

Stephen Ministry Sermon

Sunday, July 28, 2013

2 Corinthians 1: 2—4 (NIV)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all of our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”

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Our heavenly Father tells us that His desire is to work through us, His children, to extend His compassion and comfort to others; to encourage and uplift each other.

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“God is sovereignly orchestrating all situations and events everywhere and at all time to bring us into a closer relationship with Himself and others...for His glory and our ultimate joy”.

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Even for the believer a time of difficulty may still be confusing times, anxious times, frustrating times, and scary times!

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Going through a tough time with another person will make the transition go more smoothly and successfully. For some, their trial will weigh very heavily on them.

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*(6 minute Stephen Ministry video)*

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Ephesians 4: 11-12 (NASB)

“And He (Christ) gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;”

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Jesus Christ gives His church the necessary leadership and teaching and preaching gifts to equip and to train His people.

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God’s people...that’s me and you, the Body of Christ, the congregation...are called by our Lord to be trained to do the work of the ministry.

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There are always many more needs for ongoing, one-on-one care than our pastors or elders can effectively and efficiently meet by themselves. Stephen Ministers are gifted lay people who can support and assist our pastors and elders by receiving the necessary training to reach out with God’s love to folks who are hurting – both congregation members and nonmembers alike.

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*(Short 30 second Stephen Ministry video)*

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What is a Stephen Minister?

- He or she is a child of God who walks beside a person who is hurting.
- He or she is a Grace Church member with gifts for caregiving who is carefully selected to serve in this role.
- He or she is a lay person, not one of our pastors, who has been equipped thru 50 hours of training in providing emotional and spiritual care.
- He or she is a caring Christian friend who confidentially listens, prays, supports, and encourages.
- He or she is someone who will “be there” for his or her care receiver, meeting faithfully for about an hour each week, for as long as there is the need.

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Our training will start on Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>.