

THE “ONE ANOTHER” CHURCH

by Pamela Urfer



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CHURCH**

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Bearing One Another's Burdens

(Galatians 6:1-5)

CAST: JANE and BETH

TIME: Four minutes

JANE: Beth, I don't know whether you've heard, but Bill and I are thinking of getting a divorce.

BETH: Are you planning on going to the women's tea Thursday? It should be a lot of fun. I hear they've got a good speaker.

JANE: Beth, did you hear what I said? I said that Bill and I . . .

BETH: Of course I heard you. You don't have to say it again.

JANE: Well, I just thought that perhaps, . . . that is . . .

BETH: What do you want from me, Jane? Sympathy?

JANE: Well, no. I guess not. It's just that I've been feeling so down lately.

BETH: Well, naturally you feel down. Who wouldn't? But if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

JANE: What do you mean by that?

BETH: I mean that if you don't think you can handle it, then don't do it. Make things up with Bill. Get back together again.

JANE: It's not that simple, Beth.

BETH: Have you tried. *Really* tried?

JANE: Yes.

BETH: I can't believe that. *(Pause)* You know I don't approve of divorce.

JANE: I don't approve of divorce, either.

BETH: It's a sin.

JANE: I know. And I'm sorry. I'm sorry it's happening. You can't believe how sorry I am.

BETH: Not sorry enough, apparently. *(Pause)* What did you do to make Bill want to leave?

JANE: What did I do? What makes you think I did anything?

- 1 **BETH:** It's always the woman's fault when a marriage goes
2 bad.
- 3 **JANE:** Please, Beth. Don't make me feel any worse than I do
4 already.
- 5 **BETH:** Well, it is! I don't mean that you did anything as awful
6 as adultery. . . . You didn't, did you?
- 7 **JANE:** No!
- 8 **BETH:** Well, then. What did you do?
- 9 **JANE:** Why does it have to be me? If you must know, it was
10 Bill. He's having an affair and he won't give it up.
- 11 **BETH:** Jane! You shouldn't have told me that! That's gossip!
- 12 **JANE:** But you asked me! And I hoped maybe it would make
13 you feel, well, a little more . . .
- 14 **BETH:** Understanding? I told you I didn't approve.
- 15 **JANE:** I didn't ask you to approve! I just needed someone
16 to . . . listen, maybe hold my hand.
- 17 **BETH:** (*Reluctantly*) Well, I suppose that would be the right
18 thing to do. But first, tell me! When you found out about
19 this . . . uh . . . indiscretion of Bill's, did you say anything
20 to hurt his feelings?
- 21 **JANE:** Hurt his feelings!
- 22 **BETH:** You know what I mean? Did you do everything a
23 Christian wife should? Were you patient and kind? Did
24 you put your feelings aside? Did you tell him you would
25 stand by him no matter what?
- 26 **JANE:** (*Slowly*) No, I can't say I did. Perhaps some day . . .
- 27 **BETH:** Well, there, you see! How can I offer you sympathy
28 when you haven't been blameless in this business? No
29 wonder Bill wants to leave.
- 30 **JANE:** (*Getting up.*) If you'll excuse me, Beth, I think I've had
31 about enough of your thoughtful understanding for one
32 day.
- 33 **BETH:** (*Watching her go. Huffily*) Well! That's the last time I try
34 to help *her* with a problem.
- 35

Encouraging One Another to Good Works

(Hebrews 10:24)

CAST: FRED and SAM

TIME: Five minutes

FRED: You know, that sermon the pastor gave on “Good Works” really touched my heart. I haven’t been doing nearly enough for those less fortunate than myself. I’ve decided to give more to the church.

SAM: Hey! That’s a really great idea!

FRED: Yes. I’m going to tithe for sure, and maybe even give a little something extra to some special charities. I really want to do good works for the Lord.

SAM: Over and above your ten percent?

FRED: Sure. If I get a bonus at work, or something like that, I might give it to the drug ministry. Or the shelter for the homeless. Or . . .

SAM: Well, that certainly sounds wonderful, but . . .

FRED: But, what?

SAM: Does that really make sense, economically? Sure, it’s important to give, but we mustn’t forget our primary responsibilities.

FRED: Such as?

SAM: Well, your family, first of all. You made a vow, a contract, if you like, when you first got married, to be financially responsible for your family’s expenses. It wouldn’t do anyone any good if the four of you became needy yourselves. Then others would just have to spend their money taking care of you.

FRED: We’re a long way from that.

SAM: Can anyone really say that, these days. One or two months without the receipts coming in and you’d never even make payroll.

FRED: That’s true.

- 1 **SAM:** And, of course, you'll be wanting your children to go off
2 to college.
- 3 **FRED:** They're only in elementary now.
- 4 **SAM:** This is the time to start planning. Did you see that
5 article in *Newsweek*? Harvard's tuition is \$23,000 a year!
- 6 **FRED:** Wow!
- 7 **SAM:** You should have some money put aside, or invested, for
8 that. Do you?
- 9 **FRED:** Well, some. Not a lot.
- 10 **SAM:** Better invest a pretty big hunk if you want them to
11 have a decent education. It's not right that your children
12 should be a burden to the taxpayers — or the scholarship
13 fund.
- 14 **FRED:** I can see your point.
- 15 **SAM:** And what about insurance? Do you have enough coverage
16 to make sure your wife and children will be well off? You
17 wouldn't want them to suffer, would you?
- 18 **FRED:** Of course not! I have some insurance and I guess I've
19 always sort of counted on God to provide . . .
- 20 **SAM:** Fred! That's the worst kind of spiritual pride, to think
21 God will bail you out when you've been too lax and
22 irresponsible to do it yourself.
- 23 **FRED:** Maybe you're right. But I could still tithe. And, of
24 course, there's the building fund.
- 25 **SAM:** Now, what about this building fund? After all, a bigger
26 church will just mean new members. I'm having a hard
27 enough time just remembering the names of all the people
28 there now. And more members will mean more kids and
29 you know the C.E. department can't get anyone to teach
30 Sunday School as it is. We may be stepping too far out
31 in front of God on this one. I think we had better hold
32 on to our money until we're sure this is really God's will.
- 33 **FRED:** But how will we know that?
- 34 **SAM:** Well, if everyone else gives a lot of money, then we'll
35 know it's OK to go ahead and give ours.

1 **FRED:** OK. But I still want to tithe. That's OK, isn't it?
2 **SAM:** *Only* if you're sure you've covered all your other
3 obligations first. Didn't we agree on that?
4 **FRED:** You're right. But you know the pastor needs enough
5 to live on.
6 **SAM:** Oh, he's got that, and more. Do you know what he told
7 me?
8 **FRED:** What?
9 **SAM:** He told me that he tithes, too. Don't you see what that
10 means?
11 **FRED:** What?
12 **SAM:** That means he's getting more money from the
13 congregation than he really needs. So don't worry about
14 him. He's doing great!
15 **FRED:** Oh! OK.
16 **SAM:** Well, got to go. Hope you'll seriously consider what I've
17 said. And, Fred, I think it's just great that you're going
18 to be doing such great works for the Lord.
19 **FRED:** Thanks, Sam. I just hope the Lord appreciates it.
20 **SAM:** Amen to that!
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Accepting One Another

(Romans 15:7)

CAST: ALICE and BETTY

TIME: Seven minutes

ALICE: I've often thought of going to church. I really would like to get to know God better, but, I don't know, I'm just not sure I would be accepted.

BETTY: I'm sure you'd like our church. We're really very accepting.

ALICE: You are? Well, . . . no. I just don't think it would work. Not when people really got to know me and hear about the kind of life I've led.

BETTY: No, really, they would. We're very accepting. It doesn't matter at all what you've done before. What matters is that now you want to draw closer to God. *(To audience)* Right? *(To ALICE)* We're all sinners here. We've all done things we're ashamed of. *(To audience)* Right?

ALICE: It doesn't matter, really? That sounds great! But, I don't know . . .

BETTY: Why don't you try it? Give us a chance.

ALICE: Well, one thing I think you should know before you make all these promises.

BETTY: *(In a hushed voice)* What?

ALICE: We, my husband and I, we're . . . we're . . .

BETTY: Yes?

ALICE: *(Embarrassed)* We're Democrats.

BETTY: Democrats!

ALICE: Yes. And worse than that, we voted for all the liberals on the ticket.

BETTY: *(Bravely)* Well, that's all right. Really. I'm sure no one in our church will throw that up to you.

ALICE: But that's not all. In the last election we voted against prayer in the public schools.

- 1 **BETTY:** (*Nervously*) Well, that's all right. Really. As I said, I'm
 2 sure, almost positive, that no one will throw that ...
- 3 **ALICE:** And when we were students we were Beatniks and
 4 later, part of the Flower Child scene in the Haight-
 5 Ashbury, ...
- 6 **BETTY:** Well, that's all in the past now.
- 7 **ALICE:** And we were members of the Communist Party.
- 8 **BETTY:** (*Shocked*) Really! Well, as I said, that's all in the ...
- 9 **ALICE:** And we still support the Civil Liberties Union.
- 10 **BETTY:** You do?! I mean, you *do*. How ... er, ... interesting!
 11 But, that's all right. Really. We have a very understanding ...
- 12 **ALICE:** My husband is a doctor ...
- 13 **BETTY:** (*Relieved*) How lovely! We have a number of ...
- 14 **ALICE:** And he works for Planned Parenthood.
- 15 **BETTY:** Planned Parenthood!
- 16 **ALICE:** Are you sure your church ... ?
- 17 **BETTY:** Oh, yes. Absolutely! We are very accepting. (*To*
 18 *audience*) Right?
- 19 **ALICE:** (*Sadly*) There's more.
- 20 **BETTY:** (*Resigned*) I was afraid there might be.
- 21 **ALICE:** Our son is a drug addict.
- 22 **BETTY:** Many people's children ...
- 23 **ALICE:** Which is understandable since his father ... was
 24 able to get him the drugs from the hospital, free.
- 25 **BETTY:** (*At a loss*) How nice!
- 26 **ALICE:** He did quit a lot of that ...
- 27 **BETTY:** Your son?
- 28 **ALICE:** My husband. He was arrested. For pushing drugs ...
- 29 **BETTY:** Oh?
- 30 **ALICE:** ... in the elementary schools.
- 31 **BETTY:** Ah!
- 32 **ALICE:** While he was in prison, well, you know how prisons
 33 are, he er ... how accepting did you say your church ... ?
- 34 **BETTY:** Extremely! (*To audience*) Right?
- 35 **ALICE:** ... well, he got involved with ...

- 1 **BETTY:** *(Cringing)* Yes?
2 **ALICE:** ... the Mob.
3 **BETTY:** OH! *(Sigh of relief)* Is that all?
4 **ALICE:** They wanted him to help with their drug smuggling
5 operation but he refused.
6 **BETTY:** Oh! *(Ray of hope)* Well, good for him!
7 **ALICE:** He knew he just wasn't suited for that sort of thing.
8 **BETTY:** *(Indignantly)* I should think not!
9 **ALICE:** No. So he became their hit man instead.
10 **BETTY:** *(Automatically)* That's all right. Really. I'm sure no
11 one will ...
12 **ALICE:** *(Sadly)* While he was in prison, I ... well you know
13 how it is, I'm sure, for those left behind ...
14 **BETTY:** Of course.
15 **ALICE:** I had an affair ...
16 **BETTY:** *(Understandingly)* Many women ...
17 **ALICE:** ... with my mother's husband ...
18 **BETTY:** Oh!
19 **ALICE:** Who was also my husband's lawyer.
20 **BETTY:** Really!
21 **ALICE:** And the child ...
22 **BETTY:** The child!
23 **ALICE:** ... was born retarded.
24 **BETTY:** Oh.
25 **ALICE:** When I realized that she wasn't going to be normal, I
26 asked the doctor what to do, and he suggested I put her ...
27 **BETTY:** What?
28 **ALICE:** ... in an institution.
29 **BETTY:** *(Relieved)* Oh.
30 **ALICE:** Where I could visit her every day.
31 **BETTY:** I see. Well, our church does have a program for the ...
32 **ALICE:** But she died.
33 **BETTY:** How sad.
34 **ALICE:** Of AIDS.
35 **BETTY:** AIDS!

1 ALICE: Yes. I think she got it from my son, who gave her an . . .
2 BETTY: . . . injection?
3 ALICE: (*Surprised*) No, a blood transfusion.
4 BETTY: So you mean he . . .
5 ALICE: (*Sadly*) . . . has it, too.
6 BETTY: This must all have been very difficult for you.
7 ALICE: Yes, it certainly was. That's why I think that perhaps
8 what I need is God.
9 BETTY: Don't we all! (*To audience*) Right?
10 ALICE: Anyway, I was wondering, now that you know all about
11 me, do you think your church would still be so . . . ?
12 BETTY: . . . accepting? I don't know, Alice. I honestly don't
13 know. (*To audience*) What do you think? Can we accept her
14 in our church?
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Being Hospitable to One Another

(I Peter 4:9)

CAST: WALTER and BILL

TIME: Seven minutes

(BILL enters and joins WALTER who was already seated.)

WALTER: Say, Bill. Nice to see you. Sit down. I've been meaning to ask you if you and the Missus would like to come over to dinner one of these nights.

BILL: Say! That's real nice of you folks. I'm sure Helen would love to.

WALTER: Let's set it for next Saturday. OK?

BILL: I think that'll be alright. Don't think we're committed for then.

WALTER: Great! I'm glad that's settled! Wilma's been on my case about this for weeks. Every time we come to church she says, "Now find Walter, and ask him." And every Sunday I forget.

BILL: I know what you mean. It's hard to keep up with all the little chores they want you to do.

WALTER: Isn't that the truth! Things the women think are so important just seem to go in one end of my brain and out the other.

BILL: That's so, isn't it?

WALTER: Take this having-people-over-to-dinner business. Can't ever seem to remember who we're having — or why.

BILL: Oh, well . . .

WALTER: Just not important to me, if you see what I mean.

BILL: Er, . . . yes. I suppose I . . .

WALTER: Women's kind of thing, you know? Sitting around the table, drinking coffee, talking and all that. Can't seem to get really interested.

BILL: Well, if you'd rather not, we . . .

WALTER: Now what I like to do after dinner, is just sit and

1 watch TV. Talking's too much work. Know what I mean?

2 **BILL:** Well, actually, I enjoy it.

3 **WALTER:** (*Amazed*) You do?

4 **BILL:** Well, sometimes. If the company's good.

5 **WALTER:** Oh, sure. If the company's good. But how many

6 times does that happen? Once in a blue moon. No, what

7 I like's TV. Come home from a hard day's work, you don't

8 want to have to chat with some numbskull that doesn't

9 even know what the football scores are, now do you?

10 **BILL:** No, of course not. *I* always enjoy talking football

11 scores.

12 **WALTER:** That's right. No fun talking to people at the end of

13 a hard day's work.

14 **BILL:** But Saturday now. That's different. We're coming over

15 on Saturday, didn't you say?

16 **WALTER:** Saturday's are the worst. Either I have to go to the

17 office anyway, to finish all the work I couldn't get done

18 during the week, or Wilma's got me working so hard

19 around the house or the yard I just collapse at five o'clock.

20 **BILL:** Oh. Well, I'm glad you're off next Saturday. We wouldn't

21 want to be an imposition.

22 **WALTER:** Off next Saturday? What gave you that idea? Have

23 to work at the office and home both, more'n likely.

24 **BILL:** Oh, well, perhaps it would be better if Helen and I

25 were to come some other time. I hate to make you . . .

26 **WALTER:** Another time? Of course not. We're really counting

27 on you and Helen being there.

28 **BILL:** Oh, great. I was afraid for a moment . . .

29 **WALTER:** Even though that will be SuperBowl Previews day

30 and I sure hate to miss those.

31 **BILL:** Well, really, Walt. There's no reason for you to miss

32 them. I like SuperBowl Previews, too. And I'm sure Helen

33 and Wilma . . .

34 **WALTER:** No, there's where you're wrong. Those women just

35 don't appreciate such things. No, there's nothing to do

- 1 but bite the bullet. Have to keep Wilma happy, and this
2 is the kind of thing she likes — having people over for
3 dinner.
- 4 **BILL:** And you don't.
- 5 **WALTER:** (*Gloomily*) Can't say that I do. Seems a terrible
6 waste of time.
- 7 **BILL:** Well, Walt, this puts me in a rather awkward position.
- 8 **WALTER:** (*Surprised*) It does? How's that?
- 9 **BILL:** Well, I'm getting the idea you don't really want us to
10 come.
- 11 **WALTER:** Now where on earth did you ever get that notion?
- 12 **BILL:** (*Confused*) Well, I thought ... That is, you were saying ...
- 13 **WALTER:** Not at all! Not at all! I love having people over ...
- 14 **BILL:** (*Relieved*) Oh, good. I ...
- 15 **WALTER:** If they're the right sort, that is.
- 16 **BILL:** Oh! And are we ... ? That is ... er ...
- 17 **WALTER:** Can't stand spending a hard day at work and then
18 coming home to dinner with the wrong sort of people.
19 Ruins my whole day. Know what I mean?
- 20 **BILL:** Well, almost, but ... er, what sort is the ...
- 21 **WALTER:** Now, the right sort of people can really liven up a
22 dinner party. Make everything fun, you know what I mean?
23 Makes you glad your wife's gone and done it. Even if you'd
24 usually rather not.
- 25 **BILL:** Oh, exactly. Absolutely. I see what you mean. Now,
26 these "right sorts". What do they. ... That is, how ... ?
- 27 **WALTER:** But the other sort. Really can't imagine anything
28 worse than having to sit next to them for a couple of hours,
29 wasting my time when I could be watching TV.
- 30 **BILL:** Oh. But exactly what do they ...
- 31 **WALTER:** Oh, now here's Wilma. She'll be so tickled I finally
32 got around to inviting you. She's been nagging me to invite
33 someone, *anyone*, for weeks. She says it isn't right for us
34 to go years without having people over.
- 35 **BILL:** Years?

1 **WALTER:** Doesn't seem near that long to me but, that's what
2 she says. She seems to think I put people off. Don't know
3 what she's talking about. I invited you, didn't I?

4 **BILL:** Yes, you certainly did.

5 **WALTER:** Offered you and your wife the hospitality of our
6 house just like it says in the Bible?

7 **BILL:** Well, I . . .

8 **WALTER:** That's what I mean. I don't understand her some
9 times. Well, better be going or she'll be biting my ear off.
10 *(Getting up)* See you and the Missus next Saturday night
11 then. Around five?

12 **BILL:** Sure, I guess. . . .

13 **WALTER:** Great. Really looking forward to it. Bye. *(WALTER*
14 *walks off and BILL sits stunned, staring at the audience.)*

15 **BILL:** I guess.

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