

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

July 24

2022

Lighten Your Load

Someone once said, “Sometimes you don’t realize the weight of something you’ve been carrying until you feel the weight of its release.”

You see, we all recognize that there are times when life gets heavy, and although there are a variety of factors which lead us to sometimes feel weighted down, there are also some solutions which can help us lighten our load. So, with that thought in mind, let’s identify a few things that can help us lighten our load. Starting with...

Refuse To Be Thin-Skinned.

One solution to lightening the load is to be one who refuses to be thin-skinned. To be thin-skinned is to be sensitive to criticism or insults. Those who are thin-skinned are typically those who get offended, hurt, or unsettled very easily. However, if we refuse to be thin-skinned we will be better equipped to withstand criticism, and we will help eliminate one of the factors that can weigh us down.

Therefore, when you are negatively criticized, or unlawfully persecuted, keep these words of Jesus in mind, “love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). Friend, by putting this instruction of Jesus into practice, it will help you end up with a thicker-skin needed to keep moving forward without being loaded down by criticism and persecutions.

Avoid Carrying A Chip On Your Shoulder.

It has been said that the heaviest of all loads to carry is a chip on the shoulder. Carrying a chip on your shoulder usually refers to the act of holding a grudge or the act of carrying around a grievance toward someone. However, we all need to strive to avoid carrying a chip on our shoulder, for such indicates wood higher up, and we all know how heavy that can get.

Therefore, let’s lighten the load by avoiding to carry around “chip’s on our shoulders,” and let’s be ever mindful of these words of the Hebrews writer, “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled” (Hebrews 12:14-15). Hold on to those inspired words my friend, and always remember things such as hatred and bitterness, do far more harm to the one who possess it.

Forget Those Things That Are Behind.

Many often become weighed down because they fail to let go of their past mistakes or misfortunes. However, we all need to remember, “Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We only have today.” You see, we cannot go back to yesterday, last week, last month, or to last year and change anything.

Therefore, lighten your load by forgetting the former things and by not dwelling on the past (Isaiah 43:18), and let your eyes look straight ahead (Proverbs 4:25). Know that those things from your past are behind you and remembering that you cannot go back and relive the past. So, forget those things which are behind, and reach forward to those things which are ahead (Philippians 3:13), and do not let yesterday use up too much of today.

Strive To Be Optimistic Rather Than Pessimistic.

Some become loaded down simply because they are always negative about everything. You see, we all would do well by being one who seeks to be hopeful and confident about the outcome of things, rather than to be one who always tends to see the worst aspect of things.

Therefore, lighten your load by striving to be optimistic, rather

than pessimistic. Always remember, a man is as he thinks in his heart (Proverbs 23:7), and if we think and focus upon pure and wholesome things (Philippians 4:8) we will more than likely be one who is positive and optimistic, rather than one who is negative and pessimistic.

Cast Your Burden's On The Lord.

One more solution to effectively lighten your load is to cast your burdens on the Lord. You see, there may be times when we may feel like "I can't handle this." So, if or when those times present themselves, may we never forget that our rock is the Lord (Psalm 18:2), and that He will sustain us.

Therefore, brethren, when the burdens of life load you down, cast your burden on the Lord (Psalm 55:22). Know He cares for you (1 Peter 5:6), and that the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

Once again, may we all seek to lighten the extra load which we may unnecessarily be carrying around, and never forget, "You don't realize the weight of something that you've been carrying until you feel the weight of its release."

✍ Brad Phillips

"There Are Times To Keep Your Mouth Shut!"

In the long ago, Solomon said, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Prov. 21:23). This is undoubtedly a true statement! Many times, our mouths get us in trouble, don't they? James said that the tongue can "defile the whole body" (Jas. 3:6). Proverbs 10:19 states: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise." Geoffrey Chaucer wisely said, "God in his great discretion walled a tongue with teeth." Friend, let us be mindful of what the Bible says about the sins associated with speech, and remember that there are times to keep your mouth shut!

When ought you be quiet? Solomon gave some good advice when it comes to controlling speech. You need to be quiet when ...

You are tempted to talk instead of work: "In all labour there is

profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to poverty" (Prov. 14:23).

You are tempted to lie: "A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies" (Prov. 14:5).

You are tempted to joke about sin: "Fools make a mock at sin ..." (Prov. 14:9).

You are tempted to "shoot off at the lip": "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few" (Ecc. 5:2).

You are tempted to curse or slander men: "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (Jas. 3:9-10).

Remember, "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding" (Prov. 17:27-28)! A modern rendering is, "It is better to keep silent and be considered a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt."

✍ Jarrod M. Jacobs

Belleville church of Christ
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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

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