

Can you help?

The Lord Jesus came to earth with an important message that everyone needed to hear. "Jesus travelled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God." Was He alone in this communication task? No! We read that He had helpers: "The Twelve were with him and also some women." We know that then Lord Jesus miraculously multiplied fish and bread, but this was not His normal way to meet the physical needs of His team. Among them were some very grateful individuals "who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases... These women were helping to support them out of their own means" (Luke 8:1-3).

Christian leadership is a gift from God (Rom. 12:8). Leaders can share a vision, propose a good action plan or design the structure for a useful Christian ministry. But without helpers, they do not get very far! The apostle Paul was a man of great energy, contagious enthusiasm and was gifted with a large vision. He also needed helpers! Some are mentioned by name, like Timothy and Erastus (Acts 19:22), Phoebe, Priscilla and Aquila (Rom. 16:1-3). Tertius helped Paul with his secretarial skills, Gaius helped Paul with his house and resources (Rom. 16:22-23). The church at Corinth helped Paul by praying for him (2 Cor. 1:11). The mother of Rufus must have been quite a special woman. Paul says that she helped him by being "a mother to me" (Rom 16:13). Local churches and Christian ministries need more of these warm hearted, caring "mothers." In the various lists of gifts, we also find "those able to help others" and "those with gifts of administration" (1 Cor. 12:28). Can you help? Do you help? Would you like to help?

Sometimes we are called to work alone. But usually the Lord works through a group of people, each person with his or her own personality, experience, gifts and skills. We Christians serve the Lord as members of a body, a body where Christ is "the Head." This ensures that every person, every function and every task has dignity and significance. Christ's objectives are reached "as each part does its work" (Eph. 4:15-16). What is your task? Do you do it? Do you do it joyfully?

We can all help in different ways. By praying (Rom. 15:30), by giving (2 Cor. 9:2), by encouraging (2 Cor. 7:13) and by joining a team and "doing" (Rom 16:12). Sometimes no one notices what we do. As the years go by, we forget much of what we have done. But our "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end" (Heb. 6:10-11). Enjoy helping! Don't give up! It's worth it!

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