

The Harvester



Preparing Souls

To Serve The Lord



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Properly Using Our Money

By Brian R. Kenyon

As Paul brings the Book of Galatians to a close, he shows that the only way to ensure that Christians properly use their liberty in Christ is to “walk in the Spirit...be led of the Spirit...live in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16, 18, 25, KJV). In the context, Paul then reveals what should and should not characterize those who thus live (“fruit of the Spirit” versus “the works of the flesh,” Gal. 5:19-26); how to deal with those in error (Gal. 6:1); how to deal with the burdens of others and self (Gal. 6:2-5); and the proper use of money (Gal. 6:6-10). We know that elsewhere Paul teaches that it is proper for heads of households to support their families, for “if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (1 Tim. 5:8). In addition to this proper use of money, Paul lists three more for those who live according to the Spirit.

Supporting Gospel Preachers

Paul writes, “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things” (Gal. 6:6). First, note that those who are taught have an obligation to support those who teach them. In the context, those “taught in the word” are members of the churches of Galatia. The word “taught” (from *katecheo*, *κατηχέω*), though not the most common word for teaching, means to inform, tell, or instruct (Rom. 2:18; 1 Cor. 14:19). Although Paul chose not to accept financial support from some congregations (1 Cor. 9:14-18; 1 Thes. 2:9; 2 Thes. 3:8-9), he certainly taught that congregations have an obligation to financially support faithful preachers and teachers of the Gospel (1 Cor. 9:11, 14; 1 Tim. 5:17-18). Supporting the Lord’s servants should not be viewed as “a grim duty, though some congregations treat it as such,” but rather as a “fellowship,” or “partnership” in the Gospel (Boice 503). This “fellowship” and “partnership” is seen in the word translated “Let communicate [share, NKJ]” (from *koinoneo*, *κοινωνέω*), which means to share, take part,

participate, exercise fellowship, or to contribute or give a share (cf. Rom. 12:13; 15:27; Phil. 4:15; 1 Tim. 5:22; Heb. 2:14; 1 Pet. 4:13; 2 Jn. 11). It is a verb form of the word “fellowship.”

Second, note that those who faithfully teach the Gospel have a right to receive financial support. “Him that teacheth” refers to one through whom the Gospel truths were taught. Elsewhere, after showing what common sense and the Old Testament taught concerning the support of laborers, Paul wrote, “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:7-14). Faithful preachers, like everyone else, need to eat and support their families. What about cost of living increases, health insurance, and retirement accounts? While in the strictest sense these may not be necessities (Mt. 6:25-34), how many elderships have shaken their heads when receiving requests from preachers who are buried in medical expenses, thinking, “Why didn’t he have adequate health insurance?” Nowhere in the Bible are preachers required to take vows of poverty. Thankfully, local churches generally have been better at financially supporting their preachers over the last few decades. May we all realize that if congregations have the ability and their preachers are faithfully laboring in the Lord, they should financially support them, “for the laborer is worthy of his hire” (Lk. 10:7). It is proper to use our money to support faithful Gospel preachers!

Promoting Spiritual Life

While on the surface, Galatians 6:7-9 may not appear to be teaching the proper use of money, but since Paul speaks of proper support in the verse before and the verse after (Gal. 6:6, 10), and since Paul uses the “sowing and reaping” imagery elsewhere in connection with the use of money (2 Cor. 9:6-9), we are Biblically correct in making an application of these verses to the proper use of money. Paul starts by show-

ing that God's law of sowing and reaping is certain. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). God cannot be fooled! The word translated "mocked" (from *muktepizo*, *μωκτηρίζω*) means to make a fool of, to turn up the nose at, to ridicule. The idea is that no one can "make God ridiculous by outwitting Him and evading His laws" (Rogers and Rogers 432).

Just as God's physical law of sowing and reaping is unalterable, so also is His spiritual law of sowing and reaping: "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:8). Sowing to the flesh, or as applied in this context, using our money to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, results in spiritual death (cf. Gal. 5:19-21; Job 4:8; Mt. 6:19-20). When we devote ourselves and our money to "the material and fleshly...side of life," we certainly reap "moral rottenness and corruption" (Johnson). Sowing to the Spirit, or as applied in this context, using our money to promote spiritual things, results in eternal life. "Life everlasting" is the antithesis of "corruption," which shows that "corruption" in this context is eternal death, not "sinful nature" (NIV)! When we use our money to support the church and her good works and workers, we prove that our interest is in spiritual things, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:21), and, says Paul, "to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6).

Since God's law of sowing and reaping is so certain, Paul encourages us to keep sowing, or as applied in this context, using our money for spiritual things: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). Sometimes the lack of observed results from our investment in spiritual things can lead to discouragement, but, as Paul says, we must not allow ourselves to become weary, nor must we "faint [lose heart, NKJ; grow weary, NAS]." The harvest will come in God's own time (cf. 1 Cor. 3:6)! "Due season [due time, NAS]" is from a word (*kairos*, *καίρος*) that refers to time as an occasion rather than an extent; it is an appointed time. The other common Greek word for "time" (*chronos*, *χρόνος*) generally refers to time in the "the abstract," whereas the word here (*kairos*) "means 'the right time' for anything," and so the translations "due season" and "opportunity" in 6:10 (see Cole 230-231). It is proper to use our money to promote spiritual life!

Helping The Needy

Although the reaping will come according to God's appointed time, now is the time to take advantage of the opportunities God presently gives. Paul writes, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). "Opportunity" is from the same word (*kairos*) that was translated "due season" in 6:9. Two aspects of opportunity must be known: (1) Is there truly a need (cf. Acts 2:43-44; 4:32-35)?, and (2) Is there an ability for us to meet that need? To the extent that both are present, we have an obligation! "Do [work for that which is, ASV]" is from a word (*ergazomai*, *ἐργάζομαι*) that is usually translated "work," and means to bring about, perform, work (Jn. 6:28; Rom. 2:10; 4:4-5; 1 Cor. 4:12; Eph. 4:28; Heb. 11:33). "Good," in this context, refers to acts of benevolence according to God's will.

"Good" is to be done to all people when opportunity arises, not only to members of the church, as some teach. While it is true that faithful members of the church who are in need should be a priority in helping, none whom we have the ability to help and who are truly in need are to be excluded from our "doing good" (cf. Lk. 10:25-37; Acts 2:43-44; 4:33; 20:35). The word "men" in "all men" was added by the translators, evidenced by its being in italics. The word "all" (from *pas*, *πας*) is without the definite article, which means it refers to each, or every (in plural). Other translations render it "all" (NKJ); "all people" (NAS); and "everyone" (ESV). "Especially" (from *malista*, *μάλιστα*) does not mean "exclusively." It means especially, above all, most of all (Phil. 4:22; 1 Tim. 4:10; 5:8; 2 Tim. 4:13; Tit. 1:10). "The household of faith," obviously, refers to the church, the family of God (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6). Thus, Paul is saying that we should help all people who are truly in need and for whom we have the ability to help. This is not to say that we should be indiscriminate in our benevolent aid, but it

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is to say that our decision to benevolently help others should not be based solely on whether or not those seeking help are members of the church. The “only saints” doctrine of benevolence is wrong (cf. Mt. 15:21-28; Lk. 10:25-37; Jas. 1:27). It is proper to use our money to help those in need!

Conclusion

Do we “walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16)? Are we “led of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:18)? Do we “live in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25)? Perhaps the best indication of whether we do or not is how we are using our money. Difficult economic times have always been a part of the human experience and will continue to be so from time to time. However, since people are still lost in sin (Rom. 3:23), financially supporting preachers is still needed; since following the Spirit’s law still leads to eternal life (cf. Rom. 8:2), financially supporting good works that promote spiritual life is still needed; since there

will always be some among us who need benevolent assistance (Mk. 14:7), supporting the needy is still needed. May we properly use our money to the glory of God, “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9). 🙏

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Road Trip to the FHU Lectureship

For several years, the school has set up a display at the FHU lectureship in Henderson, Tennessee. The main purpose for this is to allow ourselves more exposure throughout the brotherhood. We set up our display and offer our lectureship books, CDs, and class notes for purchase. Since Amber Kenyon has been “manning” the display, we have more than covered our travel expenses. While at the lectureship, we never know who we will run into. Do those to the right look familiar?



Kathy Brian Chuck
In “Old Chapel Hall”



Brian and I recently attended the Freed-Hardeman lectures. The books and CD’s of the Florida School of Preaching lectures sold well. I would like to thank Amber Kenyon for attending to the booth for us. She does a great job.

Her presence makes it possible for Brian and me to attend to other things throughout the week. Also, once again we owe a debt of gratitude to Jim and Karen Davis (Amber’s parents) for letting us stay with them throughout the week.

If you have not yet purchased a book or CD of the 2009 FSOP lectures, they are still available. If you have purchased a CD of the complete FSOP lectures in the past, then you should know that our upgrade offer is a fantastic deal. Class notes written by FSOP instructors are also available. All orders can be placed through the school office (863) 683-4043, or email (fsop@gte.net).

Gene Burgett (burgett@windstream.net)

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*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month’s financial statement.

Good News . . . Bad News

By Brian R. Kenyon

B. C. Carr used to have an expression (that probably was not original with him) when it came to raising funds for the school. He would say, "The good news is that we have plenty of money in the brotherhood to financially support good works of the church. The bad news is that it is still in our brethren's pockets." With the economic condition worsening, people might be more likely to keep their money in their pockets. There is no doubt that all of us who are heads of households must make sure we provide for our families (1 Tim.5:8). However, we must still realize that good works must continue. Consider another set of "good news . . . bad news."

The bad news is that the economy is the way it is and may possibly get worse before it starts getting better. Greed, political correctness, and foolish lack of foresight has put our country's economy in a bad situation. The good news, however, is that because the economy is the way it is more people may start realizing that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). This may be an opportune time for the church to reach souls who are looking for substance in their lives. We know that an obedient relationship with the Lord is the answer, but how do we get people to realize this? The answer necessarily involves preaching and evangelizing. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14).

Since 1969, the Florida School of Preaching has been about the Lord's business of training preachers and preparing souls to better serve the Lord. The Lord has especially blessed us with two things that make this possible: (1) Biblically stable personnel working with the school (board of directors, faculty, and staff); and (2) a Biblically stable support base of concerned individuals and churches of Christ. Do you see the tremendous need for sound and stable preachers during these turbulent times? We need your support. Will you help us to continue training men to preach and preparing souls to better serve the Lord? Our supporters help others to realize, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15).

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