



congregations often support a man to be their “evangelist,” but that does not remove the local church’s responsibility to save souls (Matthew 28:18-20). I think one of the reasons we don’t teach the lost is that we fear the uncomfortable “one on one” situation. If in your mind you think evangelism is something you have to do alone, read the book of Acts. God’s people rarely worked alone! I urge you to find a companion to help you teach a lost soul. There is no need to work alone.

To sum up, the preacher accurately wrote, **“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”** (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).



kinds of Christians refuse to ask for the help (i.e., companionship) that they truly need. God’s people were never meant to be lone wolves who can get by on their own. God’s people are expected to be a family (Ephesians 2:19). How can we be the family we’re expected to be if we never allow others to be our companions.

Finally, we need to work together to save souls. It is true that local

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Faithful Sayings Issue 17.7 February 15, 2015

Welcome Visitors

**We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.**

● **Let us know if you have any questions.**

ISSUE

17.7

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

February 15,
2015

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Steve Dixon
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow



“The Lord...Sent Them in Pairs” Companionship in the Work of the Lord

By Andrew Dow

The origin of all things is summed up in this statement: **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”** (Genesis 1:1, NASB). The beginning of God’s Word tells us of the creation of light, water, land, stars, earthly creatures, and plant life. Additionally, we can read of the creation of man and his perfect companion, woman.

After creating man, God makes a significant statement: **“It is not good for the man to be alone”** (Genesis 2:18). *From the beginning of time God recognized that man needs companionship!* After bringing every land and air creature before Adam, **“there was not found a helper suitable for him”** (Genesis 2:20). Therefore, **“God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man”** (Genesis 2:22). Companionship was not just desirable, it was a desperate need! In fact, the need was so enormous that the Lord went to great lengths to make sure man had a suitable companion.

God always intended companionship. When God recreated the human race through Noah, He made certain that Noah and his sons entered the ark, along with **“Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons”** (Genesis 7:13). We teach our children that the animals boarded

the ark **“by twos”** (Genesis 7:15). Companionship, however, is not limited to the sexual relationship in which procreation occurs. Scripture seems to indicate that companionship is important for all of us as we strive to do the work of the Lord.

Examples of Companionship in the Lord’s Work

Companionship played a major role in spreading the gospel in the first century. The Gospel of Mark records a time when Jesus **“summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs...”** (Mark 6:7). This is what is often referred to as



“the limited commission” (also recorded in Matthew 10:5-15 and Luke 9:1-11). On this occasion Christ sent His twelve apostles out to **“proclaim the kingdom of God”** (Luke 9:2). They were sure to be met with opposition, and disagreement throughout this work. Jesus instructed them, **“take nothing for your journey”** (Luke 9:3). In addition to being armed with miraculous gifts, they were given a companion to assist them on this journey.

Shortly after the limited commission, Luke records another instance in which **“the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come”** (Luke 10:1). In a situation similar to the one we saw above, these seventy men were called to do a difficult work. **“Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves”** (Luke 10:3). Again, Jesus instructed them not to carry provisions with them, but to rely on what would be given to them (Luke 10:4-8). One of the few things they were allowed to take was a companion.

After Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection we find no such command to travel in pairs. Jesus simply commanded, **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe whatever I commanded you...”** (Matthew 28:19-20). However, it might be significant to note that Jesus disciples continued the trend of doing the work of the Lord with a companion. For instance, after the events of Pentecost, the book of Acts spends some time following the work that Peter and John did for the Lord (Acts 3:1, 3, 4, 11; 4:3, 13, 19).

The church of Antioch provides an interesting example of multiple individuals working with one church. **“Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius of**

Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul” (Acts 13:1). The text tells us that all five of these men were **“ministering to the Lord”** (Acts 13:2). How wonderful a situation in which five companions were able to work together to spread the gospel in one area!

Another example is seen in the apostle Paul. The well known apostle seems to always be traveling with a companion, or waiting for a companion! During Paul’s first journey he travels throughout Asia Minor with Barnabas (Acts 13-14). These two partners also traveled to Jerusalem together engaging in the work of the Lord (Acts 15). When Paul decided to set out for a second journey through Asia Minor, he and Barnabas had a disagreement. Instead of deciding to travel alone, he **“chose Silas and left”** (Acts 15:40). Paul and Silas worked together through parts of Asia Minor and then throughout Macedonia (Acts 16-18).

Paul’s companionship extended beyond his work with Barnabas and Silas. Paul’s companionship with Timothy and Titus becomes evident by reading his epistles to them. Read through Paul’s epistles sometime and notice all of those whom he describes as his “fellow workers.” Paul was rarely without a companion in his work, and he was often with more than one companion.

Some Points of Application

It seems significant to me that God in the beginning of time, Jesus before His crucifixion, and the disciples during the early days of the church all recognized the importance of companionship. They recognized that life is hard and the Lord’s work is difficult. They recognized that working in groups of two or more was valuable. How should this knowledge affect the way we work in the Lord’s kingdom?

First, let me suggest that we need to work with each other. Some brethren have the mindset that we meet together for worship and Bible classes for the purpose of **“encouraging one another”** (Hebrews 10:24-25), but then we’re on our own for the rest of the week. This is a dangerous attitude. Perhaps it stems from an even more dangerous attitude that thinks that designated worship and Bible study times are the only way in which we work for the Lord. Do we truly believe that the Lord’s work (i.e., growing to spiritual maturity and saving souls) is our work, or do we feel that it is only the work of the preachers and elders? Recognize that these things are YOUR responsibility, and then work together to do the work of the Lord.

Second, we need to accept the help of others. Have you ever seen a strong Christian fall into sin? Maybe it was an elder, or a preacher, or a well respected man or woman. I’m afraid that too often these