

BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS All nice and clean and cooled off by a nice swim in the ocean, Herman Trueblood saw a sweating man helped by his two sons trying on a hot day to push his disabled car up an incline. Two voices started yelling at each other inside him. One said, "There's an opportunity for service; you ought to help them push." The other voice protested, "Now that is none of your business. You'll get yourself all hot and dirty. Let them handle their own affair." He finally yielded to his better impulse. He put his shoulder to the task. The car moved and kept moving.

A simple thing then happened which Trueblood never forgot. The father stuck out his dirty hand and Trueblood stuck out his dirty hand. The father said, "I'm very glad that you came along. You had just enough strength, added to ours, to make the thing go."

Trueblood says, "Years have passed since that hot day, but I can still hear that man saying, 'You had just enough strength, added to ours, to make the thing go.' . . . There are many thousands of people struggling to get some heavy load over the hill, and I probably have 'just enough strength, added to theirs, to make the thing go'"

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

There is nothing holier in this life than the first consciousness of love. Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction. To love is to stay close enough to touch and still have enough space to grow.' Love is the willingness to see less because it sees more. In the one we love, we find our second self. Love is the beauty of the soul. To love abundantly is to live abundantly, to love forever is to live forever. There is exquisite beauty in the heart that cares and loves. Love believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

DURER'S PRAYING HANDS From childhood Albrecht Durer wanted to paint. Finally, he left home to study with a great artist. He met a friend who also had this same desire and the two became roommates. Both being poor, they found it difficult to make a living and study at the same time. Albrecht's friend offered to work while Albrecht studied. Then when the paintings began to sell, he would have his chance. After much persuasion, Albrecht agrees and worked faithfully while his friend toiled long hours to make a living.

The day came when Albrecht sold a wood-carving and his friend went back to his paints, only to find that the hard work had stiffened and twisted his fingers and he could no longer paint with skill. When Albrecht learned what had happened to his friend, he was filled with great sorrow. One day, returning home unexpectedly, he heard the voice of his friend and saw the gnarled, toil worn hands folded in prayer before him.

"I can show the world my appreciation by painting his hands as I see them now, folded, in prayer." It was this thought that inspired Albrecht Durer when he realized that he could never give back to his friend the skill which had left his hands.

Durer's gratitude was captured in his inspired painting that has become world famous. And we are blessed by both the beauty of the painting and the beautiful story of gratitude and brotherhood.

AN ASSORTMENT OF GIVERS There are three kinds of givers -- the flint, the sponge and the honeycomb. To get anything out of a flint you must hammer it. And then you get only chips and sparks. To get water out of a sponge you must squeeze it, and the more you use pressure, the more you will get. But the honeycomb just overflows with its sweetness. Which kind of giver are you?