

Going Beyond The Expected

As I was preparing to write this article, the following verse came to mind, “And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.” It is this verse, coupled with the one’s surrounding it, that are enormously challenging. Jesus exhorts us to do more than what is expected, go further than the average person, even when it comes to serving our enemies.

Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2

The life of a Christian is a calling for someone to go beyond the expected, as is mentioned in the previous paragraph. But going beyond our comfort zones is not only challenging with those outside the church, it is equally as challenging within the church and the above verse reveals that to us. God calls us to ***“bear one another’s burdens.”*** The word ***bear*** means *to endure, to take up in order to carry*. What are we to help carry? A brother or sister’s ***burdens***. This word quickly grabs our attention, for it speaks of *troublesome moral faults*. Gene Getz says it plainly, “Dealing with sin in the lives of fellow believers is one of the most difficult tasks God has given Christians...Many churches ignore this responsibility entirely.”

One might be asking, “Why do we tend to ignore spiritual problems. I am not going to claim to know all the dynamics regarding such a question, but I would like to make a couple observations I have learned over the years. First, for someone to help carry my burdens I must be willing to reveal what they are to someone. Like politics and finances, we often see personal sin as...well...personal and thus no one’s business. Exposing our sin to Jesus is spiritually therapeutic (1st John 1:9), but so is it when we confess to one another (James 5:16). Being willing to invite another to help you conquer sinful behavior is a step of incredible faith. Of course, for such efforts to yield its spiritual reward, there must be someone willing to carry that burden., to offer service in order to help someone conquer their vice. This demands time, energy and sacrifice. The writer of Hebrews pens these words, ***“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin”*** (Hebrews 3:12-13). We cannot fight it (sin) alone! We need God and we need each other!

Going beyond the expected is what God calls us all to do. Sometimes that is not so easy, especially when it comes to dealing with sinful habits. Interesting to realize that we find comfort in helping people with things that have only temporary value (food, clothes, shelter, etc.), but find ourselves almost handcuffed when it comes to sin and its eternal implications. Even so, we can go beyond the expected with God’s guidance and strength. Where are you willing to let Him take you?

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