

A friend of mine recently told me about a camping trip he took with his grandson. He was preparing to cook breakfast and realized that he had forgotten butter for the eggs. In the end, he did make eggs with some butter he got from the campers in the site next to theirs. No, **this is not a spectacular story**; in fact, it may seem rather mundane. But he told me about this incident, and I am relaying it to you, because of the potential lessons it holds.

When we have a crisis (like no butter for cooking the eggs) we'll obviously cast about in our minds looking for a solution, and usually hope to find one that is easy. For my friend, the easy solution was for him and his grandson to ride their bikes to the camp store and buy some butter. But that did not work; the store did not sell butter. So, the idea came for him to **ask for help from the neighbors**.

Asking for help is such a simple thing to do, but we often make it more difficult than it is by having conversations with ourselves and imagining the perception of others. The conversation can sound like "They'll think I'm an idiot because I (forgot to pack the butter.)" Or worse, "I am an idiot because I (forgot to pack the butter.)" Or some other self-accusation that is likely not true, debilitating, and probably destructive. But asking for help is not only an easy and likely effective path to a solution, it is **the way God designed us to work**.

*Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."  
(Genesis 2:18)*

Engaging another person for assistance very often has some unintended benefits as well. My friend asked his neighbor for butter and: he ended up spending a good amount of time in conversation with some new friends; he gave them an unexpected way to offer their generosity; and his grandson was shown the example of social interaction, the kindness of strangers, the benefit of self-confidence, and the **humility of asking for help**. God's laws are always intended for His followers, but more often than not, they are universal and apply to all people. Remember 2Pet3:9: that He wants all to come to repentance. God wants us to help one another:

*Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)*

Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, while not known to be a follower of God, seems to have understood the value of the "golden rule." He is quoted saying, "What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good." But **we don't have to take Aristotle's word to understand that**. Peter said it:

*As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (1 Peter 4:10)*

Paul says it often:

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. (Philippians 2:3-4)*

*For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." (Galatians 5:13-14)*

And, of course, we get this directly from Messiah as well:

*Sitting down, He called the twelve and \*said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." (Mark 9:35)*

These scriptures clearly instruct us to be helpful, to always be willing to “lend a hand” to someone in need. But let us not forget how my friend **received unintended benefits by simply asking his neighbor for butter**. Chapter 7 of Matthew is almost like a list of proverbs given to us directly from Messiah. I encourage you to read all of it. But there’s one that is so relevant here. I have always read this with respect to God – ask Him and He will answer. But most of **the chapter is framed in the context of people**, so why not verses 7&8 as well?

*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)*

A “Help Wanted” sign is a modern way to advertise for a job. Originally, this advertisement was exclusively used to find domestic help, or household servants that were specifically not enslaved people. I remember asking someone for help in the past and the person responded, “Will you pay me?” Today I wonder how compensation, whether monetary or favor or otherwise, affects the intent of help. In our modern culture, this distinction probably does not matter much at all. I suppose there are occasions when someone offers to help another expecting to be paid, and occasions when some who ask another for help fully expect to pay them for it. And surely the opposites are true. But the disconnect, or misunderstanding, is of little consequence. “NBD” (**no big deal**) right? I’m not so sure.

*Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7)*

I argue that, as God’s children, we should always seek to help others without seeking or expecting compensation. Of course, we need to provide for our needs and thus work for a living, but I also think this idea of helping without seeking pay can be taken to an extreme and it will still continue to work. This, however, would **require more faith than I have**. In Luke 9, Messiah sent his disciples out to proclaim the kingdom of God and said, “Take nothing for your journey...” Now there is a test of faith. Volunteering, or helping others will benefit not only the others, but the volunteer as well. Studies conducted by Harvard Medical School and the Mayo Clinic show that people who regularly donate their time suffer less from loneliness and depression, tend to have lower blood pressure and lower stress levels, have a greater sense of purpose, stay more physically and mentally active, and are generally more socially connected by developing new relationships.

As imitators of Christ, we need to seek out those who need help and then freely and cheerfully offer our resources. As children of God, we need to recognize our weakness, His love for us, and His willingness to provide for our needs – and then ask for it. Compared with helping others, asking for help may be the more difficult of the two. We are creatures full of pride, tending to not ask for help when we need it, believing that “I can do this myself...” Well, **we really cannot do anything without our Great God**. In humility, we should always acknowledge our complete reliance on God and that we have been provided a helper.

*"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:26)*

We all want an easy time walking through this wilderness, being refined as we go. But we know that **it is not meant to be an easy walk**. If we learn to ask for help, our walk will become easier.

*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. (Colossians 3:2)*

Peace to you and glory to God!

-Nate

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