

Three Targets To Hit
Hebrews 13:1-3

Introduction:

V.1

“The world,” said Alexander Maclaren, “takes its notion of God most of all from those who say they belong to God’s family. They read us a great deal more than they read the Bible. They see us; they only hear about Jesus Christ.”

So, Our Lord commanded of His followers, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

Other references: Rom. 12:10 & Romans 12:9-13; Thess. 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Pet. 1:7;
1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8; 1 John 3:10; 4:7, 20, 21; 1 John 4:7-11 & 20-21.

[Gal 6:7-10 NASB95] 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

What does sowing to the flesh mean? What does sowing to the Spirit mean?

James M. Boice comment:

...Paul mentions time (karios, translated time in v. 9 and opportunity in v. 10). Karios denotes 'the right time' or 'the proper time' for anything; consequently a time that occurs **only once before it is lost forever**.

No one can hope to reap the harvest before the time appointed for it by God (v.9). But, if he does not seize the time appointed to him for sowing, he will reap no harvest at all (v.10).

How does the comment by Boice challenge us?

Something to think on.

Sympathy is closely related to sustained love.

It is easier to help others when we ourselves have needed help.

It is easier to appreciate hunger when we have been hungry, loneliness when we have been lonely, and persecution when we have been persecuted.

It is not that a Christian must experience starvation or extreme loneliness or imprisonment in order to be sympathetic to those who are experiencing these things.

*The point is that we should do our best to identify with those in need, to try to put ourselves in their places. We know that if we were starving, we would want someone to feed us, and that if we were imprisoned, we would want to be visited. We should do for them what we would want done for us were we **in prison with them**. It is the principle of Jesus' golden rule: "Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 7:12).¹*

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1983). [Hebrews](#) (p. 427). Moody Press.

We can show sympathy in at least three important ways.

For one thing, we can simply “be there” when others are in trouble. Sometimes the mere presence of a friend is the best encouragement and strength.

Another way to show sympathy is by giving direct help. Paul thanked the Philippians for sharing with him in his affliction by giving him money to carry on his ministry in other places (Phil. 4:14–16). By supporting him financially, they also encouraged him spiritually.

A third way to show sympathy is through prayer. Again Paul’s ministry gives us an example. His closing words to the Colossians, “Remember my imprisonment” (Col. 4:18), were an appeal for prayer. They could not visit him, and money would have been no help at that time. But by remembering him in prayer they could support him powerfully.

Some people say they are not interested in Christianity because of the hypocritical behavior of believers.

Talk about the validity of this claim in your care group or around your kitchen table this week.

What does it mean to be entertaining strangers?

Of these three imperatives, which do you think our church needs to work on corporately?

Of these three imperatives which of these do you think you need to work on personally?

Some of the old Roman walls are compacted with such excellent cement that it would be almost impossible to separate one stone from another. In fact, the whole mass has become consolidated like a solid rock, so embedded in cement that you cannot distinguish one stone from another.

Happy is the church that is built up: where each cares not only for his own prosperity, but for the prosperity of all; where if there is any joy in one member, all the members rejoice, and if there is sorrow in any one part of the body, all the rest of the body is in sorrow too.

Spurgeon, Hebrews Commentary – pg. 445