

Band of Brothers

How and Why We Need to Share

BAND OF BROTHERS is this mornings topic

SO - Why are we here today?

AND - Why do we attend Band of Brother meetings?

I'll answer that on our behalf and see if you agree in principle:

We attend our Band of Brothers small group meetings because we expect to be changed by the Holy Spirit for His purposes, and to our spiritual benefit.

In that process, our families, friends and the world are blessed by the outward and visible changes in our lives AND we become better Christians, husbands, fathers and countrymen.

Raise your hand if that is at least part of the reason you're here each Saturday and more importantly you attend your Band of Brothers group.

RAISED HANDS

Then, to make our desires a reality, we need to submit to and ask for help from other Christian men.

This part happens near the end of our Band of Brothers meeting time. In fact its item #4

We ...

- 1) Open with prayer
- 2) Share scripture or testimony
- 3) Ask about others
- 4) SHARE OUR NEEDS
- 5) Close with prayer

So here's a question ...

"How's that going - the "sharing our needs and struggles" part of the Band of Brothers meeting?"

- How well are we confessing sin to one another?
- How well are we sharing our personal, relationship, financial or emotional struggles?
- How well are we asking each other for help?
- How well are we then following through in our prayer life on behalf of our brothers?

I suspect I know the answers to these questions because, like you, I am a man

For many reasons, I'm resistant to asking for help, and sometimes too proud to admit sin

We often hear the scriptural reference of Proverbs 27:17 as to "why" we should gather with other men

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another"

It is, of course, true, but there are far more explicit instructions in the bible to give us courage and direction in this matter

Let's look at the book of James to find where the bible gives us specific instructions on the matters of asking for help from our sins

----- JAMES 5:16

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” - James 5:16

Christians can and do sin. By definition, trusting in Christ brings with it a commitment to stop living for the sins our human nature desires (Galatians 5:24). However, getting caught off-guard by those desires, failing to follow the Spirit away from them, does not mean we are no longer in Christ. Paul says it means we need help, in part from other Christians.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in Galatians 6:1 that someone must step up and help restore in order for the body of Christians to continue to function well. The Greek word used for "restore" here is "katartizete", meaning to "mend" and make whole and functional again. When it comes to sin, that involves repentance and a return to Spirit-powered living. We can and we should help each other do that.

BUT WE CAN'T ... If the man needing help stays silent

----- GALATIANS 6:2

Moving to Galatians 6:2, we read a command from the Apostle Paul on how to share our burdens, needs and problems

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." – Galatians 6:2

What does Galatians 6:2 mean?

Paul is giving instructions to the Galatian Christians about how to live with each other as Spirit-powered people in Christ. In the previous verse, he told them that when one is caught by sin, others should step in to help restore that person to walking by the Spirit again.

Now he tells them, and by extension all Christians, to help carry each other's burdens. Notice that being in Christ does not mean we won't have burdens to carry. We will. One of those burdens is the weight of our temptation to give into sin, and the heaviness of trying to get out of it. Paul wanted us to share that burden and not battle sin and temptation on our own.

We carry other burdens too and sometimes we go through seasons where those burdens are too much for us to haul around. Such burdens might include relationship issues, financial problems, illness, indecision, or emotional difficulties. God's Spirit certainly gives us the power to deal with these issues, but another way God intends to provide for those in Christ is by giving us the ability to help each other.

One way we can fail in this area is by refusing to allow anyone to see the burdens we are carrying. We can mistakenly think that being a Christian means we should be self-reliant in every way, all the time. Paul reminds us that Christians are also meant to help each other with the loads we carry when they become overwhelming.

BUT WE CAN'T ... If the man needing the help stays silent

----- THE TEMPLATE

All men have needs and NONE of our needs are minor
The devil wants you to keep quiet about them
Because no ask = no change
But men's struggles need the applied power of God through other Spirit filled men of God to overcome them
In chapter 6 of Galatians, Paul tells us we need this kind of help

WHAT CAN WE DO?

HOW CAN WE GET THE MOST FROM OUR BAND OF BROTHERS?

Well, let me share a simple approach
Wayne leads our Band of Brothers group.
He and I met over lunch to discuss this topic
We decided that he and I would:
- ALWAYS have something to share
- ALWAYS have a need to pray for
- ALWAYS share a sin that needed conquering

We will always set the example for sharing our struggles and be willing to ask for help
To encourage other men to join that process, we sketched out a one page handout

The handout in front of you will be used in our group as:

An ice breaker that makes it "OK" to share
A biblical imperative that makes it clear we should share by showing related scripture
An example of reminders of the common struggles and sins of men

BOB leaders, if your group struggles in this area, bring copies of this to your next session
Walk through the sheet again to get men comfortable and biblically aligned to the process

THEN

Be the example in your group by leading off

----- CLOSING COMMENTS

God wants you to be more Christlike
You want to better reflect the light of Christ to those around you

- You can't do it alone
- You need other men to help
- You can't get help unless you ask
- Remember, the devil wants your silence
- Don't give it to him, open up to the men in your Band of Brothers group
- Let them, though the Holy Spirit, help you in life and in your Christian walk.