

Date: 21 May 2023

Scripture Passage: Galatians 6:1-4

Title: Sowing To The Spirit (Part 1)

Introduction

- This title is based on v8 “for he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the spirit will of the spirit rip everlasting life”. We are to sow to the spirit. What does it mean to sow to the spirit?
- We have seen last week, in Ch 5:13-26, Life In The Spirit. A true Christian lives a changed life, in the power of the Spirit. Consider our life before conversion. Our life has a master, and that master was sin. But when converted, sin was put to death. And the Holy Spirit came to live in us as the new master. So now we have a new master who gives us new desires, and the new ability to obey God's law. That gives us true liberty. Liberty is not to live as we like in our sin. Liberty is freedom from the power of sin. That we are. Not drawn back to live the old way of life in which we follow the desires of our flesh.
- We saw last week. What is true liberty? It is serving one another in love, & not living in habitual sin. What is true righteousness? Avoiding the works of the flesh, and showing increasing measure of the fruit of the Spirit. We will never be free from this struggle with remaining sins in our life until we arrive in heaven. But nevertheless, the true Christian will live a life that is led by the spirit, and he will walk in the spirit.
- Thus far the focus is on the nature of the true Christian. Today's passage is going to focus more on the practical action or behavior in the life of the Christian. How does this new life, led by the Spirit Show itself practically? That is what today's message is about. There are those who call themselves Christians, but they are not true Christians, because they don't live a life like Christians. So what does a life like a Christian look like?

I. Our duty towards other Christians (1-2).

- Our duty towards other Christians (1-2). True Christians indwelt by Spirit (3:2; 4:6), led by Spirit (5:18), therefore walk by Spirit (5:25). We have already seen that a true Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The spirit lives in him at the point of having faith in Christ. Therefore, a spirit that dwells in you will lead you. And you will then walk by the spirit. You will live a life according to the spirit. A Christian does not live as he likes, thinks of effect upon others. Indeed, he serves others in love (5:13). So how does one who is indwelt by the spirit, led by the spirit, and walking by the spirit show love to other Christians? We see that in v1-2.
- How? In two situations, viz. when others fall into sin, & as they struggle to live Christian life. There are two situations that we see here. First is in v1, when another Christian falls into sin. And the second is in v2, when they struggle to live Christian life.
 - When another Christian falls into sin (v1)
 - In their sin (1): (i) restore, i.e. “mend broken bone”; (ii) in spirit of gentleness, i.e meekness; (iii) considering yourselves lest tempted. If not able, leave it to others.
 - i. **Restore.** When a fellow Christian falls into sin. When he trespasses. The original Greek for trespass is a snare. A trap set up to catch you. If you are caught in a snare, if you have fallen into sin. We all will fall into sin. Even the best of Christians will sin because we live in a sinful world. And when that happens, Paul tells us to “restore such a one”. The whole purpose of church discipline is not to punish, but to restore one who has fallen into sin. The apostle is saying when a person falls into sin, he needs help. Now you who are spiritual, or those of you who are not in sin, help the person get out of the situation. And once he is out, he's still in pain. It takes time to heal. You help him mend the wound by restoring him.
 - ii. **In spirit of gentleness, i.e meekness;** You do so in a spirit of. And as we have learned in the earlier passage, the word gentleness means meekness. It refers to the attitude of heart. Don't come with a “holier than thou attitude”. Don't have your nose in the air, but rather with meekness. You could have been tempted and you could be the one falling into such a trap yourself. Sin is sin. You have to bear the consequences of the sin. There has to be genuine repentance. But the point that the apostle Paul is making here is when we help the person in sin, do so to restore them, in the spirit of gentleness.

- iii. **Considering yourselves lest you also be tempted.** And Paul says “you who are spiritual... considering yourselves lest you also be tempted”. In other words, you are in the position to help. You who are capable. What if you're not able? What if this sin is too complicated? What if you know that it is such a complex issue that it you are not able to handle it? Pass it on to the Elders of the church, or tell some other mature Christian to help the person. Be very careful when you try to help a person in sin. Don't yourself get drawn in to the sin. Know your limits, lest you also be tempted.
- So in the first situation, when a brother falls into sin, or when a fellow church Member falls into sin, we have to show our love by serving a brother that is in need. Show love by helping him in this situation. Restore him, gently, but know yourself lest you also be tempted.
 - When they struggle to live Christian life (v2).
 - The Lord Jesus Christ has told us that he gives us a new commandment “Love one another” John 13. So how do we show it in everyday life? In everyday life there are loads that we have to carry. And these loads can become heavy. It constitutes a burden that a fellow Christian has to carry. And there are many who are burdened in this world. If only we have the eyes to see and ears to hear. Are you watching and listening to the cries of help from your fellow brethren in Christ? Look around you, each of us have burdens that we carry. Are we bearing one another's burden?
 - My dear friends, are you listening? Are you trying to understand the struggles in life that your fellow Christian is carrying? We claim to want to be of help, but do we have the heart to want to help? Are we paying attention to the cries of others? One can appear to be strong! They can be so successful in life, or they can be so good in their sphere of expertise. He can be trained as an engineer and any engineering problem he can solve. But still, in his career there are problems. In his relationship, there are problems. In his family, there are problems. In his own self, there are problems. We must learn to bear one another's burdens.
 - The Lord is good. He brings us into fellowship with other people. He gives us the opportunity to bear one another's burden. But we must have the eyes to see. Have the ears to hear. We must come to understand there are many hurting people around us. We must as fellow Christians help them. Even if you cannot physically help them, you can pray for them.
 - The Lord had that heart. That is why He calls upon all in Matt 11:28 “Come to Me, all you who are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”. Come to me! We are to come to the Lord, to trust in him, because his yoke is easy. His burden is light. We come to him and have faith in him. When we have faith in Christ, we discover that the Lord is on our side. With the Lord beside us, with the Lord helping us in all issues, life's burdens become bearable. He has promised that he will never leave you nor forsake you. The Lord often uses his people to help us bear our burdens. We must not be too proud to turn away the help of fellow believers. Just as when other believers need our help, we must have the eyes and the ears to know the burden they are bearing. And we must be prepared to help them bear the burden. The Lord uses His people to bear their burdens.

II. Our duty towards ourselves (3-5).

- Our duty to ensure we are not proud, think more highly of self than ought (3). Pride deceiving self. Leads to provoking & envying (cf. 26). Different from looking to others as examples. Our duty to ensure we are fruitful: in character growth, soul winning, good works.
- Whenever there is a close gathering of people, especially in the church, the danger of thinking too highly of ourselves is there. When we think too highly of ourselves, we cause hurt to others. You may wonder “why people are avoiding me?”, “Why are they not talking to me?”, “Why are there always people not getting along with me?”. The problem often lies in ourselves. Verse 3 says if anyone thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. All the while you thought so highly of yourself, when in fact you're deceiving yourself. When we look at any person, there is the good and there is the bad. The negative traits are often the ones that we miss. Therefore you must constantly be searching yourself. It is a healthy exercise to be in constant self-examination. It is a teaching of the Bible that we examine ourselves and when we discover that

we have been thinking too highly of ourselves, we know we have been deceived. All the while we put the blame on other people. We put the blame on the church, we put the blame on the circumstances of our life. We never blame ourselves. When in fact, that is where the problem lies. We have been thinking too highly of ourselves. Pride destroys fellowship, Pride hampers relationships, and pride cripples your usefulness to God. We must be careful. We have a duty to ensure that we are not proud. Instead we ought to be fruitful in character growth, soul winning, and good works.

- We rejoice in the good in others, but let us be able to rejoice in the good we do as well (4). Do not be envious of others. When you have envious feelings towards others, that is contrary to the leading of the spirit. **Read 5:26** Your consciousness will not be clear the moment envy stirs in you. When you say things to provoke others, when you try to make yourself better than them, that attitude is contrary to a life led by the spirit. So what should we do? V4 tells us. Examine your own work. Be hard working in ensuring that you are fruitful.
 - Be fruitful in character growth. Love, Joy, peace and all the other fruit of the spirit mentioned in Chapter 5.
 - Be fruitful in winning souls to Christ. The Great Commission has been given go into the world, make disciples of all the nations. Don't leave this world just to the full time preacher. This great command or great mandate is to the church and all Christians. We have a duty to win souls for Christ. We are united as one body, each doing his part. And in that way, we are used by God for the furtherance of His kingdom.
 - Be fruitful in good works. We do not do good works to earn our salvation. But we have to rejoice in doing good works because Christ has shown His love for us. You have a duty towards being used.