

Life Under The Sun - Ecclesiastes

Chapter 4 Lesson 3



“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is _____ when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a _____ is not quickly _____.”

alone threefold cord broken

Ecclesiastes 4:7-12

We see God’s wisdom in the establishment of His church for you and me!

There is a reason Christians are compared to sheep instead of lions or bears! A lion can function by itself. The bear can survive alone. A sheep cannot function or survive alone. A sheep is totally dependent upon the shepherd and the flock!

“Therefore _____ to yourselves and _____, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to _____ of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

Acts 20:28

take heed to all the flock shepherd the church



Breaking into the Church



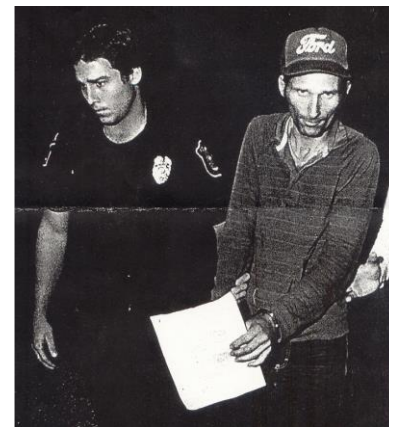
One of the hardest things for an addict in recovery to do, is Breaking into The Church!

Of course, I am talking about breaking into (becoming involved in) the work of the church!

Recovering addicts, like you and me, who do not become involved in the ministries and fellowship of their home congregation, relapse sooner rather than later.

Prison ruined my life and saved my life! Being locked up caused me to lose things and gain things!

Most people exit prison in worse shape than when they entered. However, I came out of prison a much better man than as when I entered. Why? Because I did not keep to myself, but I reached out to others!



I found my place in the church when I was still in prison. I helped start an NA group. I studied the Bible with others.

Before inmates were released, I would ask them for left-over shampoo, sewing thread and needles, shoe laces, socks, hats, jackets, etc. Then, I gave these items away, at no charge.

This friendship evangelism, led to several Bible studies!



"Where's the piccolo?"

A conductor was rehearsing his great orchestra. The organ was rolling, giving beautiful melody. The drums were thundering. The trumpets were blaring out. The violins were singing beautifully.

Suddenly something seemed wrong. Someone in the orchestra had thought, with all this going on, I can rest a while. This is a rehearsal anyway.

The conductor threw up his arms and said, "Where's the piccolo?"

The piccolo player said, "I'm obscure. I don't amount to much. With all of this going on, I don't have to keep playing."

But the one with the trained ear said, "Every one of us is necessary."

When you and I feel obscure, we must remember God has something significant for our lives, and we need to respond. *Gordon Johnson*

Some think they are not good enough!

"For in fact the body is not one member but _____. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now _____, each one of them, in the body just _____." 1 Corinthians 12:14-18

many God has set the members as He pleased

Some think others are not good enough!

"And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet _____. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But _____, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same _____." 1 Corinthians 12:19-25

one body God composed the body care for one another



There is a reason why geese fly in a "V" formation. As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow.

By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone. When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it. When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position. The geese flying in back of the formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock. (selected)

And if one member _____, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members _____ with it." 1 Corinthians 12:26

Suffers rejoice

"Brethren, if a man is _____ in any trespass, you who are spiritual _____ such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be _____ one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:1,2

overtaken restore Bear

"Let each of you _____ not only for his own interests, but also for the interests _____"
Philippians 2:4

look out of others.

"Finally, all of you be of one mind, love as brothers, be _____, be courteous." for one another; 1 Peter 3:8

having compassion tenderhearted

The Danger of Standing Alone



A few winters ago, heavy snows hit North Carolina. Following a wet, six-inch snowfall, it was interesting to see the effect along Interstate 40. Next to the highway stood several large groves of tall, young pine trees.

The branches were bowed down with the heavy snow--so low that branches from one tree were often leaning against the trunk or branches of another. Where trees stood alone, however, the effect of the heavy snow was different. The branches had become heavier and heavier, and since there were no other trees to lean against, the branches snapped. They lay on the ground, dark and alone in the cold snow. When the storms of life hit, we need to be standing close to other Christians. The closer we stand, the more we will be able to hold up.

“, _____ Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, For *he has* no one to help him up . . . Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a _____ . Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one threefold cord is not quickly broken

"Bear one another's _____, and so fulfill the law of _____." Galatians 6:2

burdens Christ

"Therefore _____" I Thessalonians 4:18

comfort one another

"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having _____; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous." I Peter 3:8

compassion for one another



In 1967, we were at war with Vietnam. And there I was, at the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was brutal.

I can still hear the raspy voice of the sergeant: "We are here to save your lives. We're going to see to it that you overcome all your natural fears. We're going to show you just how much incredible stress the human mind and body can endure. And when we're finished with you, you will be the U.S. Army's best!" Then, before he dismissed the formation, he announced our first assignment. We'd steeled ourselves for something really tough--like running 10 miles in full battle gear or rappelling down a sheer cliff.

Instead, he told us to--find a buddy.

"Find yourself a Ranger buddy," he growled. "You will stick together. You will never leave each other. You will encourage each other, and, as necessary, you will carry each other." It was the army's way of saying, "Difficult assignments require a friend. Together is better."

Who's your "Ranger buddy"?

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others _____
 _____ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others."
 Philippians 2:3,4

better than himself.

"And let us _____ in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but _____, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24

*consider one another
 exhorting one another*

"...there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same _____

I Corinthians 12:25

care for one another

"With all lowliness and gentleness, _____

with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love."
 Ephesians 4:2
with long-suffering,

BEFORE YOU CAN DRY ANOTHER'S TEARS

Let me NOT live a life that's free
From the things that draw me close to Thee
For how can I ever hope to heal
The wounds of others I do not feel
If my eyes are dry and I never weep
How do I know when the hurt is deep
If my heart is cold and it never bleeds
How can I tell what my brother needs
For without crosses to carry and "thorns" to bear
We dance through a life that is frothy & fair
And chasing the rainbow, we have no desire
For roads that are rough & realms that are higher
So spare me no heartache or sorrow, dear Lord,
For the heart that is hurt reaps the richest reward
And God enters the heart that is broken with sorrow
And He opens the door to a brighter tomorrow!
For only through tears can we recognize
the suffering that lies in another's eyes

Helen Steiner Rice (adapted)

“Yea, though I walk
through the valley of
the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; For
You are with me;
Your rod and Your
staff, _____

Psalm 23:4

they comfort me.”

“Let nothing be done through
_____ or
conceit, but in lowliness of mind
let each esteem others better than
himself. Let each of you look
out not only for his own interests,
but also for the interests of
others.” Philippians 2:3,4

selfish ambition

“Blessed be the God
and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, the Father
of mercies and God of
all comfort, who
comforts us in all our
tribulation, _____

_____ who are in any
trouble, with the
comfort with which we
ourselves are
comforted by God.”
2 Corinthians 1:3,4

that we may be able
to comfort those

