

# The Ministry of Refreshment

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*2 Timothy 1:16-18 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.*

Paul's ministry was not unlike the ministry of many modern ministers. He rode the emotional roller coaster that we call spiritual leadership. He knew how joy and sorrow all wrapped up in one tasted. On several occasions the apostle mentioned key individuals in his life that gave him the extra "oomph" he needed to do the Lord's work.

There is a compelling need for the ministry of refreshment in the realm of spiritual leadership. Moses needed Aaron and Hur to hold up his weary hands. David needed some mighty men to make an impact in his life one day. Remember the story—

*2 Samuel 23:14-17 And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate! And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD. And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.*

What was David's compelling need in this passage? At first answer someone would say, he needed a drink of water. Read the text again and you'll find that's not what he needed at all. In fact, he poured the water out. What David needed during this difficult time in his life was for someone to show him how much he meant to them. He needed someone to say in a practical way, "David, I remember when I was in distress. I was in debt. I was discontented, and I came to you and you took me in and led me. (1 Samuel 22:2) Now I want to show you I appreciate you."

Paul was lonely and imprisoned in Rome, when a believer who loved him came from Ephesus and sought him out until he found him just so he could serve him.

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MINISTRY OF REFRESHMENT

**Onesiphorus' concern for Paul was sincere.** One gift of refreshment means more than twenty "If you need anything call me." But this was not a one-time act of kindness. It was a lifetime of love.

**His concern was sacrificial.** It cost him his reputation. Paul said, "He was not ashamed of me." Every pastor needs someone who'd take a bullet for him.

**His concern was deliberate.** Onesiphorus did not say, "If I'm in the area and get a opportunity, I'll try to do something." He didn't say, "Well I looked all day today, didn't find him, it must not be God's will." Paul said, "He sought me out diligently until he found me."

## THE CONCLUSION OF THIS MINISTRY

As a spiritual follower, you're going **to be remembered**. Moses remembered the people he led (see Numbers 11:10-15), but that's not the way I want to be remembered by my leaders.

*Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

You're going **to be rewarded**. Paul prayed for Onesiphorus that "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day."

*1 Corinthians 16:17-18 I am happy that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus have come...They have refreshed my spirit and yours. You should recognize the value of people like these.*

I recognize the value of men like Eddie Roberts, whom God in his infinite wisdom, chose to take from our fellowship on January 25, 2000. He was my Aaron, my Hur, my Abishai, my Onesiphorus all rolled into one. I pray, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Eddie Roberts—his parents, Floyd & Sheila; his wife, Teresa; and his 5-year old daughter, Amanda."