

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Shepherd's Path

## A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

### A Miraculous Church Series, Lesson 56

**Lesson Title:** A Miraculous Help – Choosing the Seven

**Take Home Point:** Help carry one another's burdens.

#### **Warm-Up:**

A friend of mine has a generous and giving spirit, and God has provided him with the material wealth to be able to help others. He is as quick as anyone to write a check or extend a loan to a person, family, or group in genuine need. He does this because he believes God has blessed him to bless others. But my friend has a problem. He is very resistant to receiving any help from others. He is extremely reluctant, to the point of persistent refusal, to allow anyone to carry his burdens with him, no matter how much another desires to help him. It is an interesting mix of selfless generosity and personal pride that perhaps mirrors many of us.

**Read:** Acts 11:19-30; Galatians 6:2

#### **Observation (What happened?):**

List every action in today's reading that demonstrates helping others.

According to Galatians 6:2, when we help others, who are we obeying and pleasing?

#### **Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

Why do you think Barnabas brought Saul to Antioch?

Since the famine included Antioch, why did the disciples there still choose to send help to Judea?

#### **Insight:**

Although there are exceptions, it is not in our fallen human nature either to give sacrificially or accept help from others. Selfishness and pride are so at the core of our human spirit that God works hard to transform us in these areas of life. But as was true with my friend, between the two we usually find it easier to learn to give a gift than to receive one in the form of help. That pride runs deep. And it doesn't help that Christians can be as misinformed as anyone. For example, nowhere in the Scriptures will you find the phrase, "God helps those who help themselves." On the contrary, that statement is a Satan-provided appeal to our pride. You can almost hear him whisper, "Don't let anyone else carry your burden with you. You don't need the prayers of another Christian; you don't need help. You can do this alone." It's a lie that we need to recognize and reject. For many people, especially Christians, it is difficult to be as gracious in receiving as in giving. But when we graciously receive, we do two good things – we poke more holes in our balloon of pride, and we give someone else the opportunity to "carry each other's burdens...and follow Christ's teachings."

#### **Application (What does it mean to me?):**

Who has carried a burden for you recently? How can you thank them?

Pray for your small group to resist selfish tendencies and carry the burdens of others.