

## Helping My Brother

We need one another in Christ. We should not be islands unto ourselves as Christians, especially those of us who have agreed to work together in a local church. We should not travel through life alone for we are members of the greatest family in the world, that is, the family of God (Ephesians 3:14, 15). As a family we should have affection and concern for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25). The word “care” found in the passage cited above, is the same word Jesus used in Matthew 6:25. In that passage it is translated “take no thought” by the K.J.V., and “be not anxious” by the N.A.S.V. The idea in Matthew 6 is not to be concerned with, or worried about the necessities of life because God will take care of us. However, what Jesus said not to do in reference to the needs of life, Paul said we ought to do in regard to our brethren in Christ. If we worry too much about the necessities of life, it shows a lack of faith. If we worry about our brother or sister in Christ, it shows we care. It is this kind of care and concern that should lead us to want to always help our brethren. What are some ways that we can help each other in Christ?

**1. We can encourage our brethren.** We must remember that we are Christians, not only for our own sake but also for the sake of others. It is easy to drift into a kind of selfish Christianity in which all we think about is what is best for ourselves. But a selfish Christianity is a contradiction in terms. The Hebrew writer said, “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works...exhorting one another: and so much more, as ye see the day approach-ing” (Hebrews 10:24). One of the highest duties we have is to encourage each other in Christ. It is easy to laugh at a brother’s idea, or to pour water upon his enthusiasm. When a brother tries to do work in the kingdom, it is easy to say “it won’t work” or “it is a waste of time.” It is easy to discourage. The world is full of those who discourage, but as Christians we help our brethren most when we encourage them, not discourage. Why not decide to be an encouragement in the Lord’s church? A word of praise here, a letter of thanks or a complementary note there, can go a long way in helping a brother remain firm in the faith and steadfast in the Lord.

**2. Be a good example (Romans 12:10).** In Romans 12:10 the N.A.S. says, “give preference to one another in honor.” Usually we take that statement to mean that we should prefer the company of Christians over non-Christians, or that Paul is simply saying that we ought to put other Christians first. However, that is not the point in this verse. The word translated “prefer” or “preference” in the Greek literally means “going before to lead the way for others.” What Paul is saying, then, is that we should all strive to be frontrunners in showing honor to each other, and what Paul says about showing honor is really true in every realm of Christianity. We should all want to be frontrunners, not for our own sakes, nor to gain the praise of men, but so that we can be an example to others. This is how you can help your brethren in Christ. We should all strive to be frontrunners in zeal, personal work, love, etc. Paul was an example of these kind of things to us. “...Shine out among them like beacon lights, holding out to them the Word of Life” (Phil 2:15-16) Volume 3 March 20, 2016 Number. 5 Helping My Brother Let’s determine to be an example for others.

**3. We should be willing to rebuke and discipline.** True love will act in the best interest of a brother, even if it means rebuking him. To know that a brother is in sin and just leave him there is to do him a great disservice. To reveal his error, however, is to help him in the highest way. James 5:19-20 (ESV) 19 My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, 20 let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. Saving those who have gone astray should be a priority to those who are faithful to God (Galatians 6:1). It is not always a pleasant experience to rebuke or reprove a brother, but love demands and God commands it. 2 Timothy 4:2 (ESV) 2 Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. This would

include preaching to Christians, as well as to those who are not. Let us never allow fear or discomfort stop us when a brother in sin needs help.

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