

## In a Spirit of Gentleness

I suppose that there's not a congregation anywhere that doesn't have wayward members. These are Christians who have decided to break fellowship with the church and no longer participate in the worship or work of the local congregation. The reasons for this can be widely varied and an attempt to list those reasons would take more than our article space will allow.

Ever since Jesus walked the earth, people have made the conscious decision to walk away from the Savior. (*John 6:66*) But just because a disciple walks away doesn't mean they can't be turned around. There's a wonderful passage found in the first five verses of *Galatians 6* which speaks to us concerning reaching out to those who have been overtaken by the devil and have convinced themselves they don't need the blood-bought church of Jesus Christ. It reads as follows:

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load. (Galatians 6:1-5)*

We must take note that we are to go to these folks in a spirit (attitude) of gentleness and humility. No one will ever repent at the verbal bashing and reprimand of a self-righteous and hypocritical Christian. When we get down off our high-horses and hit our knees in humility, just maybe we'll reach those hearts that have become hardened against the church. As you finish reading this article, there's no doubt you have someone in mind that needs to return to the fold. First, pray for them, then go and get them just as the shepherd would fetch a single lost lamb. (*Luke 15:4-7*)

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