

Let Us Walk In The Spirit.

Text: Gal. 5:25–6:10

Suggested Hymns:

339, 239, 389, 380, 361

1) By Restoring The Erring Brother

2) By Doing Good To Others

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Galatians 5:25–6:10, ²⁵ *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* ²⁶ *Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.*

¹ *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.* ² *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.* ³ *For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.* ⁴ *But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.* ⁵ *For each one shall bear his own load.*

⁶ *Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.* ⁷ *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.* ⁸ *For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.* ⁹ *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.* ¹⁰ *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

We sinners are saved by faith alone in Jesus as our perfect Saviour from sin. By His suffering and death on the cross Jesus has made perfect atonement for all our sins, and by faith in Him we lay hold on His merits, so that they become our own. We thus have forgiveness with God, are righteous before Him, and become heirs of heaven.

Thank God that we have such a Saviour, utterly unable as we are to save ourselves inasmuch as by the works of the Law no flesh shall be justified.¹ However, that faith by which we are justified and then saved eternally is a faith working through love.² Our good works, pleasing to God, prove our gratitude to God for our redemption.

If we really live in the Spirit, in the faith which the Holy Spirit has kindled within us, then we certainly will also walk in the Spirit. We will live as we are led to do by the Holy Spirit.³ Unto such a life the Apostle admonishes us. Our theme is *Let Us Walk in the Spirit*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. Let Us Walk In The Spirit By Restoring The Erring Brother

Our text says, ¹ *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness*. Since every member of every Christian congregation still has the old Adam within himself, it may easily happen that one be overtaken in a fault. If he is not watching himself sufficiently, he may slip and slide into some grievous sin.

If we notice this happen, we should neither be indifferent nor inactive, but we should rather endeavour to restore the erring brother. It is possible that we, too, be overtaken in some fault; in that event we should appreciate the help given to us by some fellow Christian, who would thus be bearing our burden.

If we do this for him, we help him and in doing so we ² *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*, who has given us the new commandment that we love one another.⁴

With regard to the sinning brother Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:15, ¹⁵ *Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother*. His Apostle uses these words, *if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one!* Their words, although different, mean the same thing. If we do this, we give evidence that we are walking in the Spirit.

It is a strong appeal which the Apostle addresses to us here. He emphasises it by calling us "*brethren*" and then by reminding us that we are "*spiritual*."

We believe in Christ and therefore are spiritually alive; we know how much Christ has done for us to get us out of the mire of sin. Hence, in a keen sense of appreciation of His redemptive death, we should be willing to do the (sometimes unpleasant) task of restoring the erring brother, so that we may perform this work in the right manner and with the prospect of success.

It must be done in the spirit of *gentleness* and meekness, not roughly, not in an unfriendly way, and not in haughtiness. We must be free from conceit, pride, a provocative attitude, and all envy.⁵ We must also be free from anything and everything else that would destroy the hope of winning the offending brother. It is for us to try to speak and to act so that he will feel that we are truly sympathetic and desire to serve his spiritual welfare.

Above all, there must be totally absent a “*better-than-you*” spirit. Its presence would at once defeat us. Our admonition must be given in all humility. Even if it was true that in comparison with the offending brother we are somewhat better, we are told nevertheless that we should examine our own work. This is to be done not in comparison with that of the brother, but in comparison with the demands of God in His holy Law, the Ten Commandments.

If we thus examine our own work, and do it honestly and without self-deception, we shall find that we, too, have our own burden to bear, the burden of imperfections and shortcomings and frailties. This will keep us duly humble for our work of restoring the erring brother.

It will keep us from the folly of thinking ourselves to be something when we are nothing, as our text says, ³ ***For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.***

Finally, the detection of shortcomings in ourselves will cause us to guard against a false security and will make us realise that we, too, can be tempted, and that we, too, in some temptation could fall and thus find ourselves in the same condition as the fellow Christian who has been overtaken in a fault.

Our text says, *you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.* And we read in 1 Corinthians 10:12, ¹² ***Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.***

In the interest of our fellow Christian, in the interest of our sanctification, in the interest of the glory of God, we should develop the virtues just spoken of and practice them when restoring an offender, thus walking in the Spirit. How great a work we will then perform!

We read in James 5:20, ²⁰ *let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

2. Let Us Walk In The Spirit By Doing Good To Others

In the second part of the text, its last five verses, we are exhorted to walk in the Spirit by doing good to others, particularly by sharing with them and giving to them.

Sharing and giving are something that does not appeal to the old Adam. St. Paul therefore issues some warnings, as well as encouragements, in connection with this matter.

He wants us to consider that it is God's will that we share and give to others. Refusing to give when we ought to give is mocking God. Hence we are reminded, ⁷ *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked.* By disobeying God in this respect, we sin grievously, and we sow a seed which definitely is displeasing to God, for it can bring us nothing good, *for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

The seed one sows determines the crop one will reap. Unwillingness to share and give in keeping with the Lord's command is sowing to the flesh. It is doing the will of the old man, and from that we can reap nothing but corruption, and eternal damnation. This is a stern warning!

But our text does not fail to give us an encouragement to share and to give and doing good. Our text says, ⁹ *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.* Even the Christian needs such encouragement, because well-doing of any kind usually always demands work, and sacrifice, and self-denial.

We are assured that our deeds of kindness and help to others are a seed which we sow, a seed to the Spirit, and our gracious God will not fail to give us a

reward. Do not for a moment imagine that we earn any reward, for we are merely doing our duty; yet God in His goodness will not let us go unrewarded.

Innumerable Christians have had this experience, and not merely once, but many times over and over again. It has been that way; it will always be that way, for God makes this promise here as well as elsewhere in His ever-truthful Word.

Jesus has tells us in Luke 6:38, ³⁸ ***Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.***”

Here Paul says that if we do not grow weary in this God-pleasing activity, we shall reap. We shall reap in time, enjoying God’s blessing here, including a good conscience and a feeling of satisfaction; and we shall reap in all eternity, namely, a greater glory in heaven.

Our text does not leave us in the dark as to, who the people are, to whom we are to do good. It mentions three classes in this connection.

The first, ⁶ ***Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.*** We are to share or give to those who give to us the Word of God, our pastors, and any others who under them, break to us the bread of life. A realisation of the greatness of the service being rendered to us by them will create in us the desire to share with them all good things, to share with them what God has given us. How precious is the Word which they teach us!

It not only equips us thoroughly for every good work, fitting us for a life in sanctification, but above all it makes us ***wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.***⁶

Rightly St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:11, ¹¹ ***If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?*** This admonition of our text to the hearers of the Word regarding the teachers of the Word is altogether in keeping with the Lord’s ordinance that ***those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.***⁷

Secondly, ¹⁰ ***Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all.*** Everybody is my neighbour, and God has commanded me to love him and in such

love to do good to him, irrespective of creed, or race, or colour, or language, or nationality, or station in life, or attractiveness, or repulsiveness.

The beggar who comes to my door, dirty, dusty, disorderly, utterly a stranger to me, yet in need, possibly hungry — him I should help - unless I can prove that the verdict of God applies to him, ***“If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”***⁸

In times of war or other disasters bringing suffering in their wake, various charities help people of every kind and in every place, and I, too, help them when I give to such charities and assist in making its help possible.

My Saviour has commanded me, and other Christians with me, to be a witness for Him to the uttermost parts of the earth,⁹ and to go into all the world and to preach the Gospel to every creature.¹⁰ I do this, and I walk in the Spirit and obey the command of the text when I make my contribution for the mission work of the Church.

Thirdly, while God commands us to do good to all people, He singles out one class as the special beneficiary of well-doing: ***especially to those who are of the household of faith.*** Not all neighbours are equally near to us; God Himself makes distinctions.

While God desires us to serve any and all people, if possible, He lifts out of this great mass those who share our faith in Christ. By that faith we become God’s children, and by that same faith we become brothers and sisters to one another.

They and we together now enjoy those spiritual blessings which God through Christ’s redemptive work has prepared for us; they and we together shall some day be the blessed inhabitants of heaven. They and we have much in common, we are one in faith and in hope, and we should also be one in charity.

If any fellow believers are in need of our help or of our services, we should readily assist them. Where we can, we should help people of any class, but we should give preference to those of the household of faith.

May the Holy Spirit of God help us not only in remembering these instructions on walking in the Spirit, but also in putting into practice what we

again have heard today. Under His guidance may we more and more perfectly walk in the Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Gal 2:16

² Galatians 5:6

³ Rom. 8:14

⁴ John 13:34

⁵ Gal 5:26

⁶ 2 Timothy 3:15-17

⁷ 1 Corinthians 9:14

⁸ 2 Thess. 3:10

⁹ Acts 1:8

¹⁰ Mark 16:16