

Silent Believers

The phone call came from a member of the family. Jean was ill again in the Hospital. In about 30 minutes I was on my way to the hospital.

When I arrived I found two daughters and Jean's husband waiting for me. The girls indicated that their mom was a quiet lady who did not speak about her Christian faith as they were growing up. They both were concerned about whether or not their mom was ready to die.

Jean was a quiet and gentle lady, obviously in pain, yet very receptive to my prayer and talk of the Saviour. I assured her that just as she presented herself to the medical community for her physical needs, so she could present herself to the Lord for her spiritual needs.

Her husband was exceptionally grateful for my presence with them, he had been raised in the Gospel Halls in Ireland and knew the Scriptures very well.

Over the next seven days I visited regularly and discovered the family to be open and anxious to hear the Scriptures and have prayer. Jean slipped into a coma but I spoke to her each visit and held her hand as I prayed for her.

On Saturday morning the family called to advise me that Jean was slipping away. I went to

the hospital and en route decided that I would quote the 23rd Psalm. Later, one of the daughters told me that this was her mother's favourite Psalm. When I arrived home, the phone was ringing, it was the family calling say that the Lord had taken Jean home.

As I reflect on this family I see once again dear Christians who, for whatever reasons, have fallen away from regular church attendance, and are silent in their faith.

I know that some offer arguments to suggest that real Christians cannot be "silent". I, on the other hand, am one of those who believe that some Christian's have had exceptionally painful experiences in the church and find it easier to stay away from the Lord's house.

When judging others we need to remind ourselves of the insightful words of Oswald Chambers; "There is always one more thing you don't know about someone." We haven't walked in their shoes, we don't know their pain.

We need to recognize that some of the Lord's people "fall between the cracks" and it's our responsibility to help them back up, with a gentle push not a "great big shove"! They, as we, need the fellowship and encouragement of God's people as we work through the more difficult issues of life.

Do you know of someone who has stopped attending church? Perhaps you could call to let them know you miss them. Offer to bring them with you, to sit with them, to have lunch with them after church, invite them to your Bible Study or social function. Whatever you do, make sure they know you care.

Remember, not all the silent Christians are those who have ceased attending church, some of us are silent Christians when we don't bother reaching out to those who have "disappeared from our midst"!

Who did Jesus come to save, which people were of most value to him? Shouldn't these same people be of greatest value to us?

Luke 15:4-6 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'

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