

Encouragement to keep going

Sometime our burdens seem so overwhelming that we just cannot go on. The pain, the suffering, the frustration are all unbearable. I've been there and so has everyone else to some extent.

So I'm thanking God today for providing a way out. I was looking for something to encourage me, I found this story that not only brought tears to my eyes but it lifted me up just like Jesus always has. He has a plan for us all and we all will have burdens as we go through this life here on earth.

This is what we learn from the word of God.

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). Jesus will remove your heavy burden of guilt and hopelessness and give you true rest in Him.

The Burden

Author Unknown

"Why was my burden so heavy?" I slammed the bedroom door and leaned against it. Is there no rest from this life? I wondered. I stumbled to my bed and dropped onto it, pressing my pillow around my ears to shut out the noise of my existence. "Oh God," I cried, "let me sleep. Let me sleep forever and never wake up!" With a deep sob I tried to will myself into oblivion, then welcomed the blackness that came over me.

Light surrounded me as I regained consciousness. I focused on its source: The figure of a man standing before a cross. "My child," the person asked, "why did you want to come to Me before I am ready to call you?" "Lord, I'm sorry. It's just that... I can't go on. You see how hard it is for me. Look at this awful burden on my back. I simply can't carry it anymore." "But haven't I told you to cast all of your burdens upon Me, because I care for you? My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." "I knew You would say that. But why does mine have to be so heavy?" "My child, everyone in the world has a burden. Perhaps you would like to try a different one?" "I can do that?" He pointed to several burdens lying at His feet. "You may try any of these."

All of them seemed to be of equal size. But each was labeled with a name. "There's Joan's," I said. Joan was married to a wealthy businessman. She lived in a sprawling estate and dressed her three daughters in the prettiest designer clothes. Sometimes she drove me to church in her Cadillac when my car was broken. "Let me try that one." How difficult could her burden be? I thought. The Lord removed my burden and placed Joan's on my shoulders. I sank my knees beneath its weight. "Take it off!" I said. "'What makes it so heavy?" "Look inside." I untied the straps and opened the top. Inside was a figure of her Mother-in-law, and when I lifted it out, it began to speak. "Joan, you'll never be good enough for my son," it began. "He never should have married you. You're a terrible mother to my grandchildren..." I quickly placed the figure back

in the pack and withdrew another. It was Donna, Joan's youngest daughter. Her head was bandaged from the surgery that had failed to resolve her epilepsy. A third figure was Joan's brother. Addicted to drugs, he had been convicted of killing a police officer. "I see why her burden is so heavy, Lord. But she's always smiling and helping others. I didn't realize...."

"Would you like to try another?" He asked quietly.

I tested several. Paula's felt heavy: She was raising four small boys without a father. Debra's did too: A childhood of sexual abuse and a marriage of emotional abuse. When I came to Ruth's burden, I didn't even try. I knew that inside I would find arthritis, old age, a demanding full-time job, and a beloved husband in a nursing home.

"They're all too heavy, Lord" I said. "'Give back my own.'" As I lifted the familiar load once again, it seemed much lighter than the others. "Let's look inside" He said. I turned away, holding it close. "That's not a good idea," I said. "Why?" "There's a lot of junk in there." "Let Me see." The gentle thunder of His voice compelled me. I opened my burden. He pulled out a brick. "Tell me about this one."

"Lord, You know. It's money. I know we don't suffer like people in some countries or even the homeless here in America. But we have no insurance, and when the kids get sick, we can't always take them to the doctor. They've never been to a dentist. And I'm tired of dressing them in hand-me-downs." "My child, I will supply all of your needs... and your children's. I've given them healthy bodies. I will teach them that expensive clothing doesn't make a person valuable in My sight."

Then He lifted out the figure of a small boy. "And this?" He asked. "Andrew..." I hung my head, ashamed to call my son a burden. "But, Lord, he's hyperactive. He's not quiet like the other two. He makes me so tired. He's always getting hurt, and someone is bound to think I abuse him. I yell at him all the time. Someday I may really hurt him...." "My child," He said, "If you trust Me, I will renew your strength, if you allow Me to fill you with My Spirit, I will give you patience."

Then He took some pebbles from my burden.

"Yes, Lord," I said with a sigh. "Those are small. But they're important. I hate my hair. It's thin, and I can't make it look nice. I can't afford to go to the beauty shop. I'm overweight and can't stay on a diet. I hate all my clothes. I hate the way I look!" "My child, people look at your outward appearance, but I look at your heart. By My Spirit you can gain self-control to lose weight. But your beauty should not come from outward appearance. Instead, it should come from your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in My sight." My burden now seemed lighter than before. "I guess I can handle it now" I said.

"There is more," He said. "Hand Me that last brick." "Oh, You don't have to take that. I can handle it." "My child, give it to Me." Again His voice compelled me. He reached out His hand, and for the first time I saw the ugly wound. "But, Lord, this brick is so awful, so nasty, so.....Lord! What happened to Your hands? They're so scarred!" No longer focused on my burden, I looked for the first time into His face. In His brow were ragged scars-as though someone had pressed thorns into His flesh. "Lord," I whispered. "What happened to You?" His loving eyes reached into my soul. "My child, you know. Hand Me the brick. It belongs to Me. I bought it." "How?" "With My

blood." "But why, Lord?" "Because I have loved you with an everlasting love. Give it to Me."

I placed the filthy brick into His wounded palm. It contained all the dirt and evil of my life: my pride, my selfishness, the depression that constantly tormented me. He turned to the cross and hurled my brick into the pool of blood at its base. It hardly made a ripple. "Now, My child, you need to go back. I will be with you always. When you are troubled, call to Me and I will help you and show you things you cannot imagine now." "Yes, Lord, I will call on You."

I reached to pick up my burden.

"You may leave that here if you wish. You see all these burdens? They are the ones that others have left at My feet. Joan's, Paula's, Debra's, Ruth's..... As I placed my burden with Him, the light began to fade. Yet I heard Him whisper, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you."

I hope you enjoyed the story and remember this apply to us all.

God Bless and keep you,

Rob



JULY 4TH CELEBRATION CONCERT AND DINNER

Sunday June 24th starting at 6pm, we will celebrate our country's freedom including our Freedom to worship our Lord Jesus Christ .

At 6pm we will have the concert

At 7pm we will have fish fry dinner

We need you to bring sides--veggies, salads, beans, potato salad, desserts, etc.



We would to honor those that served in all military branches. We will need the names of those that served, what branch served in, and the years (wars) they served in. We would like to have a picture of your family members in their uniform. You can email pictures to the church or give the pictures to Suzette Jones.