

Just A Cup Of Water

Joe Slater

When I was in high school, each sports team had a “water boy” who made certain that water was available for the hot, sweaty athletes during breaks in the games. It wasn’t a very glamorous job, and was usually performed by a boy who wasn’t athletically inclined.

I never saw a water boy score a touchdown or swish a half-court basket. The local newspaper never published a story on the water boy, nor did the cheerleaders swoon at the thought of going out on a date with him. But where would the team have been without him? There is no telling how many touchdowns were scored, baskets made, and thus games won, by the players who were refreshed by the water he supplied.

Jesus said, “*For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward*” (Mark 9:41). At the judgment day He will say to the redeemed, “*I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink,*” meaning that they had done this for Jesus by doing it for their fellow human beings (Matthew 25:35, 40).

From its beginning, the church has been known for her members who are willing to give a cup of cold water. The early church had widows, orphans, sick folks, and others who needed care. Today, those needs still exist. Widows still appreciate visits and necessary assistance. Nursing home residents still enjoy a bright spot in their day when you stop by just to say “hello.” Sick people are still encouraged by a thoughtful visit, card, or call. In all of these cases and others, prayer together is appropriate and effective.

Your name may never be in the headlines of a brotherhood journal for doing these things. However,

“God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints . . .” (Hebrews 6:10).

What do you say? How about giving someone a cup of cold water? Do it this week! It will help the team (church), and the Lord will bless you for it.

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Proper Values

The story is told of a professor from a large university who hired a boatman to row him across the Mississippi River. The professor, feeling a little superior to his boatman, began asking him questions. “George, have you ever studied philosophy?” George answered, “No, sir, I haven’t read any of it.” “Then you have lost a third of your life,” the professor said.

“Have you studied literature?” asked the professor. “No, sir, I haven’t read literature and don’t know much about it,” George replied. “Then you have lost two thirds of your life,” stated the professor.

Midway across the river, a log collided with the boat, knocking a large hole in it. The boatman asked, “Professor, do you know anything about swimming?” “No, George, I don’t!” the frightened professor answered. “They you lost all your life,” the boatman said.

We can have all the knowledge, wealth, pleasures, honor, and power the world has to offer, and still miss the most important thing of all. Jesus asked His disciples, “*For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*” (Matthew 8:36-37).

A life wasted on worldly things has a terrible end, no matter how enjoyable that life has been! “*Let us hear the conclusion of the matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man*” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

--Cecil Burch (Amarillo, TX) via *Old Paths* (adapted)

People Need People!

According to a recent headline, “Loneliness is deadlier than obesity.” I did not take time to read the full story. I did not feel a need for the details of the research. God himself said, “*It is not good for man to be alone*” (Gen 2:18).

We need each other. It is not that we need to always be in a crowd. That can be the loneliest place of all. But we do need genuine human friendship. Unfortunately, so many people today have lost touch with that need. Watching television is about as close as they come to human interaction. Many are waiting at home, hoping that the phone will ring, that someone will come to the door, or that the mail carrier will bring a letter.

If you are one of those people:

- Reach out to someone. Think of others who might also be lonely. Give them a call, write them a note, or (if you are able to) get together with them for a cup of coffee or a walk in the park.

- Engage in some useful activity. We need World Bible School teachers. We need more people in our Bible classes. There are small tasks that need to be done around the building. Doing these would bring you together with others. For example, as I am writing this, two brothers are working on the floor of the fellowship hall. They are enjoying some fellowship in useful labor (which is always the best kind of fellowship).

- Do not think too narrowly. A person does not have to be your same age to benefit from your company. There is great value in cross-generational contact.

The church’s primary task is to glorify God, but we do that best when we do that together. Thus, while seeking to honor him, we help each other with our loneliness.

--Thayer Salisbury (Toldeo, OH)