

# Help When It Is Needed

*"he often refreshed me...when he was in Rome  
he searched hard for me until he found me."  
2 Timothy 1:16 (NIV)*

I have had the privilege of knowing many people who, in varying ways, have "refreshed me".

Some have sent get well cards, others have called on the phone just to check up on me. One friend, who lived a couple of hours away from me, had occasion sometimes to travel past my city en route to a business destination. Sometimes, when passing by, he would call to catch up on my news. Other friends have invited us out to dinner at a local restaurant and delighted us with spirited conversation on a variety of topics.

It is so good to have people who love us and try to encourage us in various ways. Those who suffer as the Apostle Paul did really appreciate those who come alongside to assist them in one way or another in their time of trial. Paul's affliction was imprisonment in a Roman jail.

Visiting people in jail is not for the fainthearted. I have gone as a pastor to people in various lockups. To hear the electric door slam shut behind you before the one in front of you opens is ominous indeed. Sometimes I have had to go

through several locked doors to gain access to a prisoner.

Apparently the Christians in Asia had all deserted Paul and left him to his term in prison—except the man in our verse. How pitiful to be bereft of any friends, save one, when in difficulty. It is well said that misery loves company.

Perfect strangers have contacted me when the church they occasionally went to would not bother with them. Some ministers explained that they only had time to serve the needs of regular worshippers at their church. Others simply did not return the call. In various ways the ones who called me had found out that I would visit anyone who asked.

That is my job description, I am a pastor to pastorless people.

If you find yourself alone in your suffering, then you have the privilege of turning to the One who also knew what it was like to be alone. Friends had forsaken Him, and a supposed friend delivered Him into the hands of enemies. He was physically abused, lied about, mocked, and finally executed after the judge five

times declared Him not guilty.

You can be sure Jesus can understand and feel with you in your sorrow. He was called a "Man of sorrows".

In Hebrews 4:15-16 (NIV) it says of Jesus,

"...we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are..."

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Because Jesus experienced sorrow like ours, it makes coming to Him an encouragement—because He understands and has the ability to truly help us.

His invitation to come is without qualification. It is an indiscriminate invitation. It is for whosoever will to come. None are excluded but those who exclude themselves. Come and come now.

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