

February 9, 2014

Mostly Personal...

Loved Ones,

It's great to see you this morning!

I want to say *thank you* for two tremendous responses in recent days. First of all, I want to say *thanks* to the scores of men who have signed up to be a part of *318* and *Seven*. In the next couple of weeks, you will be receiving a letter containing information about our first meeting and the schedule for the *Seven* breakfast meetings. Both will begin in March. I also want to say *thank you* for your wonderful response to our Brown Chapel Project. We will be announcing the totals in just a few minutes, but let me thank you right now for being part of this journey of faith!

These past two Sundays have represented significant victories as we move forward into the challenging days ahead. I'm so proud of you! I don't tell you enough, but I am so proud to be your pastor. Like Paul, I give thanks daily for those who are my spiritual family. Your generosity and commitment make the load lighter.

Recently a pastor, explaining the concept of a *burden* to his congregation, raised a glass of liquid and asked, "How heavy is this glass of water?" Answers ranged from 4 to 8 ounces. The pastor replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it. If I hold it for a minute, there's no problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it all day, you'll have to call an ambulance! In each case, it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

That's the way it is with burdens. If we carry the problems of life all the time, sooner or later as the strain increases, we won't be able to carry on. As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest; then you can pick it up again and carry on. That's why we're told to *help bear one another's burdens*.

This morning you'll enjoy fellowship and worship, and the cares of the day will probably be largely forgotten. The tough thing is that Monday follows Sunday and life hits us again square on the jaw! So before you get busy with the affairs of tomorrow, put your burdens in God's hand and learn to share with one another. As my Grandmother used to say, "many hands make for light work." Life is short; so give your burdens to the One who can hold them.

Galatians 6:6-10

Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

I love you,
Pastor Stephen

