



In writing to the Christians in Rome, Paul again stated the hope that he with them may be refreshed in the Lord. (Romans 15:32) His desire was that when he came to them by the will of God, they would be refreshed. Perhaps they needed to be refreshed just as much as the Apostle Paul for the persecution they had undergone for the sake of the Gospel. Whatever the reason, one thing was sure—the ministry of refreshing others in the Lord is often a mutual blessing.

How can we in a practical way be a refreshing influence to the Lord's people? Perhaps it could be through kind words or an appropriately-timed phone call to tell a fellow believer that we appreciate them and have been praying for them in their need. Perhaps, it can be through passing along a pertinent tract or other piece of literature that has a bearing on a believer's particular situation. Showing hospitality to the Lord's people can also refresh their hearts in the Lord. In the case of the Lord's servants, perhaps it can be through the provision of a "home away from home" – a "get away" like the one provided by the great women of Shunem (2 Kings 4) where Elisha was refreshed in the midst

of regular ministry. She was amply rewarded for her kind deeds to Elisha — and so will you if it is done for the Lord's sake. There is a multitude of means by which we can refresh one another in the Lord – all motivated by one main ingredient, love for the Lord and for His people.

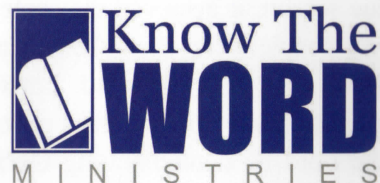
Living the Christian life is not easy and there are many perils along the way. The ministry of refreshment is one way to effectively help fellow Christians avoid many pitfalls. The world will offer its alternative ways of "refreshment" – subtle, alluring ways in which we need to be wary. Of the many lessons that we can extrapolate from the tragic example of the man of God in 1 Kings 13, one is this: the Lord's people can be very vulnerable to the enemy's devices during the time when they are most in need of refreshing. Rather than letting the world compromise our convictions to cause us to veer from the narrow path of faith, let us be those who look for opportunities in our lives and actions to refresh the hearts of the Lord's people. As we do, it will be said of us: "the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you".

**For further information, contact:**

Mark Kolchin

P.O. Box 305 Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

E-mail: [knowthewordtoday@gmail.com](mailto:knowthewordtoday@gmail.com)



[www.knowtheword.com](http://www.knowtheword.com)

# Refreshing the Saints

Mark Kolchin



*For we have great joy and consolation in  
your love, because the hearts of the saints  
have been refreshed by you, brother.*

*– Philemon 7 (NKJV)*

**T**he Bible speaks clearly about the value of refreshing others in the work of the Lord. Whether it is due to a personal difficulty or a disheartening experience, there will always be the need either to refresh others or to be refreshed ourselves in our service for Christ.



There are a lot of reasons why the Lord's people need encouragement and refreshing. When the disciples were so busy in their work with the Master, He urged them in no uncertain terms: "Come apart into a desert place and rest a while" (Mark 6:31). Because they had been so busy, they had "no leisure so much as to eat". They needed to be refreshed so that they could be revitalized for further ministry – just as the Lord's people need on occasion. When Elijah was struggling with personal issues such as disappointment, unrealized expectations, anger and self-pity, he needed to be refreshed in his spirit. God saw to it that he was refreshed when an angel ministered food and drink to him. It was after this that Elijah had his whole perspective realigned (1 Kings 19). He needed to be refreshed in the work even though he had just experienced a great victory at Mount Carmel. He was restored in a dramatic way and his ministry

continued on with more manifestations of God's power (2 Kings 1). His experience reminds us of the need that many of the Lord's servants have to be encouraged in the wearying and often unappreciated work they do.

When David and his men came back to Ziklag and discovered that the Amalekites had captured their women and children and all their possessions, David and his men lifted up their voice and wept until they had no more power to weep. The people then turned on David and spoke of stoning him, bringing him great distress (1 Sam. 30:1-6). But when David "encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (v. 6) he was refreshed and on the strength of that refreshment rallied his troops so that they were able to recover all. What could be a clearer example of the need to seek the Lord's face and be refreshed if we are to be successful in the battles of the Lord?

There are many reasons why the Lord's people need encouragement along the way. There are also many examples of how we can refresh or encourage others in the Christian life. For instance, in writing to Philemon, the Apostle Paul highlighted the value of the ministry of refreshment. He expressed his great joy and consolation knowing that hearts of the saints were refreshed through the actions of Philemon. (v. 7) Whether those actions came in the form of practical help or through an encouraging word in due season, it achieved the same effect – the Lord's people were strengthened in heart and mind and God was glorified. Later, Paul would appeal to Philemon to again refresh his heart in the Lord by demonstrating Christ-like forgiveness toward his runaway slave, Onesimus (v. 20). Considering the situation and the tears

and trials that the apostle experienced in the work of the Gospel (Acts 20:19), is it any wonder why he would welcome such encouragement? Philemon was one who refreshed the Lord's people and he did it through his personal attitude and practical actions.

On another occasion when writing to the Corinthians, Paul cited the effect that the coming of Stephanas and his associates had upon him and the believers at Corinth saying: "they have refreshed my spirit and yours" (1 Cor. 16:18). They had supplied what the Corinthians had lacked as to the practical needs of the apostle. Their Christ-honoring conduct was encouraging to the battle-worn servant of the Lord and a tangible proof of God's seal upon his ministry. They were a great encouragement to him and it refreshed his heart. Likewise, they were a great example to the talented but immature assembly at Corinth and refreshed their hearts as well. We too, can be like Stephanas and his friends refreshing the hearts of the Lord's people by being more generous with our money and more Christ-like in our manner.



**Whether we are on the giving end or the receiving, as long as we are serving Christ, there will always be the need to be refreshed and encouraged in the Lord.**