

Being a Fellow Helper to the Truth

III John 5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully **whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; 6** which have borne witness of **thy charity** before the church: whom if thou **bring forward on their journey after a godly sort,** thou shalt do well: 7 because that **for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.** 8 We therefore ought to **receive such,** that we might be **fellowhelpers to the truth.**

- John tells the church that they have done good to look after people they knew and didn't know who were carrying the gospel that had passed through their church
 - The workers had spoken of the love, charity, unmerited one way love that they felt when they visited this church
 - They were doing good as they helped these people on their way
 - They were doing it after a godly sort
 - These people had gone out for Jesus sake
 - They had not gone to the lost world to get money
 - We should open our doors and hearts and receive them
 - When we do then we become fellow helpers to the truth
1. Forming the bond Philippians 2:25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, **my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier,** but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.
 - a. To be a yokefellow you and the missionary need to form a very good bond even before they leave
 - i. Notice that Paul called Epaphroditus his brother.
 1. That will need to be more than the artificial and superficial brother term that we use for everyone
 2. It was a term of endearment.
 3. It meant that they had a special bond

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- i. He was a companion in labor
 - 1. That means that somehow they had worked together
 - 2. They had spent time, maybe, in prayer or sharing the gospel
 - 3. They had done some ministry together
- ii. He was a fellow soldier
 - 1. So there was a high level of respect that Paul felt towards this brother
 - 2. Paul felt that this man was in the war against sin and Satan
 - 3. Paul felt that this man took ministry and serving God very seriously
- a. The responsibility to form this bond will have to go both ways
 - i. The missionary has no right to expect that someone that barely knows them will take all of this special care of them
 - ii. The missionary will have to work at developing relationships with people in our church
 - iii. If the missionary doesn't make an effort to know people then they will not develop this special bond
 - iv. The church members should also work at getting to know the missionaries
 - v. They are our servants, our staff, our sent ones so if they go for us then we must love them and work at getting to know them
 - vi. I challenge you to get to know our church member missionaries that are on deputation
 - vii. Do things together, serve, pray, have fun
- b. This should not be a one way street
 - i. The words used are fellow and companion
 - ii. The missionary should work at developing this relationship with you as well
 - iii. The missionary should not be a taker or live expectantly
 - 1. Some may try to demand that you do things for them. If they do politely decline and let them learn the correct way to handle this relationship
 - 2. This is to be fun, spiritual way
 - 3. The missionary is to raise enough money for his support

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- a. You do not have to buy every meal
 - b. You do not have to provide them with baby sitters
 - c. You do not have to meet their every need
 - d. They should be men and women of God and not be trying to take advantage of you
1. I am asking you to addict yourself to the ministry of the saints I Corinthians 16:15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that **they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,**) 16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one **that helpeth with us,** and **laboureth.** 17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for **that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.** 18 For they have **refreshed my spirit** and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.
- a. The family of Stephanas had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints
 - i. When they saw a need they went to work on it without waiting to be asked
 - ii. They toiled to exhaustion
 - iii. They refreshed his spirit
 - iv. They brought him blessing
 - b. How might we addict ourselves to the ministry
 - i. We want to make our missionaries feel cared for and understood
 - ii. This is me asking you to pray for them regularly
 - iii. To show them practical love
 - iv. To keep them visible before our church
 - v. To keep them feeling like Vision really is their home church
 - c. You can only help a missionary as much as they are willing to open up to you
 - i. You should never do this out of duty or guilt
 - ii. Work at developing a friendship
 - iii. I will challenge the missionaries to work on their part as well

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- iv. It would be good if you could develop this relationship with a missionary on deputation so that you really know and care about them when they leave
 - v. Those on furlough need to work with you at developing this relationship
 - d. Ultimately the missionary is responsible for developing this relationship if you will open up to it
 - e. Would you work at communicating with your missionary as much as they will work at keeping those lines of communication open
 - f. Practical ideas you can use in caring for your missionary
 - i. Ask them personally how you can pray for them
 - ii. Be available for them and help them through tough times as they prepare to leave, return, or are on the field
 - iii. Talk with them about their ministry
 - iv. Ask them what they are learning and how they are growing
 - v. Treat them like someone special
 - vi. Have them and others into your home for special get togethers when they are home
 - vii. Keep them informed about all that is happening at Vision
2. Some specific ideas to be applied Philippians 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send **Timotheus** shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man **likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.** 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.
- a. I ask you to be likeminded with me and care for their state
 - b. Know and treat them as real men of God, a pastor
 - i. You may be older than them and have more experience but they need someone that believes in them
 - ii. I just met a pastor that constantly said that there are more bad days in the ministry than good
 - iii. He talked about how hard it was and how he was mistreated

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- iv. He was mistreated because he was under 40
- v. He was mistreated because it was his first time as a senior pastor
- vi. He said that all men in the ministry knew the feeling
- vii. By the end of the service I wasn't sure that I wanted to be in the ministry
- c. Do not be controlling or manipulative even if you think that you are doing what is best for them
 - i. No one wants another mother or dad
 - ii. They are looking for a friend, a confidant
 - iii. They are looking for someone that will believe in them and hold them up
- d. Do not let them be controlling or manipulative because they think that they are the missionary, the one that is really sacrificing
 - i. They should be doing this ministry for the Lord Jesus
 - ii. Complaining is like praise to the devil and so they should get a hold of themselves
 - iii. They need to be a friend as much as they want you to be a friend
- e. Work at being there for them but they must respond or you are relieved from your duty
- f. For this to work it requires effort on both sides
- g. Really be an advocate for your missionary

Phillipians 4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last **your care of me hath flourished again;** wherein ye were also **careful,** but ye lacked **opportunity.**

 - i. I know you care
 - ii. I know that you too are just looking for how to be a part
 - iii. Pray for them
 - iv. Keep their needs in front of the church
 - v. Be available for them when they are here, when they return, and even on the field

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