

Restore Them with a Spirit of Gentleness*

Introduction

The fruits of the Spirit dictate our attitude toward alienated sinners and fallen brothers and sisters:

Gal 5:21-26

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

1. A Spirit of Gentleness with Our Fallen Brothers and Sisters

Gal 6:1-5: The Law

6 Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load.

1 Cor 5:1-8: A Fallen Brother

5 It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife. 2 And you have become arrogant, and have not mourned instead, in order that the one who had done this deed might be removed from your midst. 3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? 7 Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. 8 Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

2 Cor 2:5-8: Restoration

5 But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in some degree — in

* All scriptures are from the NASB unless otherwise noted.

order not to say too much — to all of you. 6 Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority, 7 so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, lest somehow such a one be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

Acts 13:13: The Fallen Brother—John Mark

13 Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

Acts 15:37-39

37 And Barnabas was desirous of taking John, called Mark, along with them also. 38 But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. 39 And there arose such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

Acts 12:12-17

12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. 13 And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. 14 And when she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. 15 And they said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. And they kept saying, "It is his angel." 16 But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed. 17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

Col 4:10: The Restoration

Col 4:10

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas' cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him).

2 Tim 4:11

1 Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

1 Peter 5:13

13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark. 14 Greet one another with a kiss of love.

2. Let Your Speech Always Be with Grace toward Outsiders

Col 4:5-6: The Law

5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

Acts 18:24-28: The outsider's Conversion

24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. 25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; 26 and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

Acts 18:27-28: The Outsider's Life as a Christian

27 And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he helped greatly those who had believed through grace; 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

1 Cor 3:5-7:

5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. 7 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

Conclusion

Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.

Bear your own load.

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders.

Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt.

Make the most of the opportunity.

James 5:19-20

19 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8-9

8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.