

Glad Tidings

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

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Bear One Another's Burdens

(Jerry Fite)

The mind of Christ demands we look to the things of others, not just matters that please ourselves (*Philippians 2:4*, *Romans 15:4*). Paul further writes, “bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (*Galatians 6:2*).

The Greek word, translated “burdens” is BAROS. Vine says, “it denotes a weight.” It can denote the weight of accumulated hours of a day's heat- “burden of the day”; or the weight of carrying more than that which is necessary – “no greater burden than these necessary things” (*Matthew 20:12*, *Acts 15:28*).

There are burdens people carry who have been taken in a trespass that we can help them carry as we strive to restore them to a place of usefulness before God. As they face the burden of the reality of their sin, they may feel like a complete failure, or one overwhelmed with sorrow over their fall that they cannot function in the present or look forward to a godly future. Here is where those who are spiritual come in. Forgiveness with comfort is the way of love that keeps the truly peni-

tent from being “swallowed up with overmuch sorrow” (*2 Corinthians 2:7-8*). The Devil has his way in tempting one to commit sin, but we can in “bearing one another's burden” weaken Satan's devise of discouragement and help our brother or sister carry the weight in the time of failure with encouragement and hope for the future.

Another heavy burdensome weight to all is sickness or death. Sadness creeps in and sometimes quickly overflows the barriers of a positive attitude we thought were sufficient in times of good health. Feelings of vulnerability, fear and uselessness can enter our minds as our bodies experience great pain. The brother or sister who takes seriously the Lord's command to “bear one another's burden” can be of great help. Just a conversation expanding one's knowledge of what is going on in the world outside one's illness can lighten the load for a precious moment. Expressions of faith and confidence in the Lord can lift spirits upwards which are mired in this world of physical sickness and pain.

Paul informs us that “each man shall bear his own burden” (*Galatians 6:5*). In light of the

demand to bear one another's burdens, is this statement a contradiction? Paul in verse five uses the Greek word PHORTON, which denotes “something carried”. It is emphasizing something that is to be carried, not the weight it may possess. The responsibility of carrying out God's law is a burden each individual must carry (*Matthew 11:30*, *23:4*). No one can offer their works in place of our own. Each one must give answer to what he or she has done in the body (*2 Corinthians 5:10*). “Each man shall bear his own burden”.

Regarding sin, one must bear the burden of the guilt of sin. That is a burden no one can bear for another. However, we can help one another with the weight of that burden and lift their spirits unto a place of usefulness before the Lord. Sickness and eventually death is a burden that no one can bear for us. But we can lift the hands of those weakened by disease and the spirits of those who are facing unavoidable death and help them with the weight of the burden they must carry alone. There is one around you struggling with a burden, the weight thereof you can help bear.