

Pushing Newton

Everybody knows of Isaac Newton's famed encounter with a falling apple, and how Newton introduced the laws of gravity and revolutionized astronomical studies. We learn of that very early in our formal education. But few understand that if it were not for Edmund Halley, the world may never have heard of Newton.

Halley was the one who challenged Newton to think through his original theories. He corrected Newton's mathematical errors and prepared geometrical figures to support his discoveries. It was Halley who coaxed the hesitant Newton to write his great work, *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*. And it was Halley who edited and supervised its publication, financing its printing even though Newton was wealthier and could better afford the cost.

Historians have called Halley's relationship with Newton one of the most selfless examples in science. Newton began almost immediately to reap the rewards of prominence, while Halley received little credit. He did use the principles Newton developed to predict the orbit and return of a comet that would later bear his name, but since Halley's Comet only returns every 76 years, few hear his name.

Still, Halley didn't care who received credit as long as the cause of science was advanced. He was content to live without fame.

Sometimes, just the reward of what we are doing far outweighs the recognition we often think we need to have. It's good to realize that the associates of Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home feel this way about the important work they are called to do, even though we have various recognition programs in place.

--Beecher Hunter