

## *Jesus' Concern For Others*

Joe Slater

It's hard not to be selfish. Especially when our own lives appear to be unravelling, it's tempting to focus inward. But, while we must give due attention to our own interests, the Bible teaches us to be others-oriented. Paul wrote, *"Let no one see, his own, but each one the other's well-being"* (1 Corinthians 10:24). Likewise Philippians 2:4 says, *"Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others."*

But what about being concerned for others when your own life is tumbling in? And on top of that, what about being concerned for others who hate you? Does God expect us to seek their good also? Indeed, He does! Jesus said, *"Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you"* (Matthew 6:44).

Jesus didn't just say those things, but showed us how it's done! His life was filled with concern and activity for others. In fact, that's why He came in the first place; it's why He left the glory of Heaven to come to this wicked world where He would be rejected, hated, tortured, and murdered. He did that for others – namely, for you and me. *"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"* (Mark 10:45). Paul wrote concerning Jesus, *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Yes, Jesus cared for others! (More next week)

## **When Tempted To Complain**

A friend in Nigeria sent a report on his work. I am not going to go over the details. I want to quote just one sentence. But before I do so, I will say that this is a highly respected and trusted brother. He has been faithfully engaged in the work for more than fifty years. I have known him since 1993. So, with that preface, here is the one sentence: "The lock-down makes many people to die because of hunger."

Please pause a moment and think about that. I know that the restrictions that we have experienced the last few weeks have been annoying. Sadly, the tensions of these days have brought out the worst in some people. But do you really know anyone who has gone hungry, really dangerously hungry? A relative told me recently that she had to use the store brand of peanut butter, because the brand the family normally used has been out of stock. Some of us would take that as a terrible burden. Many folks in Nigeria would love to have the worst brand of peanut butter on the market.

I am reminded of a statement made by a Canadian who worked down the road from us in Nigeria in the 1990s. Jerry stopped by the house one day, about three months after he came to Nigeria. As we visited, he said, "You know, I am forty years old. I have done a lot of complaining in those years. After three months here I realize that I have never had anything to complain about in my entire life."

I am also reminded of a few other things, but I will mention just two: 1) *"Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain"* (Philippians 2:14-16, ESV). 2) "He is a poor preacher who does not preach better than he practices" (R.L. Whiteside).

--Thayer Salisbury (Toledo, OH)

## *The Truth Shall Make You Free*

Have you ever heard of postmodernism? Many sociologists and philosophers speak of America today as a "postmodern" society. By that they mean we, as a people, have more or less rejected the concept that there is such a thing as absolute, objective, "capital-T" Truth. There was a time when most Americans believed that it was always wrong to lie or steal or commit adultery. Most Americans believed that truth was defined by the Bible, which was widely respected as the word of God.

But postmodernists think that truth, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. So truth becomes something subjective and personal, and is determined by each person for themselves. Each person has his or her own truth. Nothing is absolutely true or false, and no one has the right to judge another person's beliefs or actions, since ethics is just a matter of opinion.

The Bible does not support postmodernism. We read in John 8:31-32, *"Then Jesus said to those who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'" Note that Jesus believed in absolute truth and equated it with His own teachings. Furthermore, He taught that we could know the truth and be saved from our sins by it.*

Have you obeyed the truth of the gospel that will set you free?

--Travis L. Quetermous (Thayer, MO)