

How to use This Guide:

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add any optional scriptures and questions if needed, and then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Our Main Idea:

The greatest evidence of the Spirit-filled life is love for one another. As believers we have a responsibility to others in our Spiritual Community. Church is more than just a service on Sundays. It is living life in community with other believers as we support and help each other through our joys and struggles in life.

Opening Question

Direct everyone to think of words or phrases that would describe a person focused on "self." If possible, write them so that everyone can see them. Then direct everyone to think of words that describe "love." If possible, also write these words so that everyone can see. Then ask the following question: How is a focus on self the complete opposite of love? Allow discussion for a few minutes. Today we'll take a look at spiritual community and the role that love plays in it.

Key Questions:

- What sets the church apart from other, charitable organizations and clubs, even religious ones?
- How does the discussion about the "fruit of the Spirit" (5:16-26) relate to this passage (6:1-10)?
- Have you ever needed to restore a brother gently? If so, what was that like? Do you need to do so now? How should you go about it?
- Can our attempts to provide accountability often be a mask for self-righteousness? How is self-righteousness also linked to pride?
- How is confronting the sin of other believers different from Jesus' command, "Do not judge" (Matt 7:1)?
- What are some examples of how one might "carry one another's burdens"? What might hinder this from happening?
- What is the difference between "burdens" and "loads" (6:2, 5)?
- How do we encourage the body of Christ when we share our struggles with one another and help others to carry their burdens? How is this practice a witness to the independent nature of North-American culture?
- How is holiness a harvest?
- Are you getting tired of doing good (6:9)? If so, how might you find fresh strength?
- Are you looking for an "opportunity" to bless others? In what ways might you do that today?
- Based on the truths in this text, how would you answer the following question: "If I study Scripture, pray, and listen to sermons throughout the week, why do I need the church?"
- **What was your biggest take-away from the weekend message?**

Next Steps

What did God say to you today through His Word? And what are you going to do about it! Finish your group time with prayer, asking God for help in living in Freedom

Experience

Your Relationship with God

How does knowing our true nature and God's true nature affect how we view others?

Equip

Your Relationship with Others

How can the Church sometimes create barriers to sharing burdens? What can we do to make other believers more comfortable with sharing their struggles?

Engage

Your Relationship with the World

If the greatest evidence of the Spirit-filled life is love for one another, how can we show love to others in our community?