

Look Out for One Another's Good

Work with other believers to see that Christians get the things they need for spiritual growth, relationship obedience, and physical security, whether or not they are seeking them.

**Rom 15:1-3; Gal 6:10; Phil 2:3-4; Titus 3:14;
Heb 6:10; James 1:27; 1 Peter 4:19**

God wants us to work with other believers to see that Christians get the good things they need for physical security, for their relationships, and for spiritual growth, whether or not they are seeking them.

Galatians 6:10 instructs us like this: *“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”*

When He walked on earth 2,000 years ago, Jesus was concerned about the deeper needs of people, especially their spiritual needs,. So, you want to prepare for heaven by becoming more and more able to figure out what people really need that is truly good for them.

In heaven it will be natural to look out for the good of others. However, in heaven, to what degree you will be natural and skilled depends on how deeply you become able to look out for people's needs now before you die. Presently, everyone you know faces difficulties caused by the evil that Satan began sowing into the world from the beginning of the human race. Everything can be much harder now, and God knows it. Therefore, He wants people in His kingdom to look out for one another's good.

There are two things that get in the way of watching out for one another's good. First, we think that people have to ask us to watch out for them. Second, we do not look deep enough into what others need and is good for them.

In the first case, we don't want to meddle in someone else's affairs. The problem is that God asks us to, definitely if that other person is in God's kingdom and belongs to Him. It is clearly pointed out in two places, 1 Corinthians, chapters 6 and again in 7, that we are not our own but have been bought at the price of Jesus' death. In other words, we belong to God and, as such, God has the right to ask people who belong to Him to watch out for others who are His.

You belong to God. God wants to make sure you are not out there on your own in a world that can be hurtful and dangerous. Therefore, those in your Christian Inner Circle have the responsibility to watch out for you – and you for them.

Looking out for one another's good is more thinking than doing. Looking out for what will truly be good for others requires contemplation and assessment, preferably in groups of two or three Christians with Jesus who promises to be there in such a small gathering.

The task of careful identification and assessment of what next good thing a person needs is most often a job for a few Christians working together. Only one of us making such a decision is risky because it can be incorrectly biased or does not consider something important. The great resources of God through one Christian are much less than what can be done by a few of the Lord's people working together.

To prepare for heaven, think about whatever good each of your close Christian friends and relatives need.

In many cases, they will not be aware of some of their very most important needs. Look beyond basic needs to a multitude of other essential things. Almost all of the Togethers address something good your Christian friends and family members need. Bring others into the discussion as appropriate if they can be trusted to hold the conversation confidential. Eventually, ask the person you are focused on to validate the need or refine it.

Looking out for one another's good is battling the devil who is doing all he can to destroy people. Therefore, looking out for one another's good is not often comfortable, convenient or safe. War against Satan has discomfort, sacrifice and suffering. But these things have great power to refine our spirits to be more like Jesus and prepare us for heaven. This is a task for you and those Christians you trust to be dedicated to Jesus and seek help from the Holy Spirit. 1 John 3:8 tells us that the Son of God, Jesus, came to earth to destroy the works of the devil. We join our Lord in this by spotting the evil designs of Satan and invoking those Togethers necessary to "destroy the devil's work".

Looking out for one another's good means that we want the best for Christians, particularly our closer friends and family members into whose lives we have a closer view. We are not called just to care in our hearts, but to make sure that what is truly good and essential is made available by us or others.

Now let's look at what you can do to develop your spirit for heaven by looking out for the good of others. You want to change your thinking, emotions, and actions to be more like Jesus as they relate to people's physical security, relationship needs, and spiritual growth.

It might be good to keep a notebook with the name of each of those in your Christian Inner Circle, each on a separate page. Write down what the Lord reveals to you are specific good things that person needs. You can have pages for non-believing family and friends also. Since looking out for another's needs is often identifying something that person doesn't know of or desire, having the good they need in the notebook allows you to remember to help them over the long time that might be necessary.

Let's start with needs for physical security. And, we will not focus on food, clothing and shelter as those will automatically come to mind. They also are addressed by the Together to meet one another's needs, sometimes the end action of looking out for one another's good.

Think about what it is that would be the next improvement, the next good, each person needs in the way of their physical well-being. Are they getting enough rest or are they too busy and neglecting their own needs? Would it be good for them to save more money? Do you know of any advice about staying healthy that they might want or need to hear? Things like that can be jotted down in the notebook.

Next comes relationship needs. For each of those in your Christian Inner Circle, what would be good things that might enhance their relationships with other people. Here, the possibilities for their good are many. Do they need to spend more time with their spouse and/or children? Do they need to have more fun with family and friends? Do they enjoy the deeper love and fellowship of other Christians or are they trapped in less personal religious activities? If they are elderly, do they need more visits from their children and grandchildren, or friends?

What do they need to do for the good of the important people in their lives? Are they estranged from a family member? Are there people they need to forgive? Do they pray enough for the people they love? Might they need to help any of their family with money or physical help? A quick reading of the Togethers of Scripture at our website ChristiansTogether.org will bring many more things to mind.

Last, but not least, comes the spiritual needs of others. What would be good spiritually for them to grasp and apply in the realm of truth and life? Do they know the joy of living for God rather than for themselves? What is the very next thing they need to know about the Lord and put completely in their thoughts, feelings and actions? Do they have enough Christian friends they can truly rely on if life gets tough? Do they have close Christians they trust enough to listen to when they need to be challenged? Again, a quick reading of the Togethers of Scripture at our website ChristiansTogether.org will bring

many more things to mind.

So, first you need to analyze what would be good for your friends and family members. Then you need to pray that these good things will come into their lives – and that they will accept them. Note that in many cases you will not be helpful if you give quick advice or sermons about what they need. You will have to judge your relationship with each person to determine how fast or slow you need to go. But knowing the good another needs and asking the Lord in prayer to give that to them is always valuable.

Sometimes you will be wrong about what a person needs. As long as you don't try to force the issue, God will intervene and keep that 'good' you want for them from happening or make it right if they do get something not really good for them.

Looking out for one another is a very great privilege and has these definite benefits in heaven.

In heaven you will be looking out for the needs of others, even if those needs will not be related any longer to evil. Carefully analyzing the needs of others causes you to be less focused on yourself. Most places of service in heaven will require the skill of looking out for another's good, in one way or another. Therefore, you will be qualifying yourself for a better job with its enhanced benefits.

In heaven you will experience greater joy when you look out for the needs of others. Now, when you look out for the good of another, and that good comes to pass, you feel joy. Therefore, in carefully analyzing and looking out for the needs of others, you will be increasing your spirit's capacity for joy. Then, in heaven, where everyone will look out for the needs of others, your joy will be much greater, especially because you will have learned before death to look out for the needs of others out of joy rather than duty.

In heaven you will be overwhelmed with joy when you see those you knew on earth freed from all the damage the devil did to them. When you now work against Satan's harm that holds others back from what is truly good for them, your spirit will change to more completely desire freedom from harm for those in your Christian Inner Circle. Then, later in heaven, when you see all of them completely free from Satan's damage, you will have greater joy than if you had not paid much attention to how they were hurt and damaged by evil.

In heaven, you will see more sharply the absence of evil and rejoice. In looking out for the good of others now, you will take more notice of the evil in this life before death. Your spirit will grow to desire light over darkness, good over evil. Then, entering heaven, you will be more aware of the goodness of heaven and the absence of evil.

Last, and most important, in heaven you will appreciate the purity of heaven, and be more aware of God's presence. Seeing the evil that causes pain for those you care about and desperately wanting what is good for them will change your spirit to appreciate purity and the absence of evil in heaven. Since God Himself is pure, your spirit will be able to be aware of His goodness and purity to the extent that in the midst of a troubled world you sought purity and good for others.

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This just scratches the surface of explaining how to look out for one another's good. To learn much more, go to our website ChristiansTogether.org and go down the list of the Togethers and click on "Look Out for One Another's Good".

Prayer to Embrace this Together

I and those in my Christian Inner Circle will need Your help to grow our spirits to look out for one another's good. Help us to yield to the work of the Holy Spirit for all of us to give You more glory in the

way we watch out for one another.

Please help us all to become more like Jesus and work with other Christians to see that believers get the good things they need for physical security, for their relationships, and for their spiritual growth, whether or not they are seeking them. Everything Jesus did was for the good of others. We want to be like Him in this way.

Help us to reflect back to You Your nature which always looks out for our good. Help us, like You, to always have the good of others in mind as we interact with them.

Make us strong in Your power to defeat the devil so that we take the battle to the front lines where Satan is doing all he can to destroy people. Help us to be soldiers against evil and to not be so concerned about our own safety and comfort. Let us see clearly the "good" that each person needs to overcome evil's harm.

Help us all to prepare for heaven by growing more completely to look out for the good of others, as in heaven we will need to do that continually. Make us sensitive to the good others need because they have been afflicted by evil. Then, we will be exuberant in heaven to see the absence of hurt and that no healing love is necessary.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.