



## WALKING IN THE SPIRIT?

- Galatians 5:16-26 – 'the Spirit' used 7x
- Does it refer to ecstatic experience, biblical knowledge, positions in the church?
- Paul provides some guidance on this question

## HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

Let us not become conceited,  
competing against one another,  
envying one another.

Galatians 5:26

## IN-HOUSE LANGUAGE

- 2x 'one another' (v26)
- Speaking here of relationships within the community of faith

## THREE DESCRIPTORS

i. 'Not become conceited' (NRSV/NIV)

- To have an illusion about oneself
- A false opinion/empty vain thought
- Can be employed expressing superiority or inferiority

## THREE DESCRIPTORS

ii. 'Competing' (NRSV) / 'provoking' (NIV)

- A challenging spirit
- "I'm better and I will prove it"
- Causing strife, dissension

### THREE DESCRIPTORS

- iii. 'Envy' A challenging spirit
- Desiring what others have; even desiring their spiritual gifts

- Such attitudes speak of spiritual immaturity – creating division/strife within the community of faith
- Rather there is to be a spirit of unity & peace as suggested by the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-33)
- "Let us serve one another in love."  
(Brother Lawrence)

### HELPING RELATIONSHIPS

My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted.

Galatians 6:1-2

### THE SITUATION

- Someone is tripped up by a transgression
- Surprised by sin/side-swiped
- Made a careless mistake
- As a result is spiritually stuck

### RESTORE GENTLY

- Same word as 'fruit of the Spirit'
- The emphasis is on restoration not condemnation or judgment
- Used of a doctor mending a broken bone

### SELF AWARENESS

- Watch yourself - don't get tripped up
- The plural 'you' (v26a) becomes 'you' singular (v26b)
- Seek restoration & wellbeing of the other
- An attitude of self-awareness – see yourself clearly through the process

## BEARING EACH OTHER'S BURDENS

Galatians 6:2-5

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ. For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbour's work, will become a cause for pride. For all must carry their own loads.

Galatians 6:2-5

### WE ALL HAVE BURDENS

- We can help each other carry the heavy weight
- Act in love - fulfill the law of Christ (v2b)
- An excessive burden which is difficult to bear alone – emotional, physical, financial ...

### MUTUAL BEARING

- In awareness and a spirit of self-evaluation (v3-4) - recognize that you also have burdens
- We help one another – not a solitary journey – there's a mutuality in this burden bearing

### 'OUR' BURDEN

- There is a burden that we alone must carry (v5)
- "Each person must shoulder his own pack" (Phillips)
- A different word from 6:2

- It speaks to our vocation and our responsibility before God
- You must carry your own load and I must carry mine
- Here it is not about comparison or competition but carrying our 'own pack'

The Holy Spirit is inclusive, all embracing, community-creating. He comes upon us not for ourselves privately but to enable us to *be* for others, to build up the Body. He builds the kingdom between us. He breaks down the strangeness, removes the barriers, and bridges the estrangement created by the cumulative sin of humankind.

Edward J. Farrell