

66. *Growing Under the Weight*



Jesus talks of us willingly taking up our cross and bearing the weight as we follow him, (Mt 16:24). His load might not be physically demanding in a literal sense. We may be asked to wait, and keep waiting for God’s response, like Joseph did looking endlessly outside through Egyptian prison bars. Our waiting features events like an empty letterbox or inbox, the ache of desire for a child or a spouse, or the longing for a new job. We may be in a ministry, assigned by heaven, where we are not allowed the opportunities to use our talents and abilities fully. We carry the cross of the mundane. An affliction or relationship battle can discolour our day, and the burden of this, stretching out into a prolonged future, weighs on us. Corruption and oppression may be the social environment where you labor, and this may be restraining the fruitfulness of your ministry. Some of God’s people minister in orchards where despite their faithful efforts and prayer, droughts, pests and hostile elements there is no immediate fruit.

We are called to grow under the load.

These situations are dimensions of the laboratory of heaven where we are assigned to grow. From the hindsight of heaven, we will appreciate that our day-by-day faithful service is part of a glorious harvest that God’s fecundity releases. The yoke is to be an instrument of transformation, and incredibly Jesus says it’s “easy” (Mt 11:30), and compared to the world’s shackles it certainly is. In heaven’s mysterious ways all situations and weights which we carry will work for our eventual good, (Romans 8:28).

Paul must have felt it was inefficient for him to be constrained in prison writing letters. The execution of apostles and saints, down through the years of history, must have been seen by survivors are premature deaths. Toiling to create minor beachheads in mission must have seen wasteful for qualified professionals who could have seemingly done more using their skills in their home nations. Ministry in capital cities presents as being more worthwhile than that in obscure locations. But God’s ways are not our ways, (Isaiah

55:8). We can cry out for release as did Paul (2 Corinthians 4:8-10) or complain passionately to God as we see David doing through the psalms, or Job before him. That is a legitimate response.

Today let's not curse the weight, or complain to any but YHWH, and press on choosing to grow under the load.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me*". **Matthew 16:24**

"... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." **Matthew 11:30**

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. **Romans 8:28**

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. **Isaiah 55:8**

When times are good, be happy but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about his or her future. **Ecclesiastes 7:14**

Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. **Philippians 2:14-15**

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. **2 Corinthians 4:8-11**

Mandissa Stronger

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vhPhaKy9T4> acoustic version with lyrics

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=emgv-VRtMEU&feature=related> full version

Footprints in the Sand

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R1nl6DZ4mE&feature=related>

Corrie Ten Boon Play, *The Weaver poem*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdxfqkqaU5g>

The Beatles *Carry That Weight*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBOCAcnc-RQ>

The Weaver

*My life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me.
I cannot choose the colours
He works so steadily.*

*Oft' times He weaves in sorrow
And I, in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper
And I, the underside.*

*The dark threads are as needed
In the Weaver's skilful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.*

*Not till the loom is silent
And shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.*