

The Biblical Characteristics of a Restorer of Healthy Relationships

A spiritual reflection based on Galatians 6:1-10

By [Ben Gonzaga](#)

Have you ever experience being in a fire accident situation? What did you do to help extinguish the fire?

When I was yet working as Sales Representative of a safety device for LPG appliances, it was my primary strategy to teach fire fighting techniques in a way that leads the customer to buy our product. Before I teach techniques during the demonstration of actual fire, I usually allowed anybody to try *all that they believed can stop the fire*. Some uses water, sand, sticks and dump clothes. Others use fire extinguishers. But none of them was able to stop the fire. In one of those actual fire demonstrations, a wet blanket was put into the burning hose line including the LPG tank believing it would finally stop the fire. But instead of extinguishing the fire, it only triggers the fire to get bigger and bigger. They never knew that a wet blanket is a good conductor of LPG related fire.

Our attempt to settle relationship problem can lead to greater trouble if we are not careful with our actions. Instead of becoming agent of reconciliation, we might contribute to permanent damage of relationships. Thus, it is desperately necessary for us to know the biblical principles in restoring relationships.

What are the Biblical characteristics of a restorer of relationships?

I. A RESTORER OF RELATIONSHIP MUST BE SPIRITUAL.

This is how Apostle Paul describes the quality of a good restorer of relationships. Being spiritual in this context means:

A. You are in a healthy or right relationship with God particularly the Holy Spirit who is dwelling in you as a Christian. Jesus said in Matthew 15:14b that *"if a blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit"*.

B. You are striving to please the Holy Spirit in all areas of your life instead of satisfying the desires of your sinful nature.

C. You use *spiritual means* in dealing relationship conflicts. A relationship conflict is spiritual in nature. Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 6:10, "*Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*" Thus, we can never restore a relationship if we do it by our own ways and capacity. Restoring a relationship problem requires our knee closer to the ground instead of making our hands busy or our heads brainy.

II. A RESTORER OF RELATIONSHIP MUST BE HUMBLE.

The greatest pitfall we oftentimes committed in the restoration process is *demanding humbleness from the offender or sinner instead of exercising it by ourselves*. It is true that sinners need to humble down to acknowledge their sin and receive forgiveness. But due to the fact that they are still in their unhealthy spiritual condition, it is more fitting and consistent only that the restorer of relationship will be the one to demonstrate humility in dealing with them. This is the pattern we can observe in many biblical records of restoring relationships.

In restoring our broken relationship with God, it was He who humble down himself to make reconciliation possible despites his supreme authority over us (Philippians 2:6-8). In restoring Onesimus to Philemon, Apostle Paul never take advantage of his authority over them but rather uses gentle words like, "*I appeal to you...*" (Philemon 10). In restoring the relationship conflict between Euodia and Syntyche, apostle Paul said, "*I plead with Euodia and Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord*" (Philippians 4:2).

We need to humble down ourselves:

1. On account of our own limitations. This is how Apostle Paul warned us in verses 1 and 3. He said, "*Watch yourselves or you also may be tempted.*"
2. On account of God's justice (v.5). If the offender takes advantage of our meekness he or she is accountable to God. "*Each one should carry his own load*" (v.5).
3. On account of our learning from the Word of God. You are expected to be humble because you are recipient of the divine instruction from the Bible (v6). The best thing you can ever share to those who instructs you with the Word of God is the life that has been renewed by the grace of God that includes humility.
4. On account of the promised reward (vs.7-9). A reward is not only limited to honor or material blessings but also the privilege of seeing a transformed character of the repentant sinner and the spiritual growth we experience along the process.

5. On account of our moral responsibility (10). Regardless of how the sinning person responded to our acts of restoration, we are still responsible to do good to him or her.

Responding to relationship conflict in the church or in the community is like rescuing a house that started to be consumed by fire. Although it requires immediate action, a careful step is still necessary. A rescuer or fire fighter plays a very important but crucial role in a fire incident. He can either prevent or cause further damage.

This very moment try to imagine yourself as fire fighter in a particular fire incident. Are you there to rescue or just to make yourself visible to the public, out of obligation? If you are really there to rescue, then focus on major technique or principle in fire fighting. If water is necessary element, then use it without reservation. The condition of our own relationship with God manifested in godly character is as important as water in a fire incident. If spirituality and humility are not in us, how can we successfully help others?

This article is provided as a ministry of [Third Millennium Ministries](#). If you have a question about this article, please [email](#) our *Theological Editor*. If you would like to discuss this article in our online community, please visit our [RPM Forum](#).

Subscribe to RPM

RPM subscribers receive an email notification each time a new issue is published. Notifications include the title, author, and description of each article in the issue, as well as links directly to the articles. Like RPM itself, *subscriptions are free*. To subscribe to [RPM](#), please select this [link](#).