

Learning How to 'Travel' Light

I grew up in New York City but attended a college in Valhalla, just outside the city. It took too long to commute each day from my home in Brooklyn to school, so I stayed in Valhalla during the week and went home on the weekends.

It was quite a trip. I packed my suitcase and loaded it with what seemed like a ton of books and left on public transportation right after my last class on Friday. That meant I had to take the New York Central down to Grand Central Station in Manhattan and then connect with two separate subways to Brooklyn. Each connection involved taking long walks over shiny corridors and carrying the suitcase up and down the stairs that led to the next platform.

When I finally arrived in Brooklyn and left the elevated train station, I faced another five long city blocks to my mother's apartment. I left Valhalla at 2:30 p.m. and arrived home at 7 p.m. WHEW!

The trip back to school on Sunday was even worse because I added a shopping bag full of frozen meats and foods to my already heavy load. When I arrived at the train station in Valhalla, I walked another mile uphill to the house where I stayed during the week.

At that time, most suitcases did not come equipped with wheels and extender bars. They had to be lifted by their handles and carried using bare muscle power. It was not long before calluses began to form on my hands.

I remember how relieved I was when my roommate's dad was able to meet the train in Valhalla and give me a ride up the hill to the house. Being "carried" in the car for that last stretch was such a treat. I found rest as someone else took on the

responsibility of carrying my burdens.

The Bible says that we all must bear our own burden (see Gal. 6:5), but we should also bear one another's burdens and fulfill the law of Christ (see Gal. 6:2).

I don't like heavy burdens. That's why I travel light. I now take only one carry-on with wheels when I go anywhere. If it doesn't fit in that little suitcase, I don't need it and I don't take it. Not only does it make life easier for me, but also for my traveling companions who are carrying their "own burdens."

My little suitcase goes with me in the airplane, fits easily into any automobile trunk, takes up little room in restaurants and doesn't slow me down when I need to walk long distances. And I am free to help others if they need me to.

Jesus knows all about bearing burdens. He bore our sins and those of all mankind. He took the weight of the world's sins on Himself, and He admonishes us to come to Him if we are heavy laden and He will give us rest.

But sometimes we feel as though it's our personal responsibility to carry our own burdens and everybody else's as well. When God places a prayer burden on our hearts, we carry the weight of it day and night, even to our detriment.

I carried my bags years ago because I had no other means to transport them each week.

When that season was over, I no longer had to bear those burdens in the same way. Now I bear more responsibility, but I carry fewer burdens. I found someone who helps lift the burdens off my shoulders and carries them and me to our destination.

I don't believe God intends for us to carry any burden alone. Just as my friend's father came to my rescue, placed the bags

in his vehicle and gave me a ride to my destination, so the Lord comes and gives us the lift we need to lighten the burden and continue the journey.

The Lord's exact words were, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take *My* yoke upon you, and learn from Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For *My* yoke is easy and *My* burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30, MEV, emphasis added).

Are you heavy laden? Are you carrying a load that seems overwhelming? Then heed the words of our Lord and go to Him, learn from Him, and exchange His easy yoke and light burden for what you are carrying in your own strength. Peter learned this lesson and admonished us to cast all our care on the Lord (see 1 Pet. 5:7). You and I can do the same.

Prayer Power for the Week of August 31, 2015

This week heed the Lord's invitation to go to Him and exchange your heavy burdens for His light one. Ask Him to teach you His ways so you can learn to find rest for your soul. Ask Him to help you determine which burdens you are to bear, which to release and which to help others carry. Continue to pray for our nation and its leaders, especially as we face primaries and elections in the coming months. Pray that we, as God's people, would humble ourselves, pray, seek God's face, and turn from our wicked ways so that God could forgive our sin, and heal our land. Remember Israel and the persecuted church when you pray for revival and more laborers for His harvest (1 Pet. 5:7; Gal. 6:2; 2 Chron. 7:14).