

## *CARRY ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS*

**Galatians 6:2 (NIV)** "Carry one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ."

There are limitless areas of human life that require human touch, but for now, I present one in particular for our focus. I speak of God's children who have grown old, and/or ill, who are sometimes non-ambulant, and who are far too often left alone. In church settings, we frequently refer to these as the *shut-in*. Shut in and shut out - what a dreadful combination for any human being to live. Very specifically, I am concerned about God's sick and elderly left alone in nursing homes.

Many people, even Christians, avoid this area of ministry- this part of the vineyard, that is. Most would love to be called to provide compassion and care for people who can help themselves. This is not a judgment, for the areas of ministry among us are many, varied, and unlimited. But easy, quick, and pleasant is not a promise in ministry. Nursing homes, for instance, are often not pretty sights. People are lonely there. People hurt there. People walk around "aimlessly" there. They ramble "senselessly," and are sometimes not groomed. The air sometimes smells unpleasant, and the sights can trouble the spirit deeply. And yes, people die there. The bottom line is, **People are burdened there**. This is why Christ sends us there.

God has blessed many of us with the gifts of joy and comfort, of laughter, and of peace. God has placed prayers in our bosoms and needs us to take them to His sick, shut-in, and elderly. Christ's hands, feet, and voice - we are these when we attend our sisters' and brothers' needs; but also, we are Christ's face, and we can believe that Christ wants to smile through our faces. Ultimately, we have been given an extra measure of the strength and love of Christ for the expressed purpose of carrying the burdens of those who can no longer carry their own.

Christ has no hands, no feet, no eyes, no face, except those we, His people are willing to lend.

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