SYMPATHY

Do you know what sympathy is? There are many definitions but I think the one I like best is, “an affinity, association or relationship between persons or things wherein whatever affects one similarly affects the other.” In the New Testament the word is only used twice in the English Standard Version. In Phil. 2:1 “So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy.” In 1 Pet. 3:8 “Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.” In the ASV the word in Philippians is “consolation of love,” and in 1 Peter the word “compassionate.” The definitions of these words and phrases are similar.

While Christians are told to be sympathetic, or compassionate, most of us really try our best to be that way. Younger people have a bigger problem with this because of their lack of experience. Older people have been through more, experienced similar things and in many instances it makes it easier.

Sickness and maladies comes to many of us through the years and we know what it is like to be confined to a bed, unable to do for ourselves, etc. We can “sympathize,” with folks who are in the same situation. And it is a great comfort to those, especially, who are experiencing it for the first time. It is good to know that others have gone through what we are going through and come out of it allright.

Some of the greatest joys and satisfactions in life are those that come from commiserating with folks in trouble.

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