

Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary

Joe Slater

The song is right – burdens really are lifted at Calvary! Our Savior Himself invited, *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”* (Matthew 11:28). Jesus didn’t shed His blood and die on the cross so you could carry your sin around like a ball and chain for the rest of your life. He offers rest!

Jesus made a point of saying “heavy laden.” He extends His grace to those who have committed “big” sins as well as transgressors in less extreme ways. Even as life was draining from Him, Jesus lifted the burden of a violent criminal who, only a short time before, had mocked Him. Jesus told him, *“Today you will be with Me in paradise”* (Luke 23:43).

Sometime later Jesus lifted the burden of Saul of Tarsus, a man who absolutely hated Him and was doing everything in his power to destroy the church. Innumerable disciples of Jesus had suffered arrest, torture, imprisonment, and even death at this man’s behest. So awful were his crimes that he later referred to himself as the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). Yet Jesus lifted even Saul’s enormous burden of sin! *“For this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life”* (1 Timothy 1:16). If I may paraphrase, “If Jesus can save me (and He did) then He can save anyone!”

Even before the cross, God’s people found relief from sin because Christ’s blood reached back to them just as it reaches forward to us. David’s burden made him feel lifeless and crushed until *“I acknowledged my sin to You . . . and You forgave the iniquity of my sin”* (Psalm 32:3-5).

So often we react to our sin with self-loathing and beating ourselves up. While such responses are understandable, they can never “fix” the problem! Only Jesus can do that.

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Christ Is The Answer

Have you become despondent? Are you discouraged? Has your faith grown weak? Does your spiritual battery need to be recharged? Likely what you really need is a good dose of God’s spiritual medicine, the Gospel of Christ. You need to be in Bible study and worship regularly.

Long ago Jeremiah declared: “O Lord, I know that they way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jeremiah 10:23). We live in a time when the foundations of civilization are crumbling, the night of apostasy is deepening, lawlessness runs wild to its awful climax, the powers of atheism increase and abound, and wars and inflation circle the globe. Oh, how we need a guide in these troubled times! We need a guide who knows the way – a guide where we need to go and how to get there.

We have such a guide if only we would listen to His voice! Our guide is Jesus Christ. He can solve all of our problems. Without Him, our nation will die, our homes will dissolve, and our souls will be forever lost in a Devil’s hell. To survive this crazed generation, we must get back to God and His way. We must accept the Bible and follow its teachings. The only hope and cure for mankind’s sin and misery rests in the precious name of our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord!

One day all the redeemed and blood-washed shall be gathered home to God to live forever in that house not made with hands. Will you be among that number?

--Bobby Key (deceased) via *Old Paths*

NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED

“I have shown you many good works from the Father, for which of them are you going to stone Me?” (John 10:32)

We teach our children to do right and promise them that when they do right good things will happen. This may be true as a general rule; but it is not an absolute truth. Sometimes in our sin-filled world it seems that “no good deed goes unpunished.” We must be prepared for the possibility of suffering when doing good (1 Peter 2:20; 3:17; & 4:19).

If we suffer for doing good, we must realize that we are in good company. The more good Jesus did, the more He was opposed. It was the healing of a crippled man that led the Pharisees to seek to take His life (Matthew 12:14). And as John 10:32 indicates, the more His deeds pointed Him out as the Son of God, the more they hated Him.

We also are to be children of God. We do not stand in the unique relationship Jesus had; but we also will feel the anger of the world as we draw closer to our Heavenly Father. Remember the warning of Jesus: *“A servant is not greater than his master; if they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you”* (John 15:20).

--Thayer Salisbury (via *Power For Today*)

HELPFUL DISTINCTIONS TODAY

1. Men are not women.
2. Women are not men.
3. Pets are not children.
4. Boyfriends/Girlfriends are not spouses.
5. The internet is not the local church.
6. Creatures are not the creator.
7. Sin is not righteous.