

Spiritual Men to Lead a Spiritual People in Service to the Soul and Body
Biblical Theology of the Diaconate #40
2023.07.02 Sabbath School class

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Our father in heaven. How we thank you and praise you for your goodness to us. Body and soul for your. Creating us with bodies. In which you communicate your goodness to us and reflect your own goodness in us.

And give us an opportunity. To image you and mirror you, and your goodness to one another spiritually and bodily. We ask the lord that you would help us. To have this fellowship that you have given us, To enjoy it to exercise it, to express it. In a way that brings you much glory.

We thank you for your wisdom. Lord, Jesus. And how you administer the church in the covenant under you who are a son over the house. And so, we thank you this morning, particularly for elders and deacons And does it fit? It into where we are right now. Particularly o lord for deacons, we pray.

That you would stir up our hearts towards you. To love one another, in temporal things and earthly things. And that you would give us the men whom you have redeemed, whom your spirit has gracing and gifting For overseeing all of our service to you. And to one another And even to our neighbors.

Our service and Temporal things. So we ask these things in Jesus name. Amen. So, The text that brings us. Into. This part of Galatians where we are in. In the course as a whole believers personal careful, one another and it's spillover outside. The church is actually verse 10. We've seen this in other places.

We saw it in Romans, we saw it. In Peter. Uh, but Uh, here is the primary proof text when when someone says. We're to do good to believers first. Uh this of course, flows out, not just some romans and Peter, but especially of the new commandment as Jesus calls it and John 13.

Uh, but then by the time, Uh, By the time, John the apostle writes first John. Uh it's such a foundational and central commandment to the Christian life. He refers to the commandment that we love one another as Jesus as loved us as the commandment that we have had from the beginning and when he says we he means the Christian church under the administration of Christ.

Uh so loving the lord, your god, with all your heart soul, mind and strength was the first great commandment, loving your neighbor as yourself was the second great commandment. And when Jesus gives us a new commitment and doesn't come in the form of the ten, it comes in the form of the two.

And it really isn't the third great commitment. It's the first time to have Uh, because he's speaking about how we love one another Uh, in light of the fact that we are united to Christ. Remember, the original context in which he gave then you commandment he had just washed their feet.

He was about to go to the cross and he was informing them, that they would not be able to reciprocate to him in physical material ways because he was going to the father. And they could not come and so Log one. Another as I have loved, you is not just a description of intensity and manner but also reciprocation Uh, we love the lord Jesus.

We love him because he first loved us. We love him as our god with all that we are. But we also love him as a man because he is a god man. And we must love him consistently with his nature. However, his humanity is is not physically accessible to us.

And so he has done these amazing things and is about to do this amazing thing for the for the disciples. And he says, love one another. As I have loved you and what an opportunity then Our brothers and their physical neediness present us. Uh Jesus was coming right up to the end of his physical neediness.

Three days later he would be in a glorified body. He would not be needy at all. Uh, the next time they had a meal, he would have sunk their boats with fish, but prepared to fish already on the shore for them to have to have for breakfast. They're just would not be Neediness ever again.

And you can imagine having been one of the one of the 12. Uh, not Judas, of course, we know, because he had no spirit given love for Jesus, but you can imagine having been one of the 12, And realizing what is happening especially is you learn of the resurrection especially as the ascension comes and you think I had three years I had three years to be the one who ran and got him a drink.

Like, David's three, mighty men, ran for David. I had three years to wait on him at table or watch his feet which I could have done, but I never thought to do because only slaves do that. And now he has done that for me. Many of us feel that way about our grown and gone children.

I had all this time. And you children will feel that way about your mom and dad. If you don't already Uh, one day. The lord will take them or the lord will providentially move you and your opportunities. To wait upon and serve and love. Mom and dad materially physically immediately in the home.

Those will be gone. Those are limited time opportunities. That we treasure for the sake of, Of the love that the lord has given us for them. Well, the love of the brethren is a reciprocation. Both in spiritual things. And in material things, we have the opportunity to love one.

Another as Christ has loved us to give the cup of cold water or the morsel, or the visit, or the clothing. Uh, for the sake of there, being connected, to the lord Jesus Christ. Uh, wonderfully, this connects both to Uh, last week's morning sermon, and the fellowship that we have and wanting to do one another, not just physical goods.

They definitely wanted to do. Paul the, the physical good. Um, but wanting to do one another Spiritual good as well. And and we saw the effects of the fellowship. Upon one another and sadly even the Jerusalem elders, And James had a negative spiritual effect. On the apostle Paul but we we want to serve one another material as well.

And Paul, as we're going to see this week and next week, In the morning, sermons lord willing, lord, helping us Uh, remembered that. This is also very physical as well. He was introduced to Jesus with the language. Saul Saul. Why are you persecuting? And it wasn't then was it.

It was me. Very sobering for those of us who have, who have harmed, other believers. And if we have Lived with other believers in our home, or Or in the assembly in the church. We have spiritually and physically. Emotionally socially harmed. Other believers. But we have much opportunity to do one another

good.

And so there's this priority because of union with Christ, not just the image of God. But union with Christ and that's why Galatians 6:10 is so key in our study, therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all especially to those thorough of the household of faith.

And so as our deacons lead us, they're going to lead us, of course and following what Christ has taught by his Spirit in the New Testament? They're going to lead us both in the collection of congregational funds for congregational needs and for the needs of other congregations. That's that's what the collected corporate.

Uh funds. The actual funds are used for the New Testament, but they're also going to lead us as individuals in loving our neighbors in non-trivial. And both spiritually and materially. Loving our neighbors. But that especially to the household of faith. That's going to control, how our deacons lead us in loving our neighbors because we're going to love our neighbors for the sake of the same one that our brother is united to by faith.

Our neighbor might not be but he is still created in his image. And he is still offered his Gospel and so it's that reasoning toward Christ reasoning. Toward Christ is creator, reasoning towards Christ as redeemer that are deacons are going to take from the ministry of the ownership.

This is one of the reasons why it is so important that the deacons have good doctrine, it's not like you're going to have. You can have, you need to have elders with good doctrine, so they can oversee the preaching. They can, they can make sure that we're worshiping God according to Scripture and hearing the word of God faithfully preached.

And that discipleship is happening in our homes and all of those things. Uh, it's not like you have that need but you, you don't really need deacons Uh, to be too theologically sound, because after all they're they're just administered in some churches. They do all of the material service.

And that's, that's where you get into the mess of people wanting to ordain, all sorts of people to the deaconate because they serve, well, someone who serves in the church, is just a Christian, not necessarily a deacon Uh, but in order for the deacons to oversee us and help us they need to be helping us apply this view of Christ, this knowledge of Christ and how that and the implications of that for someone who is our brother And what we do with them.

Uh, materially, but the implications of that for congregational needs which versus six through nine. Uh when it says, let us do good to all especially to the house to those who are of the household of faith. Um, I say it with a little bit of embarrassment because I have remaining fleshliness but I should be completely unbarred to say, he means, especially ministers.

He means, especially preachers. Because it's coming out of verses 7 through 9. All right. Sorry, versus six through nine. Let him who has taught the word, share in all good things with him. Who teaches you're not mean to be deceived. God is not mocked for whatever. A man says that he will also read For he who says to his flesh, will love the flesh.

Read corruption that, he who says to the spirit will love the spirit, read everlasting life and let us not grow. Weary while doing good for induce season, we shall reap. If we do not lose heart, there's a lot of good to do enough that God says we will get weary if we are not committed to him from the heart.

So we need to keep heart so that we don't grow weirdness. So we don't. So he tells us, let's not lose heart. Let's stick to the word that we're taught and one of the implications of that will be that everything that we have. We are going to sew to the spirit.

That doesn't mean only use spiritually because he's just been talking about the use of material things. He's talking about prioritizing spiritual things and how we interact with one another. And what we do with our will Well, one of the things that Uh, that taking the next week dead for us, then is it lets us back all the way up to chapter 5 and verse 16 so that we can see that this is actually coming out of the language of bearing burdens in verse 2, but that comes out of This whole second half of chapter 5 and which he's talking about walking in the spirit.

Uh, in the beginning of the chapter, he says brethren. This is the beginning of chapter 6 brethren. If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual Restore such a one. Now. And you could say, Well, I have the spiritual gift of Of recognizing people who are caught in sin.

And restoring them. I am spiritual. I'm a Christian, I have the Holy Spirit. Thankfully. Uh, the Lord helps us avoid such immature views. Of ourselves, nominating ourselves. To this. To this class of you who are spiritual. By the completion of verse 1, in the context. Of five, 22 and 23.

Uh, so it's if a man has ever taken any trespass, you who are spiritual restore, such a one in spirit of gentleness. Considering yourself, lest you also be tempted? So there are all these temptations involved, not just in being someone who's caught in a sin, but someone who's trying to help someone who's caught in a sin.

And we know one of the great temptations. Someone began to actually Alludes to the passage to me a few minutes ago. One of the great temptations is to forget that any skill that we have. Inspect removal was obtained in log removal. And it's not that we don't help one another.

We want to see in order that we can help with the brother with the spec in his eye. That's what the Lord Jesus said says But the prerequisite for developing that skill, is the humiliate the humiliation before, God and humility, before men and the skill in, recognizing the sources of sin, and how it operates in the heart.

One of the things that makes a Puritan such a mercy of God to us because he really helped them. Understand themselves well, and the operation of the heart and the interaction with God. And you, you learned those things about yourself and about how sin works and about your new nature in Christ or identity and him and how from that identity and union with him helped, by the Spirit you attack, what remains that is?

That is in you the sin that is in you but you are not in it and if that feels like drinking from a fire hose, Uh, you know. Stick with it and especially you know review the last month and a half's work or so of sermons in the midweek meeting.

Uh, but this, you who are spiritual restore, such a one and a spirit of gentleness, he's referring to those who were in their flesh. And so they had been living according to the works of the flesh, which included. Hatred. Contestiousness jealousy. Outbursts of wrath selfish ambition dissension. Heresy. All those things that I just mentioned.

Uh, from Uh, from Galatians 5:20 are temptations. Especially when you're restoring someone who's caught in a sin. There is a gentleness that the Spirit produces that is part of this nine-fold fruit in verses 22 and 23, love joy, peace, long suffering, kindness goodness faithfulness, gentleness self-control. This is one of the reasons why a prerequisite for an elder or a deacon, is that he be blameless and that he be full of the Spirit.

Remember, when we were at six, that was the primary qualification Uh there was the preliminary qualification he had to be a man. He used the mail specific

word but the primary qualification is that he would be full of the holy spirit. And so we need elders who are full of the holy spirit.

Obviously, this is Spiritual care. Uh, but verse 2 covers both, doesn't it spiritual and physical things. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of christ. We are complex our sin is complex. And often there are circumstantial financial even physical aspects. Uh, to our sin. When we minister to one another, it's not like there's this, there's this Cleanly separate.

These cleanly separated categories of ministering to one another spiritually and ministering to one another materially. We do both. In every part of the ministry. And so when it says you who are spiritual, yes it does mean those who are mature. It's not saying only officers, But when you see the, the list of the fruits of the spirit, Uh, versus 22 through 23.

And you see the list of the works of the flesh that are to be avoided. Especially because there's temptation whenever there's whenever there's potential for conflict and You might fall into the sin. Of looking down upon a despising, your brother, oversimplifying his situation. Holding him accountable spiritually and not trying to help him materially.

When there's a significant material earthly component. To what's going on with him. You might even be tempted into falling into the same sin. As as your brothers, all those things. So Uh, so this is especially Uh, Especially elders and deacons here. Verse 1 and 2. And then those who are not elders and or deacons, but are hoping to be spiritual we all are right.

We don't say, well, you know, i don't have to be full of the holy spirit. I'm not aspiring to be a church officer. Uh, which Young men. Uh, he who has fires to be an overseer. Desire is a good thing. Uh, you are already called to be a church officer in your home one day.

When you're a father and a husband. Not a, not an official congregational officer but you're a household officer and your home. Uh, you oversee and you disciple, and you leave and you hold accountable and And the the buck stops with you. And the the bathing of your wife and her sanctification and the rearing of your children.

So that they're not just disciplined. It's the discipline of the lord, they're not just instructed. It's the instruction of the lord. Uh, So you don't get off the hook for that. But i hope there are none of us who say, well, i don't really need to be a full of the holy spirit, christian.

Uh, if you think that way, then you really need to listen to the next several sermons, in the first half of Romans 8, In the midweek meeting. Because that is not how someone who is in christ thinks that does not someone who has the spirit of Christ thinks And the dreadful warning there is, if you don't have the spirit of christ, and if you are not led by him, in putting to death, the deeds of the body.

Uh, that you are not united to christ. There are many who say lord, lord and he says, i never knew you Relationship in jesus is the most important thing. But relationship with jesus is most. Most clearly identified by his knowing us. Not by our using his name. They say, in your name, and your name, and your name, Matthew 7 21.

22 23. In there. Uh, but he says, i never knew you. So, using the name of jesus. Is. Is no substitute for being known by jesus being in dwelled by his spirit. Being united to him, through faith. Being co-adopt adopted with him in his inherent, sonship in eight sonship.

And now, Are adopted sonship in union with them all of these things. And so we're aiming at the list in verses 22 to 23. And god has put into his church officers, who before they become elders. Are deacons in the church, manifest the fruits, they show forth the fruits and verses 22 and 23.

So it says you who are spiritual elders are taking the lead. Deacons are taking the lead, they're overseeing us and helping us love one another and bear one another's burdens. And so dad's. Do you have? Many of you. Actually, i think just about all of the The ones who are dads in here.

Uh, you have A little household of people who get caught in sins all the time. And you have lots of opportunity. For teaching them how to think of one another. As both image bearers and united to price and in both with respect to their soul and with their body and to teach them.

To identify what's coming from their flesh. Versus 19, through 21, Galatians 5 19 to 21 and what's coming from the spirit which is to say it's coming from christ and our union with him, Remember children, you're not just a bigger parents. You are to apply your union with Christ in obedience, with your parents children, obey, your parents in the lord.

That in the look. Yeah, when our kids disobey us isn't the temptation to focus on the front half children obey your parents. Uh, whereas that, which is actually going to produce the obedience, is in the second half in the lord, just one of the places where it really matters to be covenantful and presbyterian.

You know, praise god. There are a lot of Internally inconsistent. Reformed ish, lowercase. Baptists out there. But you call your child a saint from the moment that the lord gives you that child and you call them to repentance and faith and to live out of their union with Christ.

And pretty quickly. God. Being faithful, the spirit is going to convince them that they're only hope of the kind of obedience that mom and dad require Is. To trust in the lord jesus. How am i supposed to live out of union with him? If i don't have a vital union with them, If i'm not hoping in him and hating my sin for his sake, and hoping only in him for my forgiveness and hoping only in him for my life and for my ability, Yeah.

Yeah, don't get me the wrong way. I don't mean to like, say you should give your children a psychological complex. But isn't every one of our sins, a spiritual crisis, Isn't it the flesh expressing itself over against the new man in jesus? And then when the slice expresses itself too much, doesn't that worry us that there might not be a new man in jesus?

Not all believers have assurance. And, And our children start out needing to needing to lay hold of price. Well, A man who is leading his wife leading, his children in that way, even if the lord never Never brings him to the place of becoming an elder in the church or a deacon in the church.

Is he not in training at least to be one of these, those who are spiritual? In galatians 6:1 and perhaps even in training to be The the elder or the deacon, who helps the rest of the congregation be spiritual, helps the congregation act in a spirit of gentleness with one another helps the congregation bear.

One another's. Burdens helps the congregation live in humility for if anyone thinks himself, this is verse 3. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But leave. Let each one examine his own work. And then he will have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another for each one.

Shall bear his own load. We don't have Um, we don't have time to cover all of those things. But then that is what leads right into verse 6. Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him. Who teaches? Um, This is, by the way, i don't have the proof text because i just have The hymnal version here.

I don't remember. If it's one of the proof texts. But the, which is When the confession in catechisms were first submitted to parliament, they were submitted without proof texts. And parliament request of them. And the assembly. Uh, was unwilling at first. Because, The the texts come and the context of the whole scripture.

And yet they they did, go ahead, that's why Often. When you read a proof text on the confession and the catechism you scratch your head. And you say i don't see how that proves that well that doesn't mean that you were smarter or more spiritual or new better hermeneutics or exegesis than the Westminster divides.

Uh, it means that they were probably wise and saying, Um, but if we put proof texts, people will think that all you need is that text. But listen to Uh, the first two paragraphs of chapter 26 and here, how this ministry to one another in material and spiritual things is both aspects are required both flow out of our union with Christ and our fellowship.

With one another. Uh, let's mr. Professor 26 one, and two. All saints that are united to jesus christ their head by his spirit. And by faith have fellowship with him in his graces. Sufferings death, resurrection and glory and being united to one another in love. They have communion, that is a fellowship of sharing it, a sharing in, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces.

And are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private public workshop by yourself or sitting on a computer on a live stream. But we both need the means of grace and public worship. Most of all. Our obligence of the performance of such duties, public and private as due conduced to their mutual good.

Both in the inward and outward man. Saints by profession are bounds to maintain and holy fellowship, and communion in the worship of god, and in performing, such other spiritual services, as tend to their mutual edification. See this is a this is an expansion of the inward and outer man from the first from from the first part of the chapter.

As also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities. On the one hand and necessities, those who are helped on the other hand, which communion as god offereth opportunity. As god offereth opportunity. Okay, this is not your responsible for everyone else's every other believer's problem in the world.

Um, Which communion has got offers opportunity is to be extended unto, all those who in every place. Call upon the name of the lord jesus. So ministering to one another out of respect for christ union with christ, the work of his spirit in us addressing one. Another as complex people material, and spiritual with corresponding needs that go together.

I know that that's a lot and we covered it quickly. But thank you for your patience and attention. Let's ask God to bless us to us. Our father in heaven, we have just said many things. About what we need your spirit to do and how it comes out of union with christ.

And so we pray that you would give us to know the fellowship of your holy spirit. Uh, so that By his ministry to us. And in us, Uh we would know the grace of our lord jesus christ. Even o god as we know your love how we thank you.

That this even is the benediction, the blessing that you pronounce upon us in the lord jesus. We pray lord for your ongoing work of your spirit that he would bring to mind this. Second half of Galatians 5. First half of Galatians 6 and other passages to which we alluded that he would make our hearts fertile soil.

That that which you have said would take deep root in us and would bear fruit in our minds and our lives and our households and our congregation. Lord. This is how you have said, in your word christ is glorified. Among his people, we wish to see it in our lives.

So bring it to pass. We ask by your grace in your love, which we know most of all in christ jesus and his name, we ask it. Amen.