

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Busybody?

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Was the good Samaritan a busybody? He surely stepped into a person's life and took control. It was not enough for him to dress a man's wounds, he determined where the man was to stay, and without discussing the matter with the man, he put down money to pay further medical bills. Did he even stop to ask and consider the desire and feelings of the man he stopped to help? By the way, how come the Samaritan had so much time on his hands to stop, assist, and transport the befallen traveler? Busy bodies are usually idle people with nothing to do but meddle in the life of others. The priest and the Levite could have had important religious demands on their schedule that kept them from getting involved.

No one seriously believes the Good Samaritan was a busy body. Why? First, it was obvious the beaten man left half dead was in need of medical attention. Dressing the wounds was the needed action the Good Samaritan undertook. Riding on the donkey was probably a necessity for a half dead man. And being robbed, the man probably had no money to pay for his stay at the inn and possible further assistance. This was not the case of

injecting oneself into another's affairs when such intrusion is not wanted. The Good Samaritan was being a true neighbor, not a meddling busy body.

The busybodies often suffer because in overseeing things that belong to another, they foster a negative response for their unwanted intrusion. Peter speaks to this aspect of being a busybody when he writes, “*For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters*” (I Peter 4:15). The one Greek word translated “*meddler in other men's matters*” is a compound word combining *ALLOTRIO* - “*belonging to another person*” and *EPISKOPOS* - “*an overseer*”.

As a murderer takes away the life of one, and the thief takes away the property of another, the busybody takes away the right and responsibility of looking over one's own personal affairs. As the murderer, thief, and evil doer will suffer repercussions for their evil deeds, the busybody will also suffer repercussions, often in the form of painful rebuke and lost friendships. The suffering of the busybody is put this way in Proverbs: “*He that passeth by,*

and vexeth himself with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears” (Proverbs 26:17). Beware busybody! You are never far from suffering a painful bite when you meddle with one's ears.

It has been said idle hands are the Devil's workshop. This is certainly true with busybodies. Young widows “*learned to be idle,*” yet they filled their day with “*going about from house to house*”. Not tending to their own business, they soon were literally “*working around*” injecting themselves in the business of others, and babbling about the things they have learned by the intrusion (I Timothy 5:13). The remedy is for a young widow to marry, bear children and rule over her household (I Timothy 5:14). Being busy in one's own responsibilities keeps us from learning to be idle and helps eliminate the tendency to meddle in the affairs of others.

We are going to fill our day with some activity. We should have productive work to do, even when we are retired. Our congregation is blessed with widows who are quietly going about doing good works and helping others. You can be neighborly, without being a busybody.