

THE MINISTRY OF CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER - Part 1.

[Kaitaia Abundant Life Centre - 22/3/92 - EKB]

1. God's Nature is love, and a **main part of love is caring** for those who are hurting. Read *1Jn 4:7-11* with "caring" for "love", *2Cor 1:3-7*
"comfort" = caring. People are hurting more than appears and need the caring ministry.
2. Jesus' word on caring is in *Lk 10:25-37*. The Good Samaritan's caring was in seven steps:
 - a. **Forgiveness** and mercy towards the needy Jewish man lying half-dead on the road. The Jews hated the Samaritans and despised them.
 - b. **Acceptance** of the wounded man as a person worthy of respect, honour, as one capable of receiving God's love and salvation, *Jn 8:11*
 - c. **Compassion** - an inward motivation of loving concern, *Mat 9:35,36*.
 - d. **Kindness** and tenderness, *Eph 4:32*.
 - e. **Necessary practical aid** requiring labour and effort, to meet his basic needs of life, *Mat 25:35,40*.
 - f. **Sacrifice** of plans, time, schedule, and money.
 - g. **Faithfulness** in seeing the caring ministry through to the end.
3. **CARING** is based on personal choice to be a **servant of others**, following the example of Jesus. *2Cor 4:5, 2Cor 5:14, Mat 20:28, Lk 22:27, Jn 13:1-14, Ac 10:38, Phil 2:5-7*.
4. All our gifts, ministries, and authorities are given to us so that we can **care for, and serve others**, *1Cor 9:19, 1Pet 4:10, Mat 24:45-47, 2Cor 4:5*.
5. Pastoral-care is a ministry of service that we all have towards one another. *1Cor 12:25, Gal 6:10, 1Thes 5:11, Heb 3:13(NIV), Pro 21:13*.
6. **God is the CARE-GIVER of the universe**, *Ps 55:22, Ps 50:15, 1Pet 5:7, Mat 11:28*.
7. Before attending a meeting ask God to lead you to someone in need that you can encourage, uplift and comfort. Expect and be alert to opportunities before and after the service. Start a conversation, listen to their concerns, use questions to open doors of sharing. Avoid "door closers" like:
 - "What you need is more faith!"
 - "Well praise the Lord anyway!"
 - "You shouldn't feel like that!"
 - "What's wrong with you to let that get you down!"
 - "We all have days like that!"
 - "Is that all that's wrong!"Say something like:
 - "You are having a hard time of it! I'm glad that you were able to share it. Let's join hands, believe God and pray that He will do a mighty work here!"Share any encouraging word God gives you, as the Holy Spirit directs, *Pro 25:11, Is 50:4*.
8. **Show you care** by:
listening carefully, facing the person and making eye contact, show genuine concern,

reflect back their feelings to show you care and understand, Non-verbal communication or “body language” counts for 55% of the impact you make. Tone of voice is 38%. The words you speak are 7% of the impact you make in the natural.

9. “When someone takes time to understand, listen and know how I feel, then I know they care and will work for my good,” *Pro 15:23*.
10. Caring is based on “**acceptance**” of another person as they are, no matter what situation they are in. Acceptance respects and honours them as potentially able to be made whole by God’s mercy and power. It is the opposite of rejection, judgment and condemnation. However **it is not approval of sin** and evil behaviour, *Lk 5:27-32, Mat 9:9-13*. Jesus is the friend of sinners but not of sin.

THE MINISTRY OF CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER - Part 2.

[Kaitaia Abundant Life Centre - 29/3/92 – EKB]

1. In the parable of “the sheep and the goats”, *Mat 25:31-46*, the separation is based upon **caring for the needy**, *v35,36*. It might seem to some that care-giving is a way of earning salvation, but God’s Word is very clear that salvation can not be earned by good works, but can only be received by repentance and faith, *Eph 2:8,9, Tit 3:5, Gal 2:16, Ac 2:38*.
2. However the Bible is also very clear that **the proof of a genuine living relationship with God** is the outflow of **loving-care for others in need**. *Jam 2:14-17, 1Jn 4:7,8, Jn 13:34,35, 1Jn 3:17,18, Gal 5:13,14, Rom 13:8, Gal 6:10*.
3. Jesus’ life and ministry demonstrated loving-care for those in need, *Ac 10:38, Lk 4:18, Is 61:1-3*.
4. The scary thing is that when we meet a person in need we **are looking at Jesus**, *Mat 25:35,36,37-40*.
5. God is love and **He identifies with those in need**, the poor, *Ps 146:7-9, Pro 19:17, Pro 21:13, Pro 17:5*.
6. In *Mat 25:40*, Jesus said, “inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these **My brethren** you did it unto Me.” Who are Jesus’ “brethren?”
 - a. Some say it refers to the Jewish nation, Israel.
 - b. Others teach that it means every human being in need.
 - c. But for myself I am inclined to believe it refers especially to needy believers in Christ, and then, after that needy non-believers.
 See the use of the word “brethren” in *Mat 28:10,16, Lk 8:21, Jn 20:17,18, Gal 6:10*.
7. In this parable of *Mat 25*, the “**sheep**” **are the care-givers** and the “goats” see the need and say:
 - “but I can’t afford it!”
 - “but I haven’t got time!”
 - “but he did not help me when I was in need!”
 - “but he will not be thankful!”
 - “but he doesn’t deserve it!”

8. *Mat 25:35,36*
- a. **Food and Drink.** Many churches we visit make Sunday a food and produce collection day. Someone has the responsibility of co-ordinating the food provided, the people in need, and effective distribution. Recently a church Young People's Group organised a "vege collection" during the week and on Saturday visited the homes in the neighbourhood with "vege" parcels. Be alert to those in need among your neighbours. Do not give money to people in need. Find the nature of their need and supply in kind.
 - b. **Hospitality.** *Rom 12:13* says "distribute to the needs of the saints and give hospitality." One of the needy people we took into our home was a girl of 15. We cared for her for three months before we released her to stay with another Christian family. It was not an easy time at all but today she is in full-time ministry. Do not take people into your home if you are unsure or have a negative witness in the Spirit. Do not be afraid to say "No!" Only take people into your home when you can guarantee they will not bring evil influences into your home that you cannot control.
 - c. **Clothing.** Quite a few churches run a used clothing stall, where good quality, well laundered clothes are available.
 - d. **Visitation to the sick and imprisoned,** and also to the elderly, bereaved, lonely and discouraged. Set aside time to visit on a regular basis. Don't waste time. Ask about spiritual progress. Pray together, share the Word, and encourage. Before you visit, seek God in prayer for revelation, wisdom, and great boldness in God. Step out and go!
9. **Stay in control** in the care-giving ministry. **Don't be used.** Keep in faith and in authority in Christ. **You are the Lord's servant,** not man's. Do not be manipulated. Keep your confident identity in Christ. Be led by the Holy Spirit, and act in faith.
10. **Caring ministry can get out of order.** Do not neglect your primary God given responsibilities of your own home, work, family, children, parents, and your own husband/wife relationship, *1Tim 5:8*. Maintain personal relationship with God each day. Gather the family around the Word of God day by day. Pray together and praise God in song. Take time to be involved with children in their hobbies, sports and studies.
11. Remember Jesus took five loaves and two fish to feed 5000 men as well as women and children - maybe a crowd of 15,000. **Our resources often seem minute. The need often seems massive.** Jesus says, "Come to Me, and give Me what you have, I will bless it and multiply it, and give it back to you to distribute." There will be heaps over, *Mat 14:13-21*.