



Servant's Corner

February 2012

When To Lift A Burden

By Rich Henderson, Love INC Director

Can helping someone in need ever be a bad thing? It may sound odd, but the Biblical answer is an unequivocal “Yes”. Paul gave this order to those who refused to work to meet their own needs: **“if anyone will not work, neither let him eat” (2 Thess. 3:10)**. That sounds harsh, until we remember that God **created** us to be workers. It’s part of being made in the image of God. God is a worker. God’s command to Adam to tend the garden was given **before** the fall took place. We become an accomplice in sin when we feed an able-bodied person who refuses to work. Such “help” actually enables them to continue to be lazy.

The key to helping in a way that doesn’t hurt is **discernment**. In Galatians 6:2 we are told to, **“Bear one another’s burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ”**. The “burden” referred to here is beyond what a person can bear by themselves. Picture a person stumbling under the unrealistically heavy weight of an overstuffed backpack and you’ll have the idea. In Galatians 6:5 we are told, **“For each one shall bear his own load.”** The idea here is a knapsack. It’s not too heavy. It’s what a person should be expected to carry. To carry it for someone would be to do them a disservice. We would be treating them like a child instead of as a responsible adult.

May the Lord give us the discernment to eagerly lighten the backpack, but graciously refuse to carry the knapsack.



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