

Greetings Brethren,

For the Pastor's Note this week, I thought I would share with you an article I wrote last year that appeared in the Ministerial Journal titled, *Never Forget the Weight*. Although it was written with the ministry as the target audience, I want to share this with you all because it contains an important reminder that's expected of each one of us as we continue our walk toward that wonderful promised Kingdom. No matter who we are or what role we are given in this family, we can never forget the sacred trust that has been placed upon our shoulders. It's a trust that we just rehearsed through the recent Holy Day season.

## Never Forget The Weight

I can remember that day, July 20, 2019 as if it were yesterday. I sat nervously in that air-conditioned room in Cincinnati, OH, listening to the words of Steve Myers. He was preparing the audience for the ordination that was about to take place. As he talked about the calling of the ministry, it felt as if the heat from the scorching July sun began filling the room. I was well aware of what was about to happen, my blood pressure was a great indicator.

This was not something I chose. This moment was the result of a special calling, caring people that were willing to help me understand that calling, and an intense fourteen months of training to prepare me for the work that it would demand. Yet, there's no training offered that would prepare me for the emotions that I was experiencing in that exact moment.

I could feel those emotions beginning to well up inside. I felt that sense of unworthiness to receive such an honor. There were multiple names of men racing through my mind that I felt were better qualified than myself. I began to have questions and thoughts such as, "*Who am I? I'm the least qualified among the people! I'm a child among giants!*" Yet here I was, in this room, and any moment I was about to receive this great blessing from God.

As all this kept running through my head, I heard my name called to come to the stage. My mind wanted to stay in that seat, but somehow my feet carried me forward to the place I had been summoned. I found myself suddenly surrounded by eight of the elders of the congregation. The prayer started, then all those hands were laid upon me.

I have to admit, I've never thought about the logistics of this ceremony and I was actually caught a bit off guard of what I experienced. Who would have imagined that those hands would feel so heavy upon my shoulders? The weight was more than expected and I felt my knees starting to weaken due to the downward pressure. I just kept thinking to myself, don't collapse, just hang on, but the prayer seemed to go on and on. In reality, it was over in a few short minutes.

After the ceremony and services were ended, I was approached by two men. Little did I know that the words that would proceed from this conversation would become a great source of inspiration for me as I walked in a different role from that day forward. I can't remember exactly every word that was spoken, but the advice that was given is as clear in my ear today, as the day they spoke it. Here is what I remember.

Collyer Wells, a deacon in the congregation and good friend, reached out with a firm handshake and offered his congratulations. Then he asked me, "*Did you feel the weight?*" I thought he was making light concerning the physical weight and was referring to all the hands that were placed on me. So, I replied, "*Yes sir, I thought my knees were about to buckle. I honestly felt as if I was being pushed through the floor of the stage.*" Collyer then placed his hand on my shoulder and with a serious look, but with a warm smile, replied, "*Never forget the weight. Never get to the point in your life where you think you can carry it by yourself. It will crush you if you do.*" Collyer then gave me a big hug and walked away.

I stood there alone thinking about those words for some time. A few minutes later, John McClain, a long-time faithful Elder serving in Cincinnati, walked up, congratulated me on the ordination, and asked me what I was thinking about so seriously. I told him what Collyer Wells had said and he added, *“I agree with those words and never forget them. The weight he speaks of is a sacred trust. That sacred trust is what has been placed upon your shoulders and you will never be able to carry it by yourself. Be faithful with this trust and as Christ has promised, He will be there to help you carry it.”*

Since those faithful words were given to me, I’ve heard them echoed many times. They have been treasured jewels to a new Pastor trying to figure out the role that has been placed upon him. There have been moments when I’ve went to God and cried out, *“I can’t do this!”* To my surprise, I never heard, *“It’s okay, I’ll make everything all better now.”*

No, it has always been that powerful reminder that God brings thundering back to mind. It’s as if God is saying, *“I know you can’t do this. The reason you’re feeling overwhelmed is due to the fact that you’re attempting to carry the weight all by yourself. You’re feeling the full measure of the weight that has been placed on your shoulders and it’s crushing you. Calm down, stand still, and share the load.”*

It has taken a couple of years to figure certain things out and settle down in this new role. Thankfully, after many self-examinations, it became obvious that I had the tendency to tell God how I was going to pastor instead of humbly asking Him how does He want me to pastor. The results from these two choices are drastic in comparison. I prefer the later, asking for direction first, because it’s actively sharing the load with the one who promised to help carry it.

So, from a fairly new Elder and Pastor, I wanted to share with you what has been shared with me. As Elders, we certainly do have a huge calling, the weight is heavy, and this sacred trust is no light task. This great honor should remind us of the privilege of what it means to be part of something Greater than self.

The role or positions that may accompany this honor, be it President, Council of Elders Member, Department Managers, Pastor, or Elder, is not our identity and the authority that we are given, never supersedes the humility that it requires to carry. Our first duty is to stay in contact with that identity and remind and encourage others to do the same. That identity is being a part of this Church, the Body, and member of the Holy Family of God.

There is not one person who can ever claim to have the power to carry that weight alone. We who have been placed in these leadership positions, must live this first, so that we set the example for others to follow, those whom we have been entrusted to lead.

Let’s be resolved that no matter how long we have been in these roles, let’s remain humbled and always remember the faithful words of these two wonderful men, Mr. Wells and Mr. McClain, *“Never forget the weight and trust in the One who is there to help us carry it.”*

May God Bless you all with a wonderful Sabbath,

Ryan Hall

## **For the Youth - Bible Trivia:**

1. How old was Noah when the flood began?

\*Hint: Genesis 7:1-6

2. In what city were the disciples of Jesus Christ first called Christians?

\*Hint: Acts 11:22-26

3. After fleeing Egypt, Moses came to the land of Midian. How many daughters did the Priest of Midian have?

\* Hint: Exodus 2:11-16

# North Canton Announcements:

- 1. Sabbath Service Time (April 15<sup>th</sup>): 2:00 PM**
- 2. Next Sabbath – (April 22<sup>nd</sup>): 2:00 PM**
- 3. Monthly Bible Study:** The Bible Study will take place at 7:30 pm Thursday evening, April 20<sup>th</sup>.  
**Join Via Computer:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86973702805?pwd=OXZuSFUyYUpzWEJBd2pVZVVVpcUFOZz09>  
**Meeting ID:** 869 7370 2805  
**Passcode:** 672266  
**Join Via Phone:** 1-929-205-6099  
**Meeting ID:** 86973702805#  
**Password:** \*672266#
- 4. Marlene Ware:** Due to Marlene's inability to stand, she was unable to have the Mammogram this past Wednesday. Since they had to cancel her appointment, she was able to connect to the Last Day of Unleavened services. Marlene will still need to see her doctor concerning the mass in her breast. Your continued prayers are greatly appreciated.
- 5. Feast of Tabernacles Registration & Housing:** Many members have already received their 2023 Festival Planning Brochure. If not, it can found at [feast.ucg.org](http://feast.ucg.org). Important dates to take note of.
  - **Sunday, April 23:** Feast Registration Opens at 12pm EDT & Early housing begins in the U.S. and Canada
  - **Sunday, April 30:** General housing begins for U.S. & Canada at 12 EDT.
- 6. Spring/Summer Picnic:** Mark your calendars, Our annual Spring/Summer Picnic is scheduled for after Sabbath Services on June 10, 2023 at Price Park.
- 7. Troyer's Hollow Campout:** Mark your calendars for the Annual Troyer's Hollow Campout June 23-25, 2023! Nestled in the scenic hills of Amish Country near Charm, Ohio, Troyer's Hollow in the Doughty Valley, we will once again come together for a fellowship focused weekend for all ages. More details to follow. If you have questions now, please reach out to Mary Miller - [mary@crawfordmfg.com](mailto:mary@crawfordmfg.com)
- 8. Seasons of a Woman's Life:** The women of the Indianapolis and Fort Wayne congregations invite you to a Women's Enrichment Weekend April 21-23, 2023. We will discuss and learn about the "Seasons of a Woman's Life". Rooms have been reserved at a local hotel and we will host a welcome reception there on Friday evening. On Saturday and Sunday, ladies will meet at the Indianapolis church building for a fun weekend of learning, fellowship, and music. You may contact Lizzy Creech at [liz.creech06@yahoo.com](mailto:liz.creech06@yahoo.com) with any questions. See attached Flyer for more info.

If I've overlooked anything, Please let me know ASAP.