

The Need for Involvement

INTRODUCTION:

- A. **Isaiah 57:1** – “The righteous one perishes, and no one takes it to heart; faithful men are swept away, with no one realizing that the righteous one is swept away from the presence of evil.”
1. A time of gross idolatry and rebellion among God’s chosen people.
 2. Righteous martyrs were being killed without just cause.
 3. An invasion of the nation was forthcoming.
 4. Multitudes just did not seem to care . . . Just did not want to become involved.
 5. Herein we see:
 - a. A lack of involvement
 - b. A lack of attention given
 - c. A lack of caring and concern demonstrated
 - d. A Lack of effort to remedy the situation
- B. Relationships: Vertical (God) and Horizontal (Fellowman)
- C. The 17th century poet-preacher John Dunn gave to the world these now widely quoted Words: “No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend’s or thine own were; any man’s death diminishes me, **because I am involved in all of mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; the bell tolls for thee.**”
1. Those words hold an emotional charge for many . . . and should for all.
 2. People are not isolated from one another, but rather are interconnected. Each one of us is deeply involved in all of mankind.
 3. Everything that happens anywhere in the world that affects people should be a matter of our concern, especially as it pertains to the Lord’s church.
 - a. **ILLUSTRATION:** In the state of Israel, the Jewish Knesset, bowing to the wishes of the Orthodox Jews, passed a law stating that anyone attempting to “proselyte” a Jew is subject to spend fifteen years in a Jewish prison.
 - b. **ILLUSTRATION:** In Sweden, Swedish lawmakers approved a constitutional amendment that would criminalize opposition to homosexuality. Anyone caught preaching against homosexuality or opposing it in any way is subject to spend from six months to four years in a Swedish jail. This is but one of several attempts to criminalize Christianity.

1. What will happen to our missionaries in Sweden when they attempt to preach on Romans 1:24-28 or 1 Corinthians 6:9-11?
 2. Bob Knight, who heads the Culture and Family Institute at Concerned Women for America, predicts the United States will soon have similar laws . . . The seeds for such have already been sown.
- c. **ILLUSTRATION:** As a result of a strong Hindu influence among Indian authorities, the Indian province of Tamil Nadu, has been handed down a new law forbidding the practice of “Christian baptism.” Anyone caught doing this would be sentenced to five years in jail.
1. Tamil Nadu is a large district in the south of India.
 2. It has a population of over 65,000,000 people with an estimated 1000 congregations of the Lord’s church.
4. How did you feel inside when I told you about these three occurrences? Shock? . . . Disbelief? . . . Anger? . . . Doubt? . . . Concern? . . . A strong urge to oppose these new laws in Israel, Sweden, and southern India?
 5. Brethren, it is true each one of us is involved in all of mankind and there is nothing that happens anywhere in the world that affects people, especially our brethren, that is not a matter of our concern.
- D. Since the beginning of time people have had trouble with concern and involvement.
1. God had asked Cain where his brother Abel was. Cain answered the question of the Lord with a question, namely, “Am I my brother’s keeper?”
 2. Cain soon learned that the answer to his own question was “yes.” He was more than a keeper . . . he was a brother.
 3. The first murder occurred when Cain rose up and killed Abel out in the field.
 4. As a result of this lack of concern for his brother, Cain received a curse and became a fugitive and a wanderer.
 5. How unfortunate it is that so many today are cursed by their own lack of concern for their fellowman.

LISTEN TO WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT INVOLVEMENT . . . OR LACK THEREOF

- A. Jesus had some rather harsh words to say about those who were not concerned about their brethren.
1. **Matthew 25:41-46** – Then He will also say to those on the left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels!
 For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink;
 I was a stranger and you didn’t take Me in; I was naked and you didn’t clothe Me, sick and in prison and you didn’t take care of Me.’

“Then they too will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or without clothes, or sick, or in prison, and not help You?’

“Then He will answer them, ‘I assure you: Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me either.’

“And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

NOTE: Their lack of involvement with others in a helping way.

2. The story of the Rich Man & Lazarus is recorded in [Luke 16:19-31](#)
 - a. I have read that passage to you in your hearing not because I intend to elaborate upon it to any extent, but I have read it to set before you three facts illustrating extremes:
 1. Number one: Two men lived.
 2. Number two: Two men died.
 3. Number three: The situation of those two men in the next life was exactly the opposite of what it had been in this life.
 - a. The rich man on earth became the beggar in Hell.
 - b. The poor man on earth became the rich man in paradise.
 - c. The rich man here was clothed in purple and fine linen.
 - d. In the next life he was robed in a garment of fire.
 - e. The poor man was attended by dogs here, but in the next life he was attended by the angels of God.
 - f. The rich man here fared sumptuously every day, but in the next life he couldn't get so much as a drop of water to cool his tormented tongue.
 - g. The poor man here suffered evil things, but in the next life he was comforted.
 - b. Extremely rich Extremely poor.
 - c. The rich man here is not described as being a liar, murder, or a thief.
 - d. There is nothing in the story to indicate he had committed adultery.
 - e. There is nothing to indicate that he had sown seeds of discord and stirred up strife.
 - f. Rather, he is described as a man who lived sumptuously, dressed in purple and feasted from a fine table.
 - g. His sin was that he disregarded the beggar Lazarus, who lay at his gate full of sores.
 - h. He would not get involved the helping the needs of others. That is selfishness, isn't it?

A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF REAL INVOLVEMENT –THE GOOD SAMARITAN

A. Recorded in [Luke 10:30-37](#)

1. The story is told in answer to the question, “Who is my neighbor?”
2. The Samaritan’s name is never mentioned.
3. He is traveling on a dangerous road which leads from Jerusalem to Jericho.
4. On either side there are hills that are infested with cut-throats and thieves.

B. The story summarized.

1. One day a man was traveling down that dangerous road when a band of cut-throats and thieves attacked him . . . beat him up . . . stripped him . . . robbed . . . and left him dying.
2. A **LEVITE** came by but when he saw the problem, immediately he realized that it was in his best interest to get out of there as fast as he could. So he passed by on the other side. He demonstrated non-involvement.
 - a. Priests were Levites . . . But not all Levites were priests.
 - b. Descendants of the Levite family of Aaron could be priests.
 - c. Descendants of other Levite families could be assistants to the priests, taking care of the Tabernacle and Temple as well as performing other duties.
3. After that a **PRIEST** came by, saw the poor victim, and perhaps realizing that he could become the next victim of the thieves, he, too, passed by on the other side. He demonstrated non-involvement.
4. Then came the **SAMARITAN**. Immediately he stopped and began administering first aid to the poor man.
 - a. He put the man on his donkey and transported him to a nearby inn and told the keeper, “Whatever it costs. You take care of him and I will pay you when I get back.”
 - b. The inference is that is exactly what was done.
 - i. **The Samaritan became involved.**
 - j. We are reminded of what Jesus said in [Matthew 25:40](#) - I say to you, “inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”
 - k. Some would have deemed this “good” Samaritan to be a rather irrational man.
 1. He should have had the sense to see that this was a dangerous spot and if he remained he likewise might be robbed and beaten.
 2. He should have had the insight to realize that the man he was helping was a man of a race that looked down upon his own race and that he would surely get no thanks for his efforts.
 - l. Friends, I do not know what made him stop, but stop he did. Perhaps it was his conscience . . . or his sense of honor . . . or his sense of

integrity. Whatever the reason for his getting involved, it involved unselfishness and love.

5. The **Robber** Sees An Object To **Abuse** - 10:30
The **Religious** Sees An Obstacle To **Avoid** - 10:31,32
The **Righteous** Sees An Opportunity To **Aid** - 10:33-35
6. Please consider:
 - a. When you see an erring brother, will your actions be that of the Priest . . . the Levite . . . or a helping Samaritan?
 - b. When you see the lost, will your actions be that of a Priest . . . A Levite . . . or a helping Samaritan?
 - c. When you see the hungry, will your actions be that of the Priest . . . The Levite . . . or a helping Samaritan?
 - d. In all of these circumstances, as well as all others, let your action be that of a Christian . . . A faithful Christian!
 - e. The world does will not care how much we know until they come to know how much we care!

RESISTING RESPONSIBILITY

- A. We live in an age when more and more people are running away from involvement.
 1. They are resisting responsibility and saying, “I don’t want to get involved.”
 2. In our day there is a disturbing tendency away from being involved in the needs of other people.
- B. Examples of not getting involved.
 1. **ILLUSTRATION:** Kitty Genovese
 - a. A number of years ago, there was a rash of concern aroused when Kitty Genovese was killed in New York City in view of more than thirty-five people who looked down from the darkened windows of their apartments and watched as some fiend beat her, molested her, and finally left her for dead. A while later the perpetrator of this crime returned and molested her again.
 - b. It took nearly half an hour while these people watched.
 - c. They heard the screams and they did nothing about it.
 - d. None of them called the police because they might have gotten involved.
 - e. People suffer because others refuse to become involved.
 2. **ILLUSTRATION:** The subway crisis in New York.
 - a. When the subway crisis came in New York because of marauding bands that would move into a subway car at one stop, beat, rob, and move out at the next stop and be on their way, one of the stories was of a elderly man who was beaten in a car and left groaning and moaning on the floor.

- b. Other people acted as if they were reading their papers as the car moved on, making no effort to help him
- 3. **ILLUSTRATION:** An automobile accident happens and serious injuries occur.
 - a. There are witnesses, but when the officers arrive nobody is there who saw it.
 - b. The witnesses have hurried to get away realizing that if they stayed they would be involved in answering a lot of questions and eventually there might be appearances in court.
 - c. It might take days, and they just did not want to be involved.
 - d. The miscarriage of justice and the suffering of the innocent are not as important as being free from involvement.

EXAMPLES OF INVOLVEMENT

- A. **ILLUSTRATION:** A number of decades ago when bro. G. C. Brewer was preaching for the Lord’s church in Sherman, Texas, he was walking home from his office one noon for lunch.
 - 1. Suddenly, out of the blue a crisis came.
 - 2. He had just passed some little children playing in a yard when he saw a mad dog, frothing at the mouth, coming toward those children.
 - 3. There was no time to call the police, no time to get a gun, no time even to pick up a stick to fight with, so brother Brewer met that mad dog head-on with his bare hands, and killed him.
 - 4. Of course, he had to take the rabies shots.
 - 5. There was some suffering involved and some time was lost, but some children lived because brother Brewer was willing to become involved.
- B. When threats come to a nation the citizens rise as one man and beat back the invader.
 - 1. That is involvement.
 - 2. That is courage.
 - 3. While that is involvement, there are many other kinds of invasion which people placidly accept.
 - a. Drugs
 - b. Alcohol
 - c. Pornography
 - d. Etc.
 - 4. What is needed is for every righteous person to stand up and speak out, and when enough decent people get involved something will be done.

WHY ARE PEOPLE RELUCTANT TO BECOME INVOLVED

- A. **FEAR** . . . paralyzing fear.
 - 1. Leads people to think, “I don’t know how; I can’t”

2. How we need to rise above our fears.
3. Fear deters people from becoming involved . . . Faith compels involvement.

B. **SELFISHNESS**. . . ”Why should I get involved?”

1. Because the thirty-five people failed to get involved Kitty Genovese was murdered.
2. Because people did not want to become involved, the elderly man remained on the floor of the subway car while people refused to help him.
3. **Selfishness is not Christianity** . . . Selfishness is not a part of Christianity . . . Christianity is involvement with a lost and dying mankind!

- a. **John 3:16-17** - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” God gave His Son . . . He came . . . He got involved!

- b. **Romans 5:8** - God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God became involved!
- c. **Galatians 2:20** - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
- d. All three of these passages demonstrate God’s involvement in our lives.

C. **INDIFFERENCE**

1. Unconcerned . . . uninterested . . . many just do not seem to care.
2. What if God had been indifferent toward us?
3. What if Jesus had been indifferent toward us?
4. How can we be indifferent towards others?
5. **“People do not care how much we know until they know how much we care.” Many brethren refuse to become involved in the Lord’s work as carried out through local congregations**

CONCLUSION:

A. Examples of Involvement:

1. Paul & Silas (Acts 16) got involved . . . Saved the life of the Philippian Jailor and baptized him and his family.
2. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4) . . . Involved in conversation with the woman at the well . . . Impacted a whole village and surrounding area.
3. Barnabas became involved (Acts 9:27) in speaking up on behalf of Paul, leading the Jerusalem church to accept Paul.
4. Jesus (Acts 10:38) “went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”

5. Our Lord’s life is filled with examples of His getting involved on behalf of the needs of others.

NOTE: **1 Peter 1:21** – “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.”

- B. The message that I would write on your heart and mine today is the message to become involved whenever the needs of mankind call for your help.
- C. For the glory of God . . . help others.
 1. Let us be involved individuals!
 2. Let us be an involved congregation!
 3. Let us be an involved brotherhood!

NOTE: Many brethren refused to become involved in the Lord’s work as carried out through local congregations.

 4. **Matthew 5:16** – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
- D. Two great attitudes in the Bible:
 1. Where is the Attitude of **SAMUEL** in **1 Samuel 3:9** – “Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.”
 2. Where is the attitude of **ISAIAH** in **Isaiah 6:8** - Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me
- E. **ILLUSTRATION:** Statue in a village in France. Sign: “I have no hands but yours”
- F. **Mark 12:30-31** – “And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.
 And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
 1. If we love God enough, if we love our fellowmen enough, then we will do all that we are capable of doing.
 2. Christians can make a difference wherever they are.
- G. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation.**