back on the right track. Oh goody, that someone says, do I get a gun and a badge to go along with my new policing duties? Ever notice how some people love to play the game, while others much prefer to referee the players?

Who gets to be the cop, prosecuting attorney, judge, and jury running around fixing everyone else? According to the Bible here, it is the “spiritual” Christian. What does that mean? In part, it means that if you’re the kind of Christian who constantly notices how others are messing up – it’s probably not you. In fact, I’ll go out on a limb here and say that it’s definitely not you.

We just found out a few verses ago what constitutes a “spiritual” person when we got a detailed description of them. Remember? “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

“You who are spiritual” is a bit of a jab – it’s a bit sarcastic. The plain surface meaning indicates that such a person needs to be a mature Christian as demonstrated by the recognizable manifestation of

the Fruit of the Holy Spirit in their life. Particularly and explicitly gentleness, implied self-control.

The nuanced meaning below the surface is mockingly asking “Do you claim to be that person?” And if so, “Does your claim hold water?” The basic point is that if you think that you are a “spiritual” Christian qualified to correct others, you’re probably not.

If you truly are “spiritual” and if the task to correct another legitimately falls to you, I can promise you two things. First, it’s the last thing in the world that you want to do. Second, in the performance of that duty, you will personally pay. It will cost you.

Even as a mature Christian, directed by Christ, to confront wrongdoing in another, you will struggle to smoothly operate with divine gentleness and even if you do, your efforts will rarely be received well, especially at first. It’s generally a no-win scenario for the person doing the correcting. That’s called self-sacrifice for the benefit of another, which is Agapê.

The reason parents don’t discipline their kids and pet people don’t discipline their dogs is because

there is a personal cost that comes with disciplining that they don't want to pay.

For the one being corrected, it is very human to react poorly to that correction, even when it is softened by love and gentleness. There's a reason we have the saying, "Don't shoot the messenger."

Once in a blue moon, a Christian will react to correction with humble gratitude. When that happens, it is only because they are either, 1) agreeable by nature and are putting on a great act, or 2) because they are a truly mature Christian.

When someone without the requisite maturity and calling by God tries to discipline another Christian, it inevitably ends in disaster. If not many of us should be teachers as James 3:1 indicates, even fewer should be correctors.

In general, stay alert to your own failings. Look to yourself and πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια, mind your own business, leaving the disciplining to someone God has burdened with the unenviable task.

The second half of verse 1 means that in the process of working on someone else's problem a less mature, or less experienced, or especially a less humble person, can easily become entangled in the mess and end up in just as bad, or in an even worse, situation than the person they tried to help.

There are endless public examples of this happening in Christianity, all of which is to the detriment of church unity and to the devastation of the church's witness to both the unchurched and to the lost.

I'll tell you where this slide into this particular sin begins... It begins by thinking that you, the corrector, are immune. You see your wife slip, fall, and bounce down the stairs, and you think, "that's ridiculous... why did she fall? She's so uncoordinated, I'll just run down there and help her up."

When you think too highly of yourself, you cannot comprehend how anyone could fail in that way, let alone see how you could follow suit. That kind of sin would never catch me off guard. When you can't imagine it applying to you – when it's not possible

because it's not you – when it's not a temptation that would cause you to stumble... That's when you better watch out – that's the attitude that will sink you.

Part of being mature enough to correct others is knowing, with every fiber of your being that, “There, but for the grace of God, go I.” Only when you clearly see that you are no better than the one you are called to correct, can you properly protect yourself from wrongdoing. You cannot prevent what you never see coming.

Not only will a smug Christian be brought low, just as Jesus promised more than once (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14), but the very act of feeling even slightly superior to a brother or sister who has been captured by sin is, in point of fact, sin itself.

There's a very moving song by James Blunt about his dad's terminal condition. In the song, he sings:
“I'm not your son - - - - you're not my father
We're just two grown men saying goodbye
No need to forgive - - - - no need to forget
I know your mistakes - - - - and you know mine.”

I find the sentiment quite appropriate to this discussion. When men think about their dad, they often remember his inadequacies, his imperfections, and his mistakes. Because of that, sons have a perception that their father needs their forgiveness, as well as a degree of their forgetting of his past insults, offences, and hurts. It's incredibly arrogant.

What the song reminds us of is that we are all imperfect people trying to get through life the best way that we know how. Sure, I know my dad's mistakes – believe me, I am well aware of them – but my dad also knew my mistakes. I wasn't any better a son, than he was a dad. In the end, there was no need to forgive him, nor any need to forget anything between us. We were “just two grown men saying goodbye.”

He was just a man, and I am just a man – that's all. I think of my own son. I often tell people that he is a much better man than I am and that's absolutely true. What I rarely confess is that he is also a worse man. That's what I'm trying to convey this morning – none of us is nearly as innocent as we think. Other people are not nearly as evil as we might think, and we are not nearly as guiltless as we might think.

It takes maturity to recognize that you are genuinely no better than anyone else. That you're just different – just the product of different circumstances. I mean seriously, just who do you think that you would be today, if you were born to an impoverished family living in a literal garbage dump in Indonesia?

Do you think that you would be sitting here, right now? “There, but for the grace of God, go I.” The Bible exhorts us in Romans chapter 12, “not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment.” And to “Be of the same mind toward one another; not haughty in mind, but associating with the lowly. (Culminating in the command) Do not be wise in your own estimation” (Romans 12:3&16).

Then, in verse 2 of our passage, we are commanded to “Bear one another’s burdens,” we are to “Bear one another’s burdens,” (with the result that by doing so we will) “thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”

In obeying Jesus and fulfilling His Law of Love, we are to be involved in the business of others. That

might seem to contradict what I just said that not many of us should act as correctors trying to set others back on course.

Because it seems at odds with verse 1, some people limit the scope of this command to only the “spiritual” people of verse 1. I will tell you that the primary thrust of verse 2 is the situation of verse 1 because of context, but because of the grammatical structure, verse 2 applies to a whole lot more than that as well. Here’s what I mean...

The “spiritual” people who God calls to correct others are to bear the burdens of those others as well. Additionally, every Christian is to bear the burdens of their brothers and sisters who are being corrected by the corrector.

Finally, in a general, overall sense, all Christians are to bear the burdens of all other Christians just as, and in the same fashion, that we are to love all other Christians.

Bearing another’s burdens is a type of Agapê, not a whole new and different thing. Burden bearing is part of loving, it isn't all of loving, but it is a tangible

component of loving, and that's why doing so fulfills Christ's commandment to love.

Well, I suppose that since that's the case, it would be pretty good to know what bearing another person's burdens entails.

Let's investigate by using an example... Let's say that the Lord charges me with correcting a person in our church family. Even if I do that with humble gentleness, that brother or sister is going to be emotionally affected. They might be a bit hurt, upset, or shell-shocked; they might be angry, bitter, or resentful; they might be sad, remorseful, or embarrassed.

In a perfect world, all of the rest of you would come alongside that person, without having to know the details and without passing judgment upon them, and you would love, support, and encourage, them by bearing their burden. That's love manifested in the Body, which is how we "fulfill the Law of Christ," which is to love one another.

We are all mature enough to help a struggling brother or sister by giving them comfort and

encouragement. The key difference between correcting others in verse 1, and bearing their burdens in verse 2, is the manner in which God's love is shown.

In the first instance God's love is shown to a person as Jesus caring enough to discipline them. Jesus declared in Revelation 3:19, I correct and train those I love. So be sincere, diligent, and earnest, and repent, turn away from your sins, and follow Me.

We must recognize that judging the person being corrected is an inescapable component of disciplining, or correcting, or even teaching, them. It is impossible to correct someone without declaring that they are incorrect in the process, whether that is clearly stated, or not. No one can say to anyone else, you should do it this way, without implying that the way they are currently doing it is wrong, and that requires making a judgment regarding their present situation.

I've said many times that I respect adults who try to learn something new because it requires that they humble themselves enough to be wrong and have that pointed out over and over again, until they get it

right. That's the learning process... that's discipline... that takes patient humbleness.

When the teacher corrects the student, especially when the student thinks that they shouldn't be making mistakes, the student often is crest-fallen and needs some reassurance. The teacher must give that, and it works to a degree, but it is never as helpful and soothing a balm as when that student's fellow classmates come alongside and support them. That's bearing their burden.

Burden bearing, as opposed to correcting, comes without judgment, or correction, or condemnation. Burden bearing is just giving another person a shoulder to cry on, or an arm to lean on. It's just being there for someone in their time of need.

As such, the concept can be expanded to every area of life. From struggling with being corrected to struggling with finances. Whatever a brother or sister is going through, whether spiritual, psychological, emotional, physical, relational, medical, familial, or mental. Whatever is a big deal to them.

When we do this right, we the comforter, we the burden bearer, are blessed by God in the doing of it. When God uses you to love another person you are blessed. Beyond that, in building deeper relationships through the bearing of burdens, you will find that others will be far more comfortable bearing your burdens when you need some support.

That's called love... that's called family... that's called fulfilling the Law of Christ.

Verse 3 reiterates what we saw at the end of chapter 5, "Let's not become boastful." Here it is, "if anyone thinks that he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself." Full stop. It plainly means that no one is anything – no one. What a relationship destroyer pride is... I may be the one who corrects others, but if so, it's because it is my God-given task within my God-given role. It isn't because I'm better than anyone else, it is actually because I know that I'm not.

Christian maturity is impossible for someone who still thinks that they are better than others. If you think that you deserve more than others... If you think that you are doing a better job of living the

Christian life than others... If you think that God loves you more than others... If you think that you have earned more grace than others... Then you are a person who thinks that you are something, when the Truth is that you are nothing. You are deceived, and you are not nearly as mature, or as Godly, as you think that you are.

The Gospels record multiple times where Jesus declared that “everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14, etc.).

It is a refrain throughout the Bible from the Law to the Prophets and from the Psalms to Proverbs, and from Jesus, from Paul, from James, from Peter (Psalm 138:6, Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6, I Peter 5:5, etc.) ... It cannot be overstated, nor can it be avoided... Pride will be your downfall, but if you humble yourself, Jesus will lift you up.

The reason we correct others when we should bite our tongue and take captive our thoughts is pride. The reason we cannot come alongside a brother or sister who is struggling without judging them is pride. Pride ruins relationships.

Remember what love is? 1If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. 4Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 13These three remain: faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love. (I Corinthians 13:1-8&13).

Verse 4 might seem out of place initially. The logic is that the way we stay humble enough to love others without imposing our standards upon them is to accurately examine ourselves.

Notice, we are to examine ourselves against both ourselves and against God, never against, or in comparison to, other human beings. Examination in comparison to someone else requires that we also examine them. To make a comparison with another person we must judge ourselves, but we must also judge them in order to make a comparison. We are repeatedly told not to do that.

It is not our place to judge others in that way, so we judge ourselves in comparison to ourselves. To do that we need a standard by which to measure ourselves and the standard is God.

The first thing we must do is have a genuinely legitimate and accurate understanding of Who God is and what God has done. Then we must add to that a realistic assessment of who we are and what we've done to make a comparison, to have a scale with which to measure ourselves.

You can see right away that it is a whole lot easier on our pride if we're comparing ourselves to other flawed human beings and quite a blow to the ego

when we realize that the standard is God, not other people.

If that exercise doesn't leave you humbled beyond description, you're doing it wrong. You either think far too lowly of God, or far too highly of yourself, or, most likely, both. You will never be a mature Christian until you get this straight. There is far too much personal pride remaining in a Christian who isn't overwhelmed by the magnitude of the difference between God and them.

Many Christians act as though they are not all that far behind Jesus in their Christian Walk and their devotion to God. What a pity. I feel truly sorry for the Christian who cannot see past their own passions and desires. I feel even sadder for the Christian who mistakenly conflates their passions and desires with Christ's passions and desires.

See what I mean? We want what we want, and we know deep down inside that it is really just our own passion and desire, so we pretend that it is what God wants us to strive for and do. It doesn't take long before we have convinced ourselves and we

become incapable of seeing how pushing for what we want, is a detriment to what God wants.

Examine yourself with the lens that only the Holy Spirit can provide you. Pray that God shows you what you do not want to see in yourself. It is the only way to root out your pride and make way for love.

The boasting Paul talks about is a boasting in the legitimate work of the Holy Spirit within and through you. It gets a bit technical, but we know that this is the case for a host of reasons. Those who are humble enough to allow God to love others through them can boast in that fact.

Yet, we cannot boast out loud or we reverse the humbleness that led to our being used by God. The boast is a quiet confidence that a Christian gains as they experience the love of God working through them. What could give a person greater assurance that they belong to God than having God minister to others through them?

Verse 5 should come as a bit of a reality check. As I said last week in closing and already stated again today in the opening, "You will face Jesus alone."

You will give Jesus a face-to-face accounting of what you did with the love He gave you to share.

While your fellow Christians are put here to help you bear your burdens, your burdens are, in point of fact, your burdens. I will give an account of how I handled my own burdens, which will include how I helped or how I hindered you in carrying yours, but the Lord's examination of me and the result of it is mine and mine alone.

Likewise, you will be examined by Jesus. He knows your deeds, as in, He knows every intention of your heart even when you have so muddied the waters that you don't. Nothing will escape His notice. I can't help you then. They can't help you then. You can't help you then.

It will be too late to do a self-examination and make an adjustment. Too late to do what we are commanded to do in verse 4, so that we can accomplish verse 2, so that it will go better for us in verse 5.

Too late to take your freedom from the Law and use it to enslave yourself to love... too late. We are

family and we are here for you, but at the end of the day, my dear friends, you will die alone. You will stand all by yourself before the Eternal Word of Almighty God and answer Him. You will bear your own load.

Too late then, but there is still time now. So as Hebrews 3:13 commands us, “encourage one another every day, as long as it is still called “today,” for as long as it is still called “today.”

Communion... Everyone who is reborn from above and filled with the Holy Spirit is welcome to take Communion. Anyone not fitting that description should know 3 things...

1) We're not spirit police; you make your own choice to partake or not.

2) Partaking in an unworthy manner brings divine judgment upon you. An unworthy manner also applies to the Christian who is in conflict with a brother or sister in the Fellowship. Fix the relationship and then partake with a clear conscience.

3) All of that can be fixed in an instant by yielding to God and fully embracing Jesus as your One and Only Savior – your One and Only Lord. You can do it right now.