

**Living God's Way**  
**A Sermon by Rev. Frances Savill**  
**Sunday July 3, 2022**

**Galatians 6:1-16**

There are days when I wonder about God and God's wisdom.  
God chose the church, people like you and me to work through and to be the ones to proclaim in word and deed the gospel.  
And sometimes the church does it incredibly well, but not always.

The devil comes to kill and destroy – the devil launches attacks on the church, sowing dissensions, causing divisions, undermining the work of the gospel, causing the church to be discredited.

I know this, but I wish God's people weren't such willing instruments of the devil, sometimes.

We are to be a different kind of community.  
We are the body of Christ, we are under the Lordship of one Saviour, we are supposed to be producing the fruit of the Holy Spirit – peace, joy, love, patience, kindness, gentleness, generosity and self-control.

And sometimes we do, and sometimes the church is the best place on earth to be.  
But it is work.  
And we are supposed to be learning a new way of being together as a community of Jesus the Messiah.

Paul gives a lot instructions to the early churches because they needed help in learning how to be together.

Christian faith takes people of social status, all walks of life, all different ethnicities, different backgrounds, and says we are to be one people – diverse and yet one in Jesus, and one in loving and caring for each other, which is work.

We are to care for one another.

We are to serve one another.

We are to bless and support and help one another.

This is not the work of the pastor, or the elders, or even the congregational care team, this is the work of every person in this community of Jesus' people.

Obviously, you're not going to care for everyone all of the time, but you should be caring for some people all of the time.

Chapter 6 begins: *live creatively, friends. If someone falls into sin, forgivingly restore him, saving your critical comments for yourself.*

Are you your brother or sister's keeper? *Yes*

But consider what this passage actually says.

If someone falls into sin, your goal is restore him or her.

What Paul is talking about is not someone doing something annoying, or making a once in a while mistake.

What Paul is talking about is the kind of sin that is harmful to the person's spiritual health in Jesus, a pattern or repeated problem, especially one that the person isn't seeing.

And again the goal is restoration.

To restore someone we approach them gently, honestly, humbly, not making the situation about us, but only with a view of helping, supporting, restoring, walking with the person who has or is falling into sin.

If you aren't aware how easy it is to fall into sin, if you haven't dealt with your own struggles and been restored and helped by others, please don't go to anyone else.

We see in our recovery groups that it is those who have struggled with addictions, admitted their need for help, and gotten help, who are able to help restore someone else.

This new community of Jesus is to change us and change our relationships.

We are to share the burdens of others – walk in their shoes, love them as we love ourselves, provide the help and support we can.

*Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed. Share their burdens, and so complete Christ's law. If you think you are too good for that, you are badly deceived.*

*<sup>4-5</sup> Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.*

*<sup>6</sup> Be very sure now, you who have been trained to a self-sufficient maturity, that you enter into a generous common life with those who have trained you, sharing all the good things that you have and experience.*

*<sup>7-8</sup> Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds.*

*All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life.*

*<sup>9-10</sup> So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.*

Don't compare yourselves to others.

We are to do the creative best we can we our own lives.

One day we are going to account to God for our lives, all that we have done, and all that we have left undone, with the talents and time we have been given.

And so Paul urges us to be generous, and right now, therefore every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.

Are you working for the benefit of others, especially for the community of faith?

I know there are days we are tired, but the freedom of this new life in Jesus is lived out in simple service – as we can, as God enables us, and then the joy is ours as we share in harvest.

Thanks be to God