

Needless Burdens

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When taking a trip, my family has often taken more clothes (and other items) than necessary to assure that we will have sufficient supplies while away from home. Only when we near the end of the trip do we realize that we have taken much more baggage than necessary. It occurs to me that as we travel through life toward the judgment and eternity beyond, we humans often carry with us needless burdens that both weigh us down and make the journey itself unpleasant.

There is the burden of **guilt**. Guilt is a major factor in insanity and suicide as well as being the cause of many other personality disorders. Even so, guilt is not all bad. If we were incapable of feeling guilt for wrongdoing, there would be little chance that we could be brought to repentance. However, God did not intend for men to have to carry the burden of guilt all through life. He sent His Son to die for us so that our sins could be forgiven if we will obey Him. When we repent and are baptized, our sins are remitted (Acts 2:38). We are not charged with them anymore. This is the glorious news of the Gospel, that we can be free from the guilt of sin. Anyone who goes through life with guilt is carrying a needless burden.

Anxiety and fear are also needless burdens. If we have obeyed Christ and continue to live for Him, we need be anxious or fearful no longer. As God's children, we have a Father who will provide our needs (Mat. 6:25-34). We are urged to cast our burden of anxieties and fears upon God, who cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7). The fear of death has been removed by Christ for His servants (1 Cor. 15:55-57). Those who are loaded with worries and fears carry needless burdens.

Many people carry the unpleasant and heavy burden of a **sour disposition**. Those who go through life looking and acting like they were weaned on green persimmons are not only miserable themselves, but they spread gloom and unpleasantness everywhere they go. A sour, abrasive and unkind attitude toward life is a major factor in numerous physical disorders. And it is all so unnecessary! When one is a Christian, he can rejoice in the Lord and be thankful (Phi. 4:4, 1 The. 5:18). A constant

tendency toward murmuring, whining and pessimism is a very heavy and needless burden.

Jesus invites all who are carrying such needless burdens to come to him and receive the relief they seek (Mat. 11:28).

[**Note:** I wrote this article for, and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, September 22, 1983, of which I was editor.]