

The background of the slide is a dark, low-key photograph of a bookshelf. The books are densely packed, and their spines are visible, though they are out of focus and appear as vertical lines of various colors (blues, reds, yellows) against the dark background. The lighting is very low, creating a moody and somewhat mysterious atmosphere.

High Maintenance Christians

Sharing Strength In The Lord's Church

- A great blessing enjoyed by those in Christ is help from brethren in times of spiritual or physical need
 - Rom. 12:9-12 - “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer”
 - Rom. 14:19 - “Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.”

Sharing Strength In The Lord's Church

- Those who are strong support the weak
 - Rom. 15:1 - “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”
- The spiritual help those overcome by sin
 - Gal. 6:1-2 - “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Sharing Strength In The Lord's Church

- At the same time, we all have the responsibility to become strong
 - Each Christian must bear his own load
 - Gal. 6:4-5 - “But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load.”

Sharing Strength In The Lord's Church

- Each Christian must bear his own load
 - 1Cor. 3:1-3 - “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal...”

Sharing Strength In The Lord's Church

- We will be held accountable for our own actions
 - Rom. 14:12 - “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”

Questions

- What is high maintenance?
- Am I high maintenance?
- When is it okay to be high maintenance?
- How do I overcome a high maintenance manner of life?

The Definition Of High Maintenance

- “The need for a lot of attention to maintain in good order; requiring a lot of attention, time, or money; demanding a great deal of effort to maintain current levels” (Wiktionary)
- Christians are high maintenance if they require constant, special attention to remain faithful, a lot of pleading to be active, must be visited frequently, and are easily offended

Christians Who Are High Maintenance

- Babes in Christ just starting their new spiritual life need a great deal of attention; it is expected and accepted
- Christians who are ill (short term or prolonged), grieving, aged, or thrust by circumstances into poverty need help on a long term basis. This is the will of God for those who are blessed or strong

Christians Who Are High Maintenance

- Slothful Christians who attend and work only when constantly prodded. It is well past time that they grow up in Christ
- Christians who have come to be emotionally dependent on attention from others

Churches Can Be High Maintenance

- The church in Corinth was
 - 2Cor. 12:20-21 - “For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; 21 lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.”

Churches Can Be High Maintenance

- The church in Philippi was not
 - Phil. 1:3-6 - “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”

The Difficulty Of High Maintenance

- Where it can help
 - High maintenance is crucial for the newborn Christian, just as it is for a newborn baby
 - High maintenance is essential for the hurting Christian
 - 1Thes. 5:14 - “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”
 - It can help strong Christians focus talents and share abundance
 - It can help those receiving care to develop the goal of becoming a helper of others

The Difficulty Of High Maintenance

- Where it can hurt
 - When it hinders the growth of the church in evangelism, edification, and benevolence, when undue effort is spent on a few
 - When it holds back the efforts of busy workers

The Difficulty Of High Maintenance

- Paul wished to preach where Christ was not named
 - Rom. 15:20 - “And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation”
- Some Christians at Corinth held him back
 - 2Cor. 2:12-13 - “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, 13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.”

The Difficulty Of High Maintenance

- It can hurt when more serious needs go unmet
 - Babes in Christ not being helped because others want special treatment
 - The sick, sorrowful, weak, and erring neglected, because others expect special attention

The Defeat Of High Maintenance

- By individual growth to the point where we become the providers, not just the recipients
 - Heb. 5:12 - “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.”

The Defeat Of High Maintenance

- Through individual strength
 - Strength from brethren is helpful when we need it, but we should reach the point where our strength comes from God and from within
 - We must resolve to become producers, not just consumers

The Defeat Of High Maintenance

- Phil. 4:11-13 - “Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

The Defeat Of High Maintenance

- 2Cor. 1:3-6 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. 6 Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation”

Are You A High Maintenance Christian?

- My purpose has not been to discourage you from getting help when it is needed
 - We are to bear one another's burdens - Gal. 6:2
 - The strong are to bear with the infirmities of the weak - Rom. 15:1
- My intent has been to challenge you into thinking about your service to God
 - To reflect about your work in the kingdom - Gal. 6:4
 - To grow to bear your own load - Gal. 6:5

Are You A High Maintenance Christian?

- When a burden becomes unbearable, that is when we need help from our brethren.
- When failure to bear our own load becomes a thoughtless habit, we become high maintenance and hinder the cause of Christ.
- Prov. 18:9 - “He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.”