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Tower of Strength

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”

—Proverbs 18:10

The Wrecking Crew

I watched them tearing a building down,
A gang of men in a busy town,
I asked the foreman, “Are these men skilled,
The men to hire if you should build?”

He gave me a chuckle, “No indeed!
Just common labor is all I need.
For I can wreck in a day or two,
What hundreds have taken a year to do.”

I asked myself, as I went away:
Which of these roles am I trying to play?
Am I the builder who works with care,
Measuring life with the rule and square?
Or am I the wrecker who walks the town
Content with the labor of tearing down?

—*Author unknown*

The Blessings of Brotherhood

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 says,

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.

There is application here for our congregation, which is the family of God made up of brothers and sisters in Christ (1 Tim. 3:15). Let's remember what a blessing it is to have family cooperation and peace.

We All Contribute Toward a Common Goal

Solomon says it is more fruitful to work with a business partner, because the two can share insight, expertise, and labor. Likewise, a family can accomplish more than a single person.

God has designed the church to include many people with various talents, so that we will have a better return on our labor (Eph. 4:11–12). One person cannot do all the preaching, all the teaching of every age group, save the lost, vacuum the carpets, lead the singing, repair the broken faucets, serve the Lord's Supper, encourage the children, finance the work, etc. Everyone must work together in harmony. Then, everyone can share in the success of the whole.

We Help to Restore Fallen Members

At a certain summer camp, children are warned to swim on the "buddy system." Years earlier, a camper had died from jumping into the water and banging his head on a rock. He died in waist deep water, simply because there was no one there to help him to shore.

Each person fails from time to time. But the fall can be permanent if he lacks another concerned person to lift him up. Proverbs 17:17 says, “a friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”

Therefore, let us take to heart Galatians 6:1, “if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.”

We Share in Our Warmth

From time to time, in the winter, a newspaper will report of a little boy who got lost in freezing weather, and survived the night only because his loyal puppy curled up on top of him.

It's hard to go it alone in this dark, cold, dangerous world, where temptation is around every corner and discouragement over every rise. It ought to be a warm feeling to come home to our brethren. God intends the church to be a place where the family of God can find strength and comfort. “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds” (Heb. 10:24). “Greet the friends by name” (3 John 15).

We Share in Our Defense

Peter tells us that our “adversary, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). In the wild, lions observe the flock from the high grass, looking for stragglers who have wandered away from the group. They prefer weakened, isolated targets. Not even the king of the jungle will attack a tough knot of determined and vigilant beasts, horns facing outward and ready to defend each other.

The church must stand together in defense as well. In Phil. 1:12, Paul wanted to hear that the Christians in Philippi were “standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, in no way alarmed by your opponents.” But like a braided rope, all the fibers must be bound in unity. “I exhort you, brethren ... that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). —*John Guzzetta*