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## **What we think is essential can sometimes be unnecessary**

Joseph Khabbaz

*It shall come to pass in that day That his burden will be taken away from your shoulder, And his yoke from your neck, And the yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing oil. Isaiah 10:27 (NKJV)*

**What we think is essential can sometimes be unnecessary.** Have you ever lost something that you thought you could not live without? Maybe it was your keys, wallet, or something more important. This summer, I had to answer that question after losing my iPhone while hiking. I was surprised by how much I relied on my iPhone for things outside of making a simple call, like banking, taking spontaneous notes, and needing last-minute driving directions. While deliberating on my next smartphone purchase options, I purchased a basic flip phone to hold me over. There is a lot my new flip phone cannot do, but what I noticed most was it could not disrupt me with untimely alerts or intrude on quality time with my loved ones. I will see how long I will last with my “new” phone, but one thing is clear: what I thought was essential was also a burden in certain areas of my life. Sometimes, what we think is helping us can become a “yoke” that hinders us.

In Isaiah 10, we find the Kingdom of Assyria growing stronger and threatening smaller nations like Judah. When faced with the possibility of war, King Ahaz made a peace treaty with Assyria instead of trusting in God, who is the true source of peace in times of trouble. Ahaz would painfully discover how precise Isaiah’s prophecy was; Assyria was not an ally that would relieve his anxiety but rather an adversary that would increase his burden. Like Ahaz, people can also go to the wrong places for help in times of fear. This can lead to unbearable burdens like unhealthy relationships, negative self-talk, fear of failure, addiction, guilt, and seclusion. But God promises that His anointing oil has the power to destroy the yoke that burdens His people.

Today, know that you do not have to bear your yoke alone; God can restore you by destroying the burden the enemy seeks to place upon you. Ellen White makes this beautiful statement of God’s divine assistance, “He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow... Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. Though your pain touch no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and live.” Even when you feel like no one understands you, God does, and He seeks us to pursue a life with Him. Let God’s anointing oil take away your heavy yoke as you trust in Him!

## **REFLECTION**

1. What are some things in your life that you once considered essential but have since realized may be unnecessary or even burdensome?
2. In moments of fear or uncertainty, where do you typically seek help or comfort? Have these sources ever turned out to be burdensome rather than helpful?
3. How can you trust God more fully in times of trouble or temptation, and what steps can you take to allow His "anointing oil" to break the burdens in your life?

## PRAYER REQUESTS AND RESOURCES

- Come worship with us tonight at Collegedale Church for Vespers. Doors open at 7:00 p.m., and the service starts at 7:30 p.m.
- Auditions to join the Vespers worship team will occur on September 3-5. Just click on this online form to apply: [click here](#)
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here](#).
- Follow @ministryandmissions on Instagram for updates on events and programs, and it is also a place where you will find encouraging messages. Also, [check out our website](#) for many new resources.
- Talk with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.