

The Healing Power of Ministry
Donnie Bates

Did you ever notice how you feel better when you make someone else feel better? When we're down or depressed or stressed, it's hard to think of others, but the evidence suggests that it's worth the effort. Time and again, when Jesus was stressed, the multitudes pressed Him. They would not leave Him alone. And time and again Jesus ministered to those multitudes. Some might think this just shows the sacrificial nature of the ministry of Jesus, and I am certainly not going to suggest that Jesus only ministered to people from a selfish motive of self-therapy. Scripture says Jesus felt "compassion" for those who pressed Him so. That compassion served Jesus well and it will serve us well, also.

So many times we fail to recognize that there is a problem with someone until it's too late. The deed is done! However, even then it's not too late to rescue a soul. When Cain and his brother offered their sacrifices to God, Abel's was accepted and Cain's was not. Cain chose to respond in anger. God responded to him by giving advice that rings through the ages: "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?" (Genesis 4:7). He was angry; angry enough to kill. And yet the solution was not that someone needed to minister to Cain! Did you hear that? Then let me say it again: The solution was not that someone needed to minister to Cain...he needed to minister to someone else. Or, more specifically in this context, Cain needed to "do well!" The different course Cain could have taken to deal with anger was for him to actively "do well," or reach out to someone else.

When you feel stressed and assailed from every direction, rather than retreating within your own "comfortable" shell and waiting for someone to come and minister to you, try reaching out to someone else. They won't be hard to find, if you look. And if you remain in your "safe place," you will find that it is not all that safe. Hear the words of God to a troubled young man and apply them to yourself: "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?" If you feel bad, do something good for someone else. You'll feel better!