

Galatians 6:6-8 - Bear Your Brothers' Burden by Helping the Elders

Brothers and sisters in the Lord: Christians were freed from keeping of the Jewish ceremonial laws, but **they were not freed from keeping the moral law.**

In keeping the moral law, Apostle Paul reminded the Galatians they had to be grounded in love – love that is not merely talk but action!

Part of that action was helping their brothers with their burdens – physical, mental, and spiritual burdens.

Another part of helping (loving) their weaker brothers was working with elders to do so.
We pick up there today.

Our headings are:

1. Help Elders – Why and How.

2. Help Elders - Warnings and Encouragements

Help Elders – Why and How

6 Let him who is taught the word **share in all good things with him who teaches.**

1. Apostle Paul wanted Galatian Christians to help the elders so they could help their weaker brothers.

One way to do this was to show **liberality and beneficence** to the elders.

While the Judaizers piled on burdens (all those Old Testament regulations) **on the backs of young Christians** who were unable to bear them, Apostle Paul called good, **strong Christians to help carry the burdens of the elders** **so they could help carry the burdens of young Christians.**

2. This command to help elders who helped the congregation was a common command in the Scriptures.

God wanted to draw this seriously to the attention of the congregation. The congregation had to support the elders!

1 Corinthians 9:11 **If we have sown spiritual things for you,** is it a great thing if we **reap your material things?**

I am sure it wasn't comfortable for Apostle Paul to speak about things that seem self-serving, **but it was God's command.**

Romans 15:27 It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the **Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things**, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.

This was a command for the whole church through the ages!

1 Corinthians 9:14 Even so the Lord has commanded that **those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel**.

It would be a shame for those called to serve the church to be forced to go into secular work as they had to do numerous times in history. **You saw this in Amos, Joel, Haggai, and Zechariah's times, to name a few**. This brought curses on the church.

3. Why was it important for the Galatians to be liberal and giving?

a. Elders taught them! That took work. It was not easy to get the right meaning of a text. It was not easy to get the **proper application of that text**. It is not easy to put things in such a way that made it understandable and easy to remember.

Elders made many sacrifices of body, mind, and soul. How many jobs require that your souls be prepared?

Elders had to learn to rule their houses well too...a hard task of itself.

Scholar: *How disgraceful it is to defraud of their temporal support those by whom souls are fed!*

b. Helping their elders was good for mature Christians and the basis of their heavenly and earthly rewards. In keeping God's law there is always reward. This is what he points out in verse 7!

c. The price they would pay would be too high if they didn't support their elders. Luther: Whoever will not give the Lord a penny gets his due when he is forced to give the Devil a dollar.

4. Lessons:

a. Don't withhold what God intends for his kingdom's service. God will hold you responsible if you do.

b. Share with your elders in all good things. The word "share" signifies all kinds of things, so it is more than giving money.

Give encouragement to your elders.

Use your physical labor to help them.

Offer prayers on their behalf.

Give them your attention when they are teaching.

Grow in grace as they toil for you.

c. Do not unduly attack your elders. Consider how the Judaizers had attacked Paul. They declared he was **not an Apostle** but a disciple of the apostles, that he **had no knowledge of Christ**, that he **was without authority**, that his **teaching promoted moral looseness**, and that **he was a man-pleaser**.

Can you imagine how much this could affect an elder or pastor's ministry in the church?

Can you imagine how many pastors have left a congregation or the ministry altogether because of these attacks?

These are men who were called by God!

Help your Elders: Warnings & Encouragements

7 Do not be deceived, **God is not mocked**; for **whatever a man sows, that he will also reap**.

1. Apostle Paul asserted: God is not mocked by you...

This is uncommon language! It is in a strange tense. It is in Gnomonic (neutral, generic, or universal) tense. This means the **statement it is always true**. So you can translate this phrase as: **God is never, never mocked!** God did not put up with mocking.

So the one who did not help to carry the burden of his elders was attempting to mock God. He was viewing the order that God has put in place with contempt and spitting at it!

2. What does it mean "to mock God" in this context?

It literally means to "to have a nose turned up against him," or "to make God look ridiculous," or to "outsmart God."

It seems some only pretended to help the elders or made excuses against helping the elders.

So the meaning is: **Stop being led astray. God wouldn't look at you kindly...if you try to mock him...by ignoring the command to help carry the burdens of the elders.** God loves his church!

3. Apostle Paul declared that when a man sows bad things, he will reap – bad things.

Job 4:8 Even as I have seen, those who plow iniquity and **sow trouble reap the same.**

The drunkard who sows...reaps diseases, a destroyed family, and injuries.

If you **sow to the wind, you will reap the whirlwind.**

Proverbs 22:8 He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, And the rod of his anger will fail.

And whatever evil he has done in the flesh (as the seed) will be revived and judged.

In hell there is unending fire and worms – worms of the conscience, away from the presence of Christ and away from the Tree of Life.

This is a warning, if you don't help your elders: You will reap what you sow.

As the Guyanese would say: **"If you can't hear, you're gonna to feel!"**

So if you mock God by not helping your elders (what you sow), you will be judged (what you reap).

4. On the contrary, Apostle Paul pointed out when a man sows good things, he will reap good things.

Look at the description of the blessings that come on those who sow good things and bear good fruits.

Psalms 126:6 He who continually goes forth weeping, **Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,** Bringing his sheaves with him.

Hosea 10:12 **Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy;** Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

This is getting due payment.

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead **will also give life to**

your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Consider tithing an investment in love – love for God and love for your elders.

Proverbs 11:18 - The wicked man does deceptive work, but he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward.

5. And notice the word “that,” Apostle Paul used at the end of the sentence emphatically.

“That” and nothing else will the one who sowed it receive - absolutely.

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.**

6. Apostle Paul further illustrated his statement: “Don’t sow to the flesh but to the Spirit.”

Some of the things in which Galatians might have invested their time were in things that perished, transitory things, things that gratified the flesh, and lusts.

Esau was a good example of this sin... as he lusted for the fleshly provisions and **sold his birthright.** Later, he would **marry two Canaanite women.**

Look at a fuller list of what “sowing to the flesh” means.

Galatians 5: 19 Now the **works of the flesh** are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Corny but true: It is not what you know...but what you sow.

Those who sowed to the Spirit would receive eternal rewards in heaven!

What are the things of the Spirit to which the Galatians had to invest their time and energy? Obedience to the **command, motion, and dictates of the Spirit.**

Because the Holy Spirit was in them, they had to bear fruits.

Galatians 5: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

8. Lessons:

a. It is cheating God and it is ignoring his elders if you refuse to tithe.

b. And considering the context, if you don't financially support the work of God, you are also cheating your brother of the help he needs – help that comes through your elders.

c. You may think others will not know if you don't help the elders because they haven't seen you, and that may be true for now, but God will know it. And he will definitely reward you accordingly.

d. There are some who think that what goes into another man's hand is lost (like when a minister is paid) but God says "no." If you think this way you are a robber -even a robber of yourself.

e. How much do you love the kingdom of the Lord? One way it will show is in how much you give to the spreading of his kingdom.

Conclusion:

Jesus denied himself the conveniences of heaven and came into the sin-cursed world to die for your sins. The Father blessed him for his work.

You bless him in your service to him. This is the basis on which you are called to deny yourself to help others-particularly those who labor in the Word. **Helping the elders helps you to bear the load of your weaker brother.**

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Bless elders who sacrifice, work very hard, struggle with their personal lives, and yet find the time to study to teach you God's Word in a clear and applicable way.

Support them financially.

Help bear the burden of your elders and pastor...in other ways!

Physically help them.

Pray for them.

Give them your attention when you are in church on Sunday.

Look forward and encourage your elders to visit you so they can see what is going on in your life and offer some help, if necessary.

And do what they say. They are God's ministers.

2. If you pursue your own pleasure and profit and ignore helping your elders, you will be repaid accordingly.

3. If you pursue your own pleasure and profit, your brother remains weak...and worse...the unsaved remains in his sins as he will have no one to teach him.

Finally: If you are not a Christian you are in a dangerous place. You are going to go to hell. But you can change that today if you cry out to God to make you his child. He will do it for free, but Jesus paid for your salvation.