

Helping the Hurting, Part 1 - Galatians 6:1 – November 26th, 2017

- Today's teaching will be part one of a new series I've titled, "Helping the Hurting."
- I chose this title is because it's abundantly clear from what Paul writes here these Galatian Christians had been seriously hurt.
- The reason they were so hurt was because the legalists had infiltrated the churches and in so doing had harmed the Christians.

- This is why the Apostle Paul, who was so protective of the flock of God seemed to be so harsh in his rebuke of these Judaizers.
- Simply put, they had caused much in the way of damage to the believers by burdening them with the requirements of the Law.
- Paul turns a corner of sorts and goes from exposing the legalists to helping those who had become victimized by the legalists.

- Enter our text today and with it specific ways that we can help the hurting, who in any way have been beat up and cast down.
- I would suggest that people today, especially with how the world is in the last days, are hurting in ways most don't even realize.
- I think of one of Pastor Chuck's illustrations comparing the police with the paramedics who arrive on the scene of an accident.

- I'm of the belief that we have way too many police in the body of Christ and not enough paramedics to minister to the injured.
- I see these spiritual police as the modern day Judaizers who only focus on who's at fault and in the wrong by breaking the law.
- Sadly, doing so leaves much damage in its wake, which is why it's incumbent upon us to be paramedics instead of the police.

1. Be gentle to others – (Verse 1)

1 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.

- In order to better understand what Paul is saying here, we need to know a little bit about the original language in the Greek.
- First, the Greek word for "sin" is better-translated "fault," and caught is overtaken in the context of being cornered as one's prey.
- The word restore carries with it the idea of restoring one to health in the medical sense of setting a bone that has been broken.

With this understanding, let's expand on verse one and read it this way; brothers and sisters, if you see someone who has been caught and cornered in a fault or mistake, you who are living and walking by the Spirit, with the fruit of the Spirit, should minister to them in their brokenness and restore them to spiritual health. However, you must be gentle with them and watch yourself so you're not tempted to think you're better than they are, because this could have easily been you instead.

- The problem with this is that often times instead of hurting people being restored, they're ignored and left to themselves in pain.
- This begs the question of why? Namely, why is it that restoring hurting people is a rare and even lost jewel in the church today?
- I would submit that there are at least two reasons for this, the first of which is because Christians in large measure are carnal.

- If the fruit of the Spirit is love, from which comes gentleness, and we'll be known by our love, then so too is the opposite true.
- In other words, how we're known is by how we treat one another, and if we walk according to the flesh, we will be in the flesh.
- Conversely, if we are walking in the Spirit, and have the fruit of the Spirit, we will be loving and gentle in how we treat another.

Warren Wiersbe said it best this way; "Nothing reveals the wickedness of legalism better than the way the legalists treat those who have sinned."

- Actually, this ties into the second reason restoring hurting people is so rare today, and it has to do with that of un-brokenness.
- By that I mean, people who themselves have not been on the receiving end of restoration when hurting, have not been broken.
- It's those who have been broken that will become gentle with others because they know their own propensity for sin and failure.

I like how one commentator said it; "This job of restoration is often neglected in the church. We have a tendency to either pretend the sin never happened, or we tend to react too harshly towards the one who has sinned. The balance between these two extremes can only be negotiated by the spiritual. It should be normal to do what God says here, but it isn't. It is all too easy to respond to someone's sin with gossip, harsh judgment, or undiscerning approval."

- One of the most important lessons I'm learning in my walk with Jesus is un-broken people are harsh, broken people are gentle.
- I'm learning this the hard way and have the scars to prove it by virtue of how in my own un-brokenness I've mistreated people.
- But God! But God has been faithful to break me and as such be restored back to spiritual health, which has softened my heart.

The best teaching I've ever heard on brokenness was by Damian Kyle, who is the pastor of Calvary Chapel in Modesto California, and I'd like to share with you a few excerpts from that teaching titled, "The Place of Brokenness in the Life of the Believer." "God's continual breaking in our lives keeps us constantly aware of how much we need His grace on a daily basis and how lavish He is with His grace towards us. ...Brokenness brings a humility by which one can admit wrongdoing. ...When we're broken, we won't be harsh in our treatment of other people. ...A man that I count as a dear friend, who has served the Lord over sixty years, said to me one day, 'I think the greatest thing hindering revival in the Church is the unwillingness to make things right in our personal relationships.'

- I'll bring it to a close by posing two questions, which I ask of myself as well, the first being, am I a paramedic or am I a police?
- The second question is this; is the handprint of God on that trial that's in my life in order that God might break and humble me?
- If so, could the reason be that God wants me to gently and humbly seek restoration in that broken relationship that's in my life?