



Reaching Out To Others

Galatians 6:1-3

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (2) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (3) For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

It has been said the worst enemy of someone who is down, are its own kind. In the animal world, hamsters are known to eat their own babies, especially the ones that are hurt and injured. How much more does the church do to the ones that are injured and hurt?

Genesis 37:20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

The apostle Paul tells us that a test of true spirituality is to help those that are down. Paul is giving the meaning in relation to the setting of bones that are broken, or out of joint, which is done with great care and tenderness.

Luke 10:30-35 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. (31) And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and **when he saw him**, he passed by on the other side. (32) And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and **looked on him**, and passed by on the other side. (33) But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, (34) And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (35) And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

We look at this story of reaching the lost that are in the gutter of sin but let us look at it a little deeper. Here is a brother (the man in the ditch) to the priest and Levite (children of God) they most likely were headed home after working in the temple, (Jericho was a city of priests and Levites) they had no time to help they were willing to let him die. What they did was against the law.

Deuteronomy 22:1-4 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother. (2) And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again. (3) In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself. (4) Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.

Not only for a brother, but they were required to do so for an enemy.

Exodus 23:4-5 If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. (5) If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.

Isaiah 58:7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Which Was Neighbor?

A certain woman went down from Washington to Richmond and ran over a spike which punctured her tire and left her

stranded by the side of the road. After raising the hood of her car and tying a scarf to her radio antenna, she locked the door handles and sat in the car, praying for the Lord to send help!

By chance, there came a limousine that way with a bumper sticker that read, "Smile, God Loves You!" When the occupants saw the stranded woman, they passed by in the far lane-without smiling.

And likewise, there came a sports car with a CB radio and a bumper sticker saying, "Honk If You Love Jesus!" The man who was driving passed by in the far lane without honking and without using his CB to tell the Highway Patrol about the woman's dilemma.

But a certain working man, as he traveled to his job, came to the spot where the woman was and, when he saw her raised hood, white scarf, and flat tire, he had compassion on her. He stopped his old beat-up pickup-which had no bumper sticker-and crossed the four-lane highway, and offered to change the tire. The woman opened the door and gave him the key to the trunk. The man took out the spare tire, jacked up the car, removed the flat tire, and replaced it with the spare.

When he had finished, the woman tried to pay him. He refused the money, saying, "If my wife were stranded on the highway with a flat tire, I'd want some Good Samaritan to stop and help her out."

He returned to his bumper-stickerless truck, smiled, honked at her, and went his way.

Which of these three was neighbor unto her who had a flat tire?

We are to help those. Revival is going to bring all kinds to our doors and we must be ready.

This is how the amplified says our scripture reading:

Galatians 6:1-4 BRETHREN, IF any person is overtaken in misconduct or sin of any sort, you who are spiritual [*who are responsive to and controlled by the Spirit*] should set him right and restore and reinstate him, without any sense of superiority and with all gentleness, keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also. (2) Bear (*endure, carry*) one another's burdens and troublesome moral faults, and in this way fulfill and observe perfectly the law of Christ (*the Messiah*) and complete what is lacking [*in your obedience to it*]. (3) For if any person thinks himself to be somebody [*too important to condescend to shoulder another's load*] when he is nobody [*of superiority except in his own estimation*], he deceives and deludes and cheats himself. (4) But let every person carefully scrutinize and examine and test his own conduct and his own work. He can then have the personal satisfaction and joy of doing something commendable [*in itself alone*] without [*resorting to*] boastful comparison with his neighbor.

We are to show mercy and love before judgment. We don't excuse sin or try to push it under the rug but remember..

Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

Love conciliates; removes aggravations; puts the best construction on every thing; and pours water, not oil, upon the flame; it is an imitation of the pardoning love and grace of God.

John 8:3-10 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, (4) They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. (5) Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? (6) This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. (7) So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. (8) And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. (9) And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

Here was the mission of Jesus and it should be our mission.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Evangelism

A secretary on the job is engulfed in problems. Her husband left her; a son is in rebellion; she can barely make ends meet. She cries out for help. We don't hear.

A fellow employee is overwhelmed by the complexity of overcoming his chronic drinking problem. He longs for a friend. We're deaf to his cries.

The owner of the gas station where we've traded for years has just lost his wife. His eyes echo his loneliness. We don't see.

A wife would love to share with us the trauma and trivia of her day-just to have a listening ear. Our ears are closed.

And as the "perfect" ending to such a self-centered day, we hurry to the church building and get our weekly door-knocking assignment as we hasten to engage a cold prospect in an ambiguous process which we have labeled evangelism.

Does that approach make sense? It seems to me it is time we acknowledged the fact that a good translation of the Great Commission has it reading: "As you are going into all the world...."

You see, we are in such a hurry to "go!" that we miss the very ones whom God brings into our path-"as we are going." May God awaken us to the realization that true evangelism is loving the world the way God loves it; allowing our hearts to be broken by the things that break God's heart; acknowledging that there is no dichotomy between "evangelism" and "benevolence"-that true evangelism begins with what the Scripture says.

Matthew 10:42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.