

## Not Lifting a Finger to Help

### Scripture Reading — Luke 11:37-46

*Woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them. — Luke 11:46*

In recent years Japan has been emerging from a long feudal period in its history. Under feudalism, the layers of society were strictly held in check by authority. It is no exaggeration that among the passing generation of Japanese men, some would sit cross-legged like a samurai warrior before his peasant retainer, barking out harsh commands to their wives: “Tea! Tobacco!” In Japan today, many young women don’t like the idea of waiting hand-and-foot on a tyrant, preferring not to get married rather than to suffer such oppression.

The experts of the law in Jesus’ day, as religious teachers, were similarly situated at the top of Jewish society. They had the power, by their authoritative interpretations, to make people groan under the burden of senseless legalistic regulations, enslaving people to the law.

In family life today, people still must figure out a balanced, fair division of labor in a busy household: earning a salary, raising children, handling housekeeping chores, getting enough rest. We do well to remember Jesus’ criticism of legal experts who loaded people down with burdens, not lifting a finger to help. Let’s also remember Paul’s words in Galatians 6:2: “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

### Prayer

*Lord Jesus, we know that you came to serve. Give shape to our daily lives and relationships; infuse them with an attitude of service as we reflect on all you have taught. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Life](#), [Family & Relationships](#), [Christian Life](#), [Community](#)

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