



April 25, 2025

Iron Sharpens Iron

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Over the decades, multiple times, I've heard the statement "Iron Sharpens Iron". Or put another way "Iron that Sharpens Iron" This quote is taken from Proverbs 27:17: *"As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend."*

This expression does NOT refer to pieces of metal clashing and giving off sparks! The expression refers to the action of a sharpening device to whet the cutting edge of the tool to make it more efficient and effective. Sadly, over the years I have seen more often than not the clashing and sparks rather than a positive effect.

The Adam Clarke Commentary observes: "As hard iron, viz., steel, will bring a knife to a better edge when it is properly whetted against it: so one friend may be the means of exciting another to reflect, dive deeply into, and illustrate a subject, without which whetting or excitement, this had never taken place."

Having lively and focused Biblical discussions can bring out deeper understanding of a subject. The positive and active interaction can produce an energized and enthusiastic countenance and stimulate deeper thinking and analysis.

Decades ago, I remember when folks would discuss God's Word in length at worship services. Not so much the case anymore. Politics, sports, weather, and employment have replaced those "fellowship" discussions. When a Bible discussion comes up, some are quickly to exit the conversation.

Over the years I've seen and heard of many different ways of sharpening knives, scissors, and other tools. Some ways are most interesting and intriguing. I've also seen blunt tools being used forcefully to attempt to "get the job done" that painstakingly simply don't work so well. Sometimes one can become severely injured from using a tool that simply is not sharpened properly for its use.

Another instruction states, *"If the iron is blunt, and he does not whet the edge, then he must put more strength to it. But wisdom is profitable to direct."*

(Ecclesiastes 10:10 MKJV) The wisdom that is profitable to direct will teach him that he should whet his axe, and then spare his strength.

We all have tools of vocabulary, tone of voice, personal examples, and memories of actions of others to use when we communicate. We must strive to be encouraging and build up others in our relationships, not tear down as we communicate with one another. *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."* (Jude 1:20-21).

You and I are also brothers and sisters in the Faith...led by the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. We'll concentrate even more on this throughout the weeks ahead as we come up to the upcoming Holy Day, the Feast of Pentecost, and focus on that Spirit and the power it contains.

We're also all friends. Christ Himself conveyed to His disciples, *"I no longer call you my servants, I call you my friends"*. (John 15:15)

How do friends sharpen each other? Good question to reflect upon. When we are all using and yielding to God's Spirit, we sharpen as to produce a countenance that reflects Christ living in us.

So, do we sharpen one another, ultimately for the good of all? An excellent theme to reflect upon and all of us as members of the Body of Christ to remain well focused on day by day.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. S. Hoefker', with a stylized, scribbled end.

T. S. Hoefker

Senior Pastor, CGM

Church of God Ministries (CGM)/(Ministerios de la Iglesias de Dios)

tshoefker@cogministries.org / www.cogministries.org

P.O. Box 983, Daphne, AL, 36526-0983 / 251-930-1797 Offices