



## Scotts Hill Baptist Church

LIVING IN FREEDOM KEEP ON KEEPING ON • GALATIANS 6:1-10 •

### MAIN POINT

Christians are build up the body of Christ by honoring one another.

### INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is the first thing that pops into your mind when you hear the word “honor”?**

**What are some ways Christians can honor other Christians?**

**How would someone “outdo” another in showing honor?**

We have all probably met that guy or girl who is a “one-up-er.” You know the type. If you have been to the moon, they have been to the moon twice. They always have a bigger and better story than the one you just finished telling. Although “one upping” in a negative form of outdoing one another, in Christ we are now free from this type of keeping up with the Jones.’ We can now outdo one another in our acts of service, love, and honor. We no longer outdo for our own glory, but solely for the glory of God. One of the best ways we can honor our church family is by helping them carry their burdens. Even as Christians we go through seasons of life that can be a heavy load to carry. We can carry the burdens of lingering sin, pain, loss, overextended living, sins committed against us, and much more. The passage we are going to look at will give us help with understanding some practical ways in which we can show each other honor.

### UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 6:1-2.

**How can we restore a Christian who is caught in sin? How do we do this lovingly and not in a condemning manner?**

**How does restoring a fellow believer caught in sin honor him or her?**

**How is “bearing one another’s burdens” a way of fulfilling the law of Christ?**

**Share a time when a friend carried a burden of yours.**

One of the best ways we can honor our brothers and sisters in Christ is by helping them fight their sin. We understand that all our sins are forgiven because of what Jesus did for us in His life, death, and resurrection. However, it won’t be until He returns that our personal battle with sin will be finished. Until that day, God has designed for us to live together in community, as iron sharpens iron. We honor a fellow believer when we help him or her walk away from sin.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 6:3-5.

At first glance, these three verses seem to contradict the first two verses of the chapter. But wait, not so fast. These three verses drive us deep down internally, all the way to our motives. It is important to realize that the motive behind bearing each others burdens matters just as much as the act of bearing them. So before we get an inflated head about all our burden bearing, let’s remember, it’s not about us. Test your motives. It’s possible to bear another person’s burdens in the hope of receiving honor for yourself. So test your heart, make sure you are not giving help in order to receive the praise of your neighbor. In Christ, there is now no condemnation. (Rom 8:1) As we turn our attention internally, let the Holy Spirit show you just how deep your forgiveness in Christ really is. We welcome conviction, but reject condemnation.

**How can doing the right thing be motivated by a desire to make much of oneself?**

**Why is it self-deceiving to think much of ourselves?**

**Why is it so easy to avoid self-reflection?**

**What is wrong with giving honor with the motive of receiving honor?**

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 6:6-10.

**What does sharing good things have to do with showing honor?**

**What are some practical differences between sowing for the praise of others versus sowing for our heavenly Father?**

**When it comes to the good of showing honor, why are we supposed to be quicker to do good to Christian brothers and sisters?**

## APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**Who are you going to honor this week?**

**Will you ask God to show you who in your life needs help carrying their burdens?**

**Look around at the people in this room. How are you going to outdo each other in love, service, and honor this week?**

## PRAYER

Thank the Father for His unconditional love. Ask God to help us this week go above and beyond in our love for one another.

## COMMENTARY

| GALATIANS 6:1-10

6:1. Rather than exhibit destructive attitudes and actions (see Gal. 5:26), Christians are to help one another. Paul again addressed the Galatian believers as brothers, signaling a new topic but also emphasizing their spiritual kinship and his warm feeling for them. He gave the example of someone who was caught in a wrongdoing. Whatever the nature of the person's sin, spiritual believers are to restore the individual. The word "spiritual" refers to Christians who follow the Spirit's leadership—who exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. The Greek term rendered "restore" means "to make one what he or she ought to be," "to bring one back into the right way." Paul switched to the singular as he issued a caution. He urged any believer engaged in restoration to have a "gentle" spirit rather than a harsh, judgmental attitude. The word gentle has the idea of strength under control (see on 5:22); the restorer is to be firm but kind. Someday that Christian might need gentle restoration,

for none of us is immune to temptation and sin. Rather, the believer is to keep a careful eye on self to avoid sinning. An awareness of vulnerability would help the restorer have a gentle, humble spirit.

6:2. Paul exhorted believers to carry one another's burdens. The word "burdens" refers to loads too heavy to bear alone. It could indicate oppressive loads in general but well may have referred specifically to moral faults referenced in verse 1. The guilt and shame from such sins would be heavy loads. Believers, however, also struggle with other loads that threaten to overpower them. Helping shoulder others' heavy loads would fulfill the law of Christ.

6:3-5. Paul warned against pride or arrogance—an overblown estimate of self (see 5:26). Believers are not to consider themselves to be superior to others. Elevating themselves and putting others down would prevent them from restoring erring believers and helping shoulder others' loads. Also, such pride is self-deception; arrogant people have lost touch with reality. Instead of helping erring believers, some Christians evidently were using others' moral failures to make themselves feel smugly superior. Paul directed them to "evaluate" themselves, not others. Each believer is to examine his own work. The Greek word rendered examine was used of testing metals to assure their purity. If a person's work could pass the test of his or her objective examination, the individual had grounds for pride in personal accomplishment. The person would avoid an inflated ego at another's expense. The Greek word for "load" differs from the term for "burden" (v. 2). The word for load could refer to a ship's cargo (see Acts 27:10), the law's heavy burden (see Matt. 23:4), a soldier's pack, or a traveler's backpack. Paul seems to have meant that while some burdens are too heavy to be carried alone, each person has responsibilities he or she must fulfill.

6:6. At first glance, this verse seems to be an abrupt transition to a new subject. One suggestion is that Paul was encouraging believers to participate with their teachers in restoring straying Christians (see vv. 1-5), thus furthering what was morally good. Most interpreters, however, have taken Paul's admonition as promoting material support for teachers. Pagan religious teachers commonly received no pay, so the Galatian believers could have taken Paul's words in verse 5 to mean Christian teachers are to support themselves. Evidently some believers were devoting most of their time to teaching the message (the gospel and its implications for Christian living) and needed financial assistance. Believers benefiting from such teaching are to share their material goods with the teachers.

6:7. Paul warned believers not to be deceived (literally, to “stop being led astray”), for no one can “thumb a nose” at God (God is not mocked) without experiencing devastating results. Whatever seeds a person sows will yield a harvest in kind (see Job 4:8). The person can expect that exact harvest, not something else. Paul well may have referred to the material support of teachers he encouraged in verse 6, but he likely had a broader application in mind.

6:8. Believers could choose to sow to their flesh. They could devote themselves and their goods to self-indulgence that the old self (the flesh) desired. If they did so, their harvest would be corruption—moral and spiritual ruin. Today, people thumb their noses at God when they view salvation as liberty to sin freely, presuming on God’s forgiveness. Such an approach calls into serious question the genuineness of their commitment to Christ. If, however, believers sow to the Spirit—that is, invest themselves and their goods in the sphere the Spirit governs—the Spirit will produce the harvest of eternal life. Paul’s use of the future tense (“will reap”) suggests he had in mind the final harvest of endless life with God.

6:9. One important aspect of sowing to the Spirit is persistently doing good. The phrase may refer specifically to supporting Christian teachers but likely is broader to include good deeds in general. The Greek term for “get tired” has the idea of becoming physically fatigued and of becoming faint-hearted. Christians could become discouraged and disillusioned in doing good and could be tempted to quit. Believers who persevere in well-doing, however, will reap a harvest at the proper time (or “season”)—refined character, spiritual growth, and fulfillment in this life and endless life with God in the next.

6:10. Because determined well-doing will result in a sure, Spirit-produced harvest, believers are to grasp every opportunity to work for the good of all. The Greek word for “opportunity” is the same term rendered “due time” in verse 9. Paul may have extended the agricultural metaphor: taking advantage of the season of sowing good deeds is essential if believers are to enjoy the season of harvest. Christians are to do good for unbelievers and for believers, but they have a special obligation toward members of the household of faith. Believers are to seize every opportunity to help one another in the family of faith.