

## **Week Four: *The Rules of Engagement***

### **Galatians 6:1-5**

#### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day One**

1. Have you ever watched one of those intervention reality shows on TV? They can be some of the most gut-wrenching displays of emotion, and judging by the popularity of these shows, America has a pretty good appetite for watching others go through the process of helping their loved ones recognize their destructive behaviors. What reasons might people have for tuning in to shows like this? Do they appeal to you?
2. Read Galatians 6:1-5. Write in your own words the command in verse 1.
3. Read Romans 3:23. Who has sinned and fallen short of God's ideals?
4. How is the person that needs to be restored described in verse 1?
5. Read Galatians 4:6. Who has received the Holy Spirit?
6. In verse 1, Paul, the author, exhorts Christians to help restore those caught in sin. From what we read in scripture and what we see in our own lives, we know that we all sin. What does it mean to be caught in sin? Describe what that looks like in a person's life.
7. As you finish your FIFTEEN, ask God to continue to fill you with his spirit so that you are ready to help others when they are in need.

#### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two**

8. Have you ever felt like God was calling you to step into the life of someone else who was struggling with a sin or any other destructive behavior? Did that feel weighty and heavy, like meddling, or something else?
9. Look again at Galatians 6:1. How does this verse say we are to restore that person? What else are we to be mindful of?
10. Can you think of any real life examples where a well-meaning person tried to help someone with their struggle with sin in a way that was not gentle? What was the result?
11. What does it look like to restore someone gently? In other words, what qualities should you exhibit? (See Colossians 3:12-13 for insight.)

12. In what ways can a person fall into temptation when helping another?
13. As you finish your FIFTEEN in prayer, ask God to help you display the qualities needed to help restore those who are struggling, and to give you the strength not to fall into temptation.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three**

14. Look again at Galatians 6:1-5. According to verse 2, what does carrying someone's burden accomplish?
15. What is the law of Christ? (See Mark 12:30-31 for insight.)
16. In this series, we've been looking at the tensions that make or break relationships. One of them is this: in life, we long for a sense of control and autonomy, but relationships only thrive when there is mutual dependency and vulnerability. How does helping each other carry our burdens accomplish this?
17. How does the pull for control and autonomy make it harder to step in and help carry other's burdens?
18. What does focusing on the needs of others help us to avoid?
19. What does focusing on the needs of others give us?
20. Finish your FIFTEEN by thinking about a relationship in your life where God may be calling you to step in and help him or her carry his or her burden. Ask God for the courage to help you live out his law by loving your neighbor as yourself.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four**

21. Yesterday, we talked about the need for dependency and vulnerability to make relationships thrive in spite of our longing for autonomy and control. What happens to relationships when the balance of these two pulls becomes out of balance? In other words, when a relationship is characterized by only control or dependency?
22. Read Galatians 6:1-5. What does verse 4 say we should do?
23. Read Romans 12:3. What does it look like for you to test your actions? For instance, do you have a friend that can hold you accountable or be honest with you?

24. To whom do you typically compare yourself? What is typically the result when you compare yourself to others?
25. It is so helpful to have someone to help give you perspective about yourself and your relationships. At St. John, we call this Being someONE to another person in an intentional relationship, which is defined as “Life transformation happens best when we are in relationship with others. Whether one-on-one mentoring relationships, small groups, or any other form of intentional, committed, Christian community, life is meant to be shared. We are also called to form genuine relationships with people who don’t know Jesus as savior. *John 13:34–35*.” How does having someone speak intentionally into your life help you with your other relationships?
26. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, consider if you have an intentional relationship that speaks into your life. Or in the reverse, who are you speaking into? If you can’t think of anyone, ask God in prayer to help you identify who those people could be.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five**

27. When you think about the primary relationships in your life, how would you assess your level of power? Are you comfortable with the status quo?
28. What happens to relationships when they are characterized by an imbalance of power?
29. Jesus doesn’t bash power, but instead talks about a radically different relationship with power...power used for the good of the other. Read Matthew 20:25-28. What would happen in your relationships if you used the power you have to serve the other?
30. Look at verse 28. Does it make it easier to lay down your power for the sake of another knowing that Jesus did it for you? Why or why not?
31. Look again at our scripture for this week, Galatians 6:5. What was the author Paul’s final exhortation of this passage in verse 5?
32. Read Philippians 2:5-9. It is easy for us to compare our load to others and assume that our load is greater. But if we compare ourselves to Jesus, we see someone who laid down the ultimate power to serve others in love. Finish your final FIFTEEN of the week with this verse as your prayer.