

Disciples Helping Each Other

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Last week, I gave a sermon titled "Disciples Helping Each Other." The majority of the scriptures that I quoted in that sermon were from the book of Acts. I decided to write this article with some of those scriptures and a few additional verses.

■ Acts 1:12-13—When the Son of God returned to Jerusalem, he entered an "upper room" to be with His disciples and family members. The Bible mentions that there were 120 people there.

■ Acts 4:32-37—This section of Scripture shows the disciples looking out for each other. Some people use these verses to show that the Bible teaches socialism.

Resembles socialism

On one hand, I understand why some people believe that these verses promote socialism.

Acts 4:32—"Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common."

Acts 4:34-35—"Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need."

Acts 4:36-37—"And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

Not demanded

Yet, on the other hand, I caution disciples to recognize religious organizations and religious individuals who are overtly or subtly trying to get money from kind people.

2 Peter 2:3—"By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber."

The Bible talks about cheerful giving.

2 Corinthians 9:7—"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

- I think it was wonderful for those disciples in Acts 4 to want to share with each other.
- But I recommend that disciples of today continue to maintain ownership of physical possessions—as they have a giving heart toward helping other people.

Hospitality in Acts

- Acts 8:1—When persecution arose against the church at Jerusalem, most of the disciples were scattered.
- Acts 9:36-39—When Tabitha (also called Dorcas) of Joppa died, the widows were weeping because of all the clothing that she had made for her friends.
- Acts 11:27-30—When there was a famine throughout the world, the disciples in Antioch decided to send relief to the disciples in Judea.
- Acts 16:14-15—In Philippi, Paul baptized a successful business lady and her family.
- Acts 16:40—Paul and Silas returned to Lydia's house—after a harrowing experience with magistrates, a beating, prison and deliverance.
- Acts 20:6—Paul stayed with disciples in Troas for five days.
- Acts 20:7-12—Paul broke bread with them and preached for a long time.
- Acts 21:4-6—Paul stayed with disciples in Tyre for seven days. The disciples walked him to the edge of the city, and he boarded a ship.
- Acts 21:8-13—While Paul stayed with Philip in Caesarea, Agabus the prophet warned Paul about danger in Jerusalem. The disciples pleaded with Paul not to travel to Jerusalem. But Paul decided to go.

It is a beautiful thing to see disciples helping each other.