

Blessings That Are Burdens

Dub McClish

I once heard a corny story about a bunch of crows that gorged themselves in a California prune grove. When they had finished, they jumped up on an old plow handle to use as a launch for their departure flight. One by one they took off and one by one their overstuffed condition forced them to the ground. The moral of the story? Don't fly off the handle when you're full of prunes. Not bad advice, both for crows and humans! This story also illustrates how a great blessing (prunes) can become a great burden (so heavy, the crows could not fly). It occurs to me that we humans also have some blessings that carry with them great burdens.

Most of us count **prosperity** among our blessings. While I am not numbered among the rich, as are none of my circle of acquaintances, we certainly have more than the bare necessities! It is wonderful to be able to enjoy some of the comforts, even luxuries, of life on earth; but what a great burden the blessing of prosperity brings with it! There is the burden of temptation to lay up treasures here instead of in Heaven (Mat. 6: 19-20). There is the burden of temptation to seek more and more money and in doing so to fall into foolish, hurtful and soul-destroying lusts (1 Tim. 6:9). There is the burden of responsibility to give to the Lord's work according to my prosperity (1 Cor. 16:2).

Surely, the **freedom** we enjoy in America is a great blessing. We can go when we want to and where we want to, limited only by our ability to pay our way. Freedom to say what we want and to assemble to worship at any time are mere dreams in much of the world; but freedom has its burdensome side, too. Freedom to do all of these things is more than some can handle. An abuse of freedom is seen when one chooses to travel and visit without worshiping on the Lord's day. The very freedom to serve God or not to serve Him becomes a burden when men choose not to serve. Freedom of speech places on us the burden of speaking only true and wholesome words.

There is a blessing in the **influence** potential we all possess. It is thrilling to know that one's words or deeds have inspired honorable conduct in another. No need to ask

God to help us be an example. We are one, like it or not! Herein is the burden. What we need is help to be the **proper** influence and example.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, December 3, 1987, of which I was editor.]

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