

In Defense of the Weaker

Written by Jedidiah (Jed) N. Snyder



Jedidiah (Jed) N. Snyder

There are numerous reasons for the stronger to care for the weaker. Foundational to them all is the issue of the kind of person the caregiver is now and desires to become. This columnist maintains that the voluntary care of the person with need is in great measure more profound and beneficial than the government's intervention in the life of that person. Because many individuals, churches and other religious groups have lost or never found their way in the mercy ministries, the government has stepped into the vacuum. How sad that the church and many of us individually has abdicated their role and accepted the less effective involvement of the government.

There was a TV commercial extolling the idea that each one has to look out for "numero uno" because if you don't look out for yourself no one will look out for you. This is a very sad commentary on a philosophy of life that is bereft of trust and much of human kindness.

Those of us who believe in God know that at least we can trust in Him. His love and grace, his infinite kindness and patience, his absolute wisdom, love and power give those of us of faith in Jesus Christ a firm foundation upon we can build a life of caring and self-effacing sacrifice. We have the Lord looking out for us and pleading our cause.

Most often the Lord wants our hands and feet to be his hands and feet in this world. After the 2nd World War some young volunteers were working in Great Britain to repair the extensive damage caused by German bombs.

One statue had them at an impasse. It was one of Jesus Christ with his arms outstretched. A bomb had blown off both hands and these young people did not know how to replace them. They came upon an ingenious solution. They had a plaque made and attached to the image which said "Christ has no hands in this world but your hands." This is indeed what we Christians have learned from the Lord.

Here are a couple of supporting excerpts from the Word of God. "Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy." (Proverbs 31:8-9) "Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute." (Proverbs 31:8)

Many have literally become mute. They must have someone speak for them. Part of our privilege and responsibility is to become their voice. I have worked as a Hospice Chaplain with voiceless folk. But one can see implications regarding speaking for those with no voice in much broader areas of life.

Because I am white and currently am consulting in an almost entirely black church, I at times find myself unable to fully speak for myself. Conversely the black Pastor, my friend, finds my voice to be helpful to him in some of the contexts in which we interact. There is the reality of cultural and even racial differences that in some ways make us mutually dependent.

Let us renew our efforts to speak kindly but diligently and as necessary strongly in behalf of those who cannot speak successfully for themselves. As we work at these kindnesses we will be helpful and can expect God in heaven to look down with a smile and with strong encouragement in our efforts for those who need us.

"But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing."

James 1:22 - 25.