

Co-operation. We know that, together, we can accomplish far more than we can on our own. Maybe. It isn't always as easy as it sounds. Co-operation can be difficult to achieve.

In one of the creation stories in the Bible, we learn that God always intended humans to work together. After God had created the heavens and the earth, and the first human being, God said, 'It is not good that the human should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

'It is not good that the human should be alone.' Granted there are some things we have to do on our own, like writing essays and brushing our teeth. But to build anything great, anything lasting, takes more than one person. And for a project to succeed it needs co-operation.

Co-operation is easy when we're working with people we get on with, people like us. The challenge is to co-operate when we're working with someone different than us, perhaps even someone who doesn't speak our own language. I'm now going to show a short video of co-operation between two beings who don't speak the same language.

[video of sheepdog]

There are a number of lessons we can take from this video. First off, remember what happened the first time the puppy saw sheep? He just ran at them, scattering them widely. He needed to learn from the shepherd how to listen to commands, how to

approach the sheep. In the same way we can only co-operate with each other if we take time to listen to each other, and only if we are willing to learn from each other.

Secondly, sometimes it takes time to forge a good, working relationship with others. Remember that, as the dog got older and more experienced, he was better able to work with the shepherd. Trust had built up between them, and a better understanding of each other and what the job required from each other.

Thirdly, sometimes you have to take knocks for the team! Remember how the ewe head-butted the dog, as he distracted her from what the shepherd was doing to the lamb? I bet that hurt, but the dog didn't let that stop him from doing his job. Sometimes we have to 'take one for the team' so that we can get the job done. If we take the time, if we decide to co-operate with each other, we can accomplish great projects. But more importantly, we can help each other with what it takes to live in this world. Like the video showed, a farmer relies on his sheepdog. We need to be able to rely on each other to get through life.

As the Bible tells us, 'Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.' By co-operating we are stronger together than on our own. Thank you.