

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. X

June 24, 2001

No. 25

Too tired to serve others?

By: Jerry Fite

In our fast paced lives, many find themselves stressed out and tired. They can barely function in keeping up with the pace of their job, and all of the demands one's own family requires. They may acknowledge the Scriptures which teach us to serve the needs of others, but rationalize away the demands for action by saying, "I am just too tired. God will not hold me accountable".

Please consider some days in the life of Jesus and His apostles. The disciples of John, after burying the body of John the Baptist, reported the sad event of the forerunner's death to Jesus. "When Jesus heard it, he withdrew from thence in a boat, to a desert place apart..." (Matthew 14:13). Besides the need for solitude due to sadness, another reason for getting away was for rest. Jesus' apostles came to Jesus at the same time and told them of their teaching activities. Jesus responded by saying, " 'Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest for a while.' For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." (Mark 6:31). Sadness, and being so busy as to not even eat surely were good rea-

sons for getting away to recharge one's batteries.

But notice what happened. The multitudes ran around the Sea of Galilee and met them when their boat reached the north shore. When Jesus saw them, did He respond by saying, "Look, we are saddened by the recent news of the death of John the Baptist, and we have been so busy that we are just too depressed and tired to take care of your needs right now?" No, "He came forth and saw a great multitude, and He had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things" (Mark 6:34).

Later this day, Jesus miraculously fed the 5,000 (Mark 6:35-44). Then, He commanded His apostles to travel by boat to the other side. He spent that night in solitude and prayer (Mark 6:46). He then walked upon the sea to meet his distressed apostles battling the winds (Mark 6:48-52). When they reached land, Jesus immediately busied himself in the work of healing all the sick (Mark 6:53-56).

Jesus was saddened by hearing the news of death of a

loved one. He was tired. He and His apostles needed to rest. But they were not "too saddened" or "too tired" to serve others in their time of need. His plans of rest and solitude were interrupted. Instead of treating the multitude as intruders, "He welcomed them, and spake to them the kingdom of God, and them that had need of healing He cured" (Luke 9:11).

Jesus and His apostles provide us a great example when we begin to slack up in our service to others and begin to rationalize. Are you really too depressed to manifest true compassion to others? Are you really so stressed out in life that you have no room in your heart to consider the well-being of others? (Philippians 2:4)? If you have room for compassion, are you really too tired to take action and meet the needs of others?

Let us truly imitate Christ in our lives. Even when we are sad and tired, let us respond with a "welcoming" spirit. In times of sadness and fatigue, when no relief seems in sight, let us pray in solitude, and rise back up to serve some more. Rest will come later.