

Viewpoint by Victor Knowles



“TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE”

Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will life up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up” (Ecc 4:9, 10 NASB). Throughout the Bible we see God using companions to accomplish His will. Jesus called twelve men to be His disciples. Amazingly, the apostle Paul had about the same number of people who were his companions in ministry.

Paul’s companions included people like Priscilla and Aquila, Timothy, Barnabas, Silas, Luke, John Mark, Tychicus, Titus, Epaphroditus, Aristarchus, and Epaphras. He used terms like “fellow workers,” “fellow laborer,” “fellow servant,” “fellow soldier,” “fellow prisoner,” and “partner” to describe them. God did not intend for Paul to “go it alone” in ministry. One time he went to Athens alone and the response to his preaching there was minimal (Acts 17:32-34). It is not evident that a church was established. From Athens he proceeded to Corinth. He later wrote, “I came to you [from Athens] in weakness and fear, and with much trembling” (1 Cor 2:3). A spirit and practice of interdependence, not independence, marked Paul’s ministry from that point on.

Paul did not work with unstable people or biblical illiterates. Priscilla and Aquila taught the learned and eloquent Apollos “the way of God more accurately.” They established several churches in their home. Timothy had known the Scriptures from his childhood. Paul chose him to accompany him on his second missionary journey. Paul left Titus in Crete because he trusted the young evangelist to “set in order the things that are lacking.” I’m sure his heart was pained, however, when John Mark disappointed him and Demas deserted him. But he found great joy and comfort working with his mature companions.

None of the “fellow workers” (1 Cor 3:9) of Paul traveled with him all the time. God brought first this one and then that one into his life to be his companion in labor. This appears to be the divine plan. The Holy Spirit told the church in Antioch, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:2). Those

who work alone cannot accomplish as much as what companions can achieve working together. “Two are better than one.” God gave Aaron to Moses, Jonathan to David, Baruch to Jeremiah, and Elisha to Elijah. King Saul failed as a leader because he saw David as a threat. Moody always traveled with Sankey. Shea always sang for Graham. For many years the triumvirate at my *alma mater* was Hunt, Barber, and McMorrow.

I thank God that Don DeWalt invited me to work alongside him in publishing *One Body* and coordinating the Restoration Forums. I learned much from him in the seven short years that we had together. I am truly happy for the many people whom God has brought into my life to help me. I mention literally *hundreds* of them in my autobiography. Henry Blackaby suggests that to refuse to work with God’s people is an affront to God, an embarrassment to Christ, a shameful act within the church. To minister alone is to deny God’s primary strategy in the New Testament. “Two are better than one.” Compare a saying from the Talmud: “A man without companions is like the left hand without the right.” Even the Lone Ranger had Tonto!

The “curse” of the “independent” fellowship of churches that I am affiliated with is that too many are just that – *independent*. But the Bible we all believe and preach tells us that “we are God’s fellow workers.” Jesus did not work alone. The apostle Paul did not work alone. They had their “true companions.” Paul wrote to one as follows: “And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored

with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life” (Phil 4:3 NIV). The Greek word “companion” (*syzgos*) means “yokefellow; harnessed together; pulling with a common purpose and goal.” We rob ourselves of fellowship, friendship, and fruitfulness when we choose to do ministry solo. After all, the song is “Onward Christian Soldiers” – not “Onward Christian Soldier.”

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed” (NLT). A good companion is the difference between success and failure.

Jesus did not work alone.
The apostle Paul did not work alone.
They had their “true companions.”



The Knowlesletter

Celebrating 20 Years (1992 - 2012)

A Monthly Report from Victor & Evelyn Knowles, Founders, Peace on Earth Ministries.
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LESSONS ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC

This month marks the 100th anniversary of the sinking of *RMS Titanic*. Several years ago I visited the shipyards in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where the great White Star Line ship was built. Before its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York on April 10, 1912, Mrs. Alfred E. Caldwell, a passenger, was told by a deckhand, “Lady, God himself could not sink this ship.” But on the night of April 14 the *Titanic* struck an iceberg. The \$10 million floating palace sank at 2:20 on the morning of April 15. Fifteen hundred souls went with her to the bottom of the ocean.

The cover story of the March 2012 *Smithsonian* magazine, “Shadow of the *Titanic*,” tells of one survivor’s harrowing story. Dorothy Gibson, 22, was in Lifeboat 7. “Suddenly there was a wild coming together of voices from the ship and we noticed an unusual commotion among the people about the railing. Then the awful thing happened, the thing that will remain with me in my memory until the day I die.” Dorothy listened as 1,500 people cried out to be saved, a noise she described as a horrific mixture of yells, shrieks and moans. “No one can describe the frightful sounds.” *This dreadful scene reminds us of what it means to be a lost soul and what Judgment Day will be like.*

When I was in Belfast I learned about the fatal flaw in the *Titanic*. It was in her superstructure herself – chemical impurities in the steel. The huge steel plates in her keel buckled when she hit the iceberg. Water rushed in at a horrifying rate of seven tons per second. All of her “watertight” compartments were full within one hour. *If the church is not built right (“set in order”), the water of the world will rush in and take its deadly toll.*

There were only 16 wooden lifeboats and four canvas “collapsibles” on the *Titanic* – not nearly enough for all the passengers and crew. Lifeboat 7, like most of the others, put out to sea only half full. *Government programs, technology, science, and education are totally insufficient to save mankind; only Jesus saves.*

The *Titanic* received no fewer than six warnings about icebergs ahead, but Captain Smith never notified the bridge. *Our national leaders have woefully abdicated their responsibilities, failing to heed the warnings of financial and moral danger ahead.*

Of the 1500 people who went down on the *Titanic*, only 13 were rescued from the icy ocean. Only Lifeboat 14 returned to pick up the perishing. Third officer Pitman



said, “In boat after boat the story was the same: a timid suggestion [to rescue the perishing], a strong refusal, nothing done.” But when Captain Roston of the *Carpathia* received the first SOS in maritime history, he fired off a message: “Tell them we are coming as fast as we can!” He cut off the heat and hot water and poured every ounce of steam into the boilers as they raced to the rescue. Chief Steward Hughes said, “Every man to his post and let him do his full duty like a true Englishman.” *The church has a moral and spiritual obligation to cut back on some things and put full effort into reaching those who are in peril.*

Smithsonian also reports that today the third most recognized word in the world is “*Titanic*” (“God” and “Coca-



(Traveling spiritual “Route 66” with Victor in his 66th year of life)

APRIL 13-14

Men’s Retreat
West Central Christian Camp
LaMonte, MO

APRIL 15

Northland Christian Church
Kansas City, MO

APRIL 22-24

N. Lawrence Christian Church
Lawrence, KS

MAY 1-4

Bible Lectures
Pepperdine University
Malibu, CA

MAY 6

Crossroads Church
Portland, OR

JUN 23-24

All-School Goldfield
High School Reunion
Goldfield, IA

JUN 25

Park Church of Christ
Goldfield, IA

JUN 29 – JUL 1

Midwestern Heritage
Homecoming II, Ottumwa, IA

JUL 10-13

North American
Christian Convention
Orlando, FL

JUL 15

First Christian Church
Winter Park, FL

Cola" are number one and number two). The sinking of the *Titanic* is a universal reminder of the tragedy of being lost, the necessity of building things right, the inadequacy of man to save, the delinquency of some in leadership, and the heroic efforts of others to "rescue the perishing, care for the dying, snatch them in pity from sin and the grave."

PEPPERDINE PROGRAM



"Living Between the Times" is the theme of the 69th annual Pepperdine University Bible Lectures, May 1-4. This will be the last year for **Jerry Rushford** to direct the premiere event among Churches of Christ (he has directed them since 1983). Rushford will bring the final lecture, "The Wondrous Story," on Friday night. About 300 teachers from 45 states and 35 nations will be speaking. I will speak Wednesday, May 2, at 3:15 in the Appleby Center, sharing excerpts from *VICTOR* Volume 2.

This year Pepperdine, "a Christian university committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values," is celebrating its 75th anniversary (1937-2012). For more program information go to www.pepperdine.edu/biblelectures. Or contact the Department of Church Relations at (310) 506-4270, email them at church.relations@pepperdine.edu or write Pepperdine University, Department of Church Relations, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, CA 90263-4270.

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

Teaching the Word of God greatly energizes me. At 10 a.m. every other Tuesday I am now teaching the Chapel Bible Hour here at the DeWelt Prayer Center in Joplin. I taught two seminars at Ozark Christian College on February 27-28. The first was "A Culture without Christianity? Imagine!" and the second was "The Blessing of Serving God Together" (a study of Paul and his 12 companions). Next month I'll report on my two workshops taught at the Tulsa Workshop. I taught the Homebuilders Class at Fairview Church in Carthage in March. Each day I post a "Strength for Today" on our website and on Facebook. Recent studies have been on The Life of Joseph and The Seven Crowns of the New Testament. Log on to www.poeministries.org to read them or use them in your own Bible studies.

"I HOPE TO BE LIKE DALE KNOWLES"

April 25 marks the third anniversary of my father's passing. Recently I received a nice note from **Dane Tyner**, Director of Home Improvement Ministry, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Dane wrote, "I think I met your dad at Kathy's dad's funeral in 1999. We included him in our ministry mailing list shortly afterward. In the years that followed, he would

occasionally write a little note of encouragement about some article I had written. A few times he included a little donation to our ministry. I told **Kathy** that, as I think of myself as an old 'retired' minister, I hope to be like **Dale Knowles**. He was active in his faith, reading, being inspired, and writing to inspire, and finding ways to encourage others – even a younger man like me. I said to her that I hope I can continue to learn, and encourage others, and even send a few bucks to help some guy I believe God has called to serve the Kingdom. Your dad made an impression on me – a good impression. As we talked about this, Kathy encouraged me to share this with you. So I did. You were blessed and you are a blessing."

Dane has accurately portrayed my father. Indeed, he was an encourager, active in his faith, a generous man, an inspiring man and a blessing to everyone who knew him. Dear Lord, help me to be more like my dad!

ARE YOU READY FOR ETERNITY?

January 8-10 I was with the Community Christian Church in Apache Junction, Arizona, for a Bible Conference. I met many nice people, including a very sweet lady, **Maryjane Reed**. A few days ago, I received a note from her husband **Carroll**, who wrote as follows. "We attended your series you gave at CCC in January. We joined the church on January 15. On that same day my wife **Maryjane** went into the hospital. She passed away on the evening of the 19th. I appreciated your words of wisdom on Jesus our Savior. I know that she did too."

Friends, we never know when we will have heard our last sermon. I'm glad I chose to preach about the love of God, "Jesus our Savior," and our eternal home in Heaven. Richard Baxter said, "I preach as a dying man to dying men." Every preacher needs to remember that when he stands behind the sacred desk. Our chief task is to prepare people for eternity. May God bless you, Brother Reed!



NOW TAKING ORDERS

We are now taking orders for *VICTOR: Since 1945* (Volume 2: 1978-2012). Order your copy of this 584-page book now at the special price of \$24.95 postpaid. We expect delivery of the book later this month. Make checks payable to POEM and send to P. O. Box 275, Joplin, MO 64802-0275.



SPRING ONE BODY

The Spring 2012 *One Body* was mailed April 2. This is our 99th issue since we first started publishing in 1984. The theme is on Sin, setting up our Centennial issue this Summer, which will be on Salvation. Great articles by **Bob Russell**, **Gene Shelburne**, **Chris**

DeWelt, **Jimmy Hurd**, **Boyce Mouton**, and **Bill Paul**. My editorial is on "Cosmic Treason." Subscribe or renew for just \$15.

APRIL IS LETTER MONTH!

April is our traditional "Letter Month." We hope you like our monthly newsletter. Once a year we ask you to write to us. We'd like all readers (who are not regular subscribers) to consider sending POEM \$10 to help with production costs of this newsletter. May we hear from you?

SONGS FROM MY YOUTH

"I KEEP IN TOUCH WITH JESUS"

*I keep in touch with Jesus, and He keeps touch with me,
And so we walk together in perfect harmony:
There's not a day that passes, there's not an hour goes by,
But that we have sweet fellowship, My precious Lord and I.*
(Howard L. Brown)

"WITH CHRIST"

"To depart and be with Christ...is far better" (Phil 1:23). **Maryjane Reed**, Apache Junction, AZ (see story elsewhere). **Dalvin Tatro**, Turner, OR, was from the Crossroads Church in Portland and was a great encouragement to me. **John Bryan, Jr.** was an elder and missionary treasure of the Crocker (MO) Christian Church and was a strong encourager of this ministry. Our condolences to *Carroll Reed*, *Virginia Tatro*, *Anna Bryan* and their respective families.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

"THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED" – PROVERBS 10:7

IN MEMORY OF

SHARON BRIDGEWATER
TERRI MILLER
JERROLD SCHROEDER
Tom & Lois Zimmerman

PAMELA CAMPBELL
Charles & Marj Conger

LOIS HARRIS
PHYLLIS TYREE HANSEN
Dave & Kristen Tyree

DALE V. & "DEARIE" KNOWLES
Victor & Evelyn Knowles

BETHEL PAUL
William E. Paul

CLIFFORD STOCK
Joyce & Deborah Stock

WE'VE GOT MAIL!

I wanted to write you a note about Evelyn's fine article "Religion vs. Relationship." I have given much thought to this very issue over the past number of years and every time I did, I came back to James 1:27. Thank you for writing it. It addressed the problem very well and I hope many people read it. **Bill Paul**, *Franktown, CO* • Thanks for the Feb. *Knowlesletter*. Your articles are not only uplifting but are so in tune with the times in which we live. I so appreciated Evelyn's article on religion or relationship and I cried over Tom White's article on the courage of fellow Christians in hostile nations. **Patty Boswell** • Thank you for including the article by Tom White in *The Knowlesletter*. It made me think back to the earliest days of the 2nd Persian Gulf War—Iraq War. There were reports and video of American troops accepting Christ and being baptized in the most creative ways possible (poncho lined slip trenches in the desert, 20mm metal ammunition crates onboard aircraft carriers, etc.). **Mark Clark**, *Lake Wales, FL* • We read *The Knowlesletter* and *One Body* and do appreciate your forthrightness on Bible issues! **Charles & Marj Conger**, *Centerville, IA* • We pray that your health issues have improved. **Nancy Malster**, *Beverly, OH* • Our minister enjoys *One Body* and your *Knowlesletter* that I pass on to him. **Ruby Gibson**, *Dunbar, WV* • We met a few years back at one of the lectureships at Pepperdine. I was thrilled purchase your fantastic book, *Together in Christ*, and have you sign it. I appreciate your leadership and advocacy on behalf of church unity. You've put out some great resources. Of all the things you could have done with your life, the kingdom work you have chosen will impact generations to come. Thank you! **Tyler Ellis**, *Newark, DE* • Just finished reading your manuscript given at Pepperdine University in 2004. What a great review of history and the purpose and content of the many sessions that have been held to review our history and you did it with such ease and sense of purpose. Thank you and if you have any other printed copies of manuscripts that follow the history and theme of our movement, I would be eager to have copies and will share the cost of printing and shipping. Once I have read them, I will offer them to Emmanuel Christian Seminary for their Library. **Leonard Wymore**, *Johnson City, TN* • **Ruth Cradic**, 1409 E. Iowa Ave. Apt. 9, Indianola, IA 50125 would like to thank everyone who remembered her on her 90th birthday with cards, visits, and flowers. She writes, "Brothers and sisters in Christ are dear to me." • I so enjoyed your *Knowlesletter*. Thank you for listening to God's voice and sharing encouragement to so many people! Have a blessed day. **Kathy Hunnell**, *Portland, OR* • Please send me 100 copies of *The Knowlesletter* (March 2012). Everyone in our congregation needs to read the articles that Bob Russell and you wrote about the church and religion. Send me the cost, and I will send you a check. **Bruce Runner**, *Crowley, LA* • I thought your *Knowlesletter* (March 2012) was great and kept saying, "Amen, Amen!" I am so tired of churches trying to compete with the world. It is encouraging to know that someone else is concerned about the bashing of the Lord's church. As Minnie Pearl would say, "I'm just so proud to know you!" **Barbara Barger**, *Tulsa, OK*

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"Proclaiming peace to the nations" Zech. 9:10