

# Coach House Church

# BEACONS

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## GETTING IN STEP

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17TH FEBRUARY 2021

Have you ever been with someone in absolute quiet and started to breathe in the same way, the same depth and length of breaths? Or have you ever been walking with someone and noticed that you are taking steps at the same time in the same pace? This happens with me and Jamie quite often. Even though we are different heights we somehow end up walking in harmony. It's a great feeling to be in unison with someone else.

This relates to a passage in the bible from Galatians 5:13-26 "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."

So we are called to walk in step with the spirit and because of that walk in step with each other. Let's look at how this passage says we can do this.

Galatians was written by Paul to a church somewhere in Galatia. We are not entirely sure where that church was. However, we do know why Paul wrote. He wrote to them because some of the Jewish converts to Christianity were trying to convince the gentile converts that they needed to follow the entirety of the Jewish law, including circumcision. The whole letter is trying to explain how we are freed from the law, but we should therefore choose to live in the way God wants us to by his Spirit.

This passage goes the way of many passages in the new testament. We are free, because God has set us free, but let's use that freedom properly and not enslave ourselves back to sin. We will either be a slave to sin or a slave to God, so let's choose to be a slave to God. If we choose to do that then we can be in step with the spirit. Keeping in step is an affirmative action we need to take each and every day. What will it look like if we are in step with the spirit? Well we won't be living as a slave to sin and we will be living out the fruit of the spirit, love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Let's look at the key points from this passage as to how we keep in step with the spirit. Let's look at the fact this won't be easy and that it will be uncomfortable, the fact we need to keep praying and how we have to stay in harmony with each other.

Firstly, this will not be comfortable or easy. Sometimes we think that if we did the right things all the time that we would be completely happy all the time. But we are at war. We have turned away from what would be natural for us to do. Our nature wants to sin continuously. And we have been set free from this but we are in a process, we are in a battle. We need to constantly be fighting what we would naturally want to do and do instead what we have been freed to do in Christ. We won't have to worry about our conscience because that is the part of us that is in step with God, but we will have to battle with our human nature.

Secondly, although it isn't directly in this passage, if we are to keep in step with the spirit we need to pray. If you are walking in step with someone else, it wouldn't last long if you couldn't see, hear or feel the person next to you. So we need to stay in communication with God to stay in step with Him. We need to pray and in our times of prayer allow Him to speak to us. That might be through His word the bible, or a personal word to you while you are praying. We need God's guidance to know how to live our lives. We need to know where He wants our next step to be and what He wants us to seek and pray for. So that might mean that in our prayer times we leave more space to allow God to speak to us, rather than drowning it out with our words or not allowing enough time. I have to say that I am often guilty of not allowing enough time for God. I say what I need to say and then get on with all the other things that I need to do for the day. We need to allow Him to tell us where His heart is.

Finally, walking in step with the spirit means walking in step with one another. The final line of this passage says "Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other." We need to be at peace with one another. As we get to know one another we will know where each other's weak points are. For example, if you want to make me really angry, all you have to do is constantly whistle, especially if I am trying to focus on something else. The sound of whistling just grates me. So we are to try to not provoke each other to sin, especially out of envy. It can be so easy for us to become jealous of another person in the church. We might envy others' prayer life or connection to God or the position that God has put someone in. Maybe their gifts or the fact that they get to serve in a particular area. We can feel that we want to have or be what someone else has or is. But, if we let feelings like this fester then we might start thinking of ways to provoke them to sin and this is what we need to avoid. It can be hard but we need to accept where God has put us right now and trust in His timing. Let's thank Him for what we do have and where He has put us and press in for more of Him.

So let's get in step with the spirit. To do this we need to pray and remember that it won't be easy but if we accept what God has given us and thank Him for where we are and if we try to live out the gifts of the spirit, which leads to living harmoniously with those around us, then we will be available to His call and a great example to the world.



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