

## AND I HELPED

### Introduction:

Remember those old Shake 'N Bake commercials?

Remember the one where the father walks into the kitchen, and the mother proudly displays a platter of fried chicken? "Honey, did you make this?" Sure did, she says. Then those cute-as-a-button twin girls answer in a deep-fried Southern drawl. "And we helped!"

That all happened 27 years ago and there are still some of us here who remember. There is a suggestion in this commercial that the church of Jesus Christ needs to take note of. That is, no matter how young you are, physically or spiritually, you can still help. Every Christian is called upon to exercise the gifts of the Spirit to help build up the Kingdom of God.

### Scripture:

Ephesians 2:19-22 "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, <sup>21</sup>in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, <sup>22</sup>in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit".

### I. We cannot help until we recognize that the Lord calls every member of the Body of Christ to participate in the work of ministry.

I Thessalonians 5:11 "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing."

A. As each part does his assignment, the whole body is built up (into a spiritual house) and the work of ministry is carried forth.

Ephesians 4:11-16 "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup>till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; <sup>14</sup>that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, <sup>15</sup>but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—<sup>16</sup>from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

1. Every leader has a responsibility to equip other members do the work of ministry.
  - a. The Greek word "katartizo" used in Mark 1:19 for mending nets is translated "equipping" here in Ephesians 4:12.
  - b. This suggests that we are to help each other to be prepared for service.
2. The reason for the equipping is so that the Body grows into and is strengthened to be all she is intended to be.
  - a. Equipped until we come into unity.
  - b. Equipped until we intimately know Jesus Christ.
  - c. Equipped until we mature into fullness ordained for us.
  - d. Equipped until we are not caught by false doctrines and motives.
  - e. Equipped until we walk in love with everyone we interact with and in every gift we're called to manifest.

A man was at a banquet listening to a well-known and much-admired political leader making a speech. He was seated next to the speaker's wife. He had noticed that the speaker was immaculately attired--he even had fancy monograms on his socks. But when he looked a little closer he saw that the monogram was not your usual two or three letters--but rather four letters. And they didn't seem to have any relationship to his initials. Rather, on closer

inspection he noticed that the monogram was TGIF. Puzzled by these familiar initials being on the man's socks he turned to the politician's wife and asked why he had TGIF on his socks, which everyone knew meant "Thank Goodness It's Friday." She nodded her head negatively and said, "Oh no, that's not what the letters are for. The monograms are there to help him get dressed. They stand for 'Toes Go In First!'" (Now, that's being equipped!)

3. True growth of the body of Christ and effective ministry cannot take place until each one is doing his part.
- B. When we recognize that each one is needed, we will be released to encourage and to help every other believer to move into their ministry.

Title: The Unknown Hero of Everest

In 1953 Sir Edmund Hillary climbed to the summit of Mount Everest, the first man ever to do that. The man who impressed me most, though, was not Edmund Hillary but the companion who climbed the mountain with him: Tenzig Norgay. Nobody ever hears his name. Yet on the way back down the mountain, Hillary fell and was almost lost. He would have been lost without Tenzig Norgay, who literally pulled him back up the cable and saved his life. Edmund Hillary lived to tell a great story because of the help of an unknown man. When someone asked Norgay why he didn't brag about it, he said, "We mountain climbers help each other."

-- Calvin Miller, "From Entertainment to Servanthood,"

## II. **In order to help, we need to release the other members to make their spiritual contribution to the work.**

I Corinthians 12:14-19 *"For in fact the body is not one member but many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? <sup>18</sup>But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. <sup>19</sup>And if they were all one member, where would the body be?"*

- A. If we don't receive the gifting that God has placed in an individual member, we will be unhealthy and malformed.
- B. The Body of Christ is so unique and diverse because it is the only way for us to be healthy.
- C. We have to make room for one another and the gifting that God has placed in each individual.

I Corinthians 14:26 *"How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification."*

1. We make room as a household of faith by establishing ministries that release people to make a contribution. (Small group ministry)
2. We make room by recognizing that each one has potential to be more than they are today. (And they are growing into fullness)
3. We make room for the ministry gifting of others by operating in the gifting God has placed in us.
  - a. Now someone else doesn't have to take themselves away from what they are called to in order to take care of what I have neglected.
  - b. As I move into my gifting and calling, I make room for someone else to move into the place of ministry that I vacate in order to more fully fulfill my calling.