



May I Help You?

I guess most children go through a stage where they want to be “helpers”. Unfortunately, they usually pass through this era of time and become more “self-centered”. But in the beginning, they strive to please and choose to stand by your side to assist you.

Our children were great “dusters”. We chose to encourage them by not criticizing their work, accepting any effort as “exceeding, abundantly above”. I suppose you can guess what happened. They grew to detest dusting furniture. We kept trying, however, shifting gears to other life skills. I’m not sure they learned a lot. I’m not sure they even enjoyed themselves until we moved on to teach cooking. Since cooking proceeds eating, it seemed to catch on.

Suzanne, our daughter, and I used to work together to prepare dinner. She was (and is) a great cook. I was in charge of “clean-up”, but she fixed the meal. We were a good team. She selected recipes, cut, chopped, stirred, and baked. I always loaded the dishwasher. Each of us had our responsibilities.

It is similar in the body of Christ, the church. In Ephesians 4:16 we read the whole body is “fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies.” I love that verse. It includes “everyone”. It declares that every joint supplies

“something”. This great verse continues by stating that every part works effectually. And here is the purpose — every part is joined together and works efficiently to increase and build up the body. Here, the visual image is much like the construction of a jigsaw puzzle. The pieces of the puzzle are joined together to form one picture. Each piece is required for the picture to be whole and complete.

One of the great parts of Christ’s body, the church, is listed in the writings of the Apostle

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Paul. He simply states this responsibility as “helps”. No one who has ever labored as an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor, or a teacher would underestimate the value of a good helper. It is impossible to fulfill your role in one of these fivefold offices without someone by your side to help you.

The scripture discusses many helpers. Aaron, Joshua, and the seventy elders served by the side of Moses. Aaron was God’s spokesman to the people. Moses received God’s instructions, speaking to Aaron, and Aaron spoke to the people. His role as a





helper is defined when God said, “Aaron will speak to the people for you. You will tell him what God says, and he will speak for you.”¹ Joshua too was Moses’s helper. His faithful service as “the servant of Moses” is noted in the scriptures.² Joshua “did as Moses had said to him.”³ The seventy elders also assisted Moses, helping him judge the people. Their assistance preserved Moses’s strength and the strength of the people.⁴

One of my favorite helpers is Elisha. As Joshua served Moses for forty years, Elisha served Elijah for at least twelve years. He ministered unto Elijah, “pouring water on his hands.”⁵ This was definitely the job of a servant. When we were in Africa, we had this same experience at a restaurant. Before and after our meal, they poured hot water over our hands to clean them.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul listed many helpers. In his closing remarks to the church at Rome we read “Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers;” “Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us;” and “Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ.”⁶ In other epistles, he notes the service of Tychicus, whom he sent to Ephesus and Colossae.⁷ His ministry as an apostle was definitely enhanced by their service.

There is no greater passage of scripture to explain the primary purposes of a helper than Acts 6:3-4. Here, seven men were selected to assist the apostles. They were to serve tables so the apostles could spend more time in prayer and the Word. These verses remind me of Moses’s father-in-law, Jethro. At his suggestion, the elders were appointed to help Moses judge the people because the job was “too heavy” for Moses to do alone.⁸ Jethro stirs our hearts with his words to Moses, “Be thou for the people to God-ward.” It was more important for Moses to receive directions from God than it was to judge the people.

What a privilege it is to provide assistance to men and women in places of authority so they can stand before God. From the presence of God they come to us with timely words of instruction, words of deliverance fitted to our need, encouraging words that enable us to stand. This is worth everything to us. We cherish every moment of service to them as they seek to accomplish the will of God; “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”⁹ It is not a sacrifice or an inconvenience to help them. It is the church “fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies.”¹⁰ It is the church “laboring together with God.”¹¹ It is the church triumphant.

A Faithful Helper

1. Follows Instructions

Exodus 17:10 – So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

2. Meets the Need

Proverbs 25:13 – As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

3. Serves with Power

Acts 6:8 – And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

Matthew 10:1 – And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

4. Prays with Consistency

2 Corinthians 1:11 – Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

5. Abounds in Blessings

Proverbs 28:20 – A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

6. Grows in Service

1 Timothy 1:12 – And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

Matthew 25:23 – His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

¹ Exodus 4:16, NCV

² Numbers 11:28

³ Exodus 17:10

⁴ Numbers 11:16-17

⁵ 2 Kings 3:11

⁶ Romans 16:3,6,9

⁷ Ephesians 6:22

⁸ Exodus 18:18-19

⁹ Ephesians 4:12

¹⁰ Ephesians 4:16

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 3:9