

THE DANGER OF CARRYING TOO MUCH

Knowing Who to Carry, Who to Compartmentalize, and Who to Release

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On August 25, 2001, the music world was devastated by the tragic death of 22-year-old R&B superstar Aaliyah. Aaliyah had just finished filming a music video in the Bahamas and was boarding a small aircraft to return to the United States. But something was terribly wrong. The aircraft was carrying more weight than it was designed to handle. Investigators determined that it was substantially overloaded and improperly balanced. Shortly after takeoff, the plane crashed, killing Aaliyah and all eight others on board. Nine lives were tragically lost. And while there were other serious safety failures associated with that flight, the excessive weight provides a sobering illustration of a spiritual principle.

You can have a destination, you can have the desire, and you can have the ability to fly, but if you're carrying more than you were designed to handle, your elevation can be compromised. And I want to suggest that what is true in aviation can also be true in relationships.

Some people are not struggling because they lack potential. They're struggling because they're overloaded with emotional baggage and relational attachments that God never intended for them to carry.

Hebrews 12:1 KJV

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Notice that the writer distinguishes between weights and sins. Everything that weighs you down is not necessarily sinful, but it can still hinder your progress. And one of the greatest mistakes you can make is assuming that everybody who has been a part of your history is entitled to a place in your

destiny.

The reality is that everybody cannot go everywhere with you, and everybody who goes with you cannot occupy the same space in your life. When you board an airplane, the airline determines what you can carry, where you can carry it, and what must be checked. And relationships work the same way.

Some people need to be released, some need to be restricted, and others have earned the right to remain close. Because the problem is not always who is in your life; sometimes the problem is where you've allowed them to sit. So before you take off into your next season, you need to conduct a relational baggage inspection. And I want to show you three kinds of baggage that represent three kinds of relationships.

First, there are the checked bags!

1. CHECKED BAGS: THE RELEASED RELATIONSHIPS

1 Peter 5:7 KJV

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

There are some bags that simply cannot travel in the cabin with you. They are too large, too heavy, and they violate the safety protocols of the aircraft. These are your checked bags. In our lives, these represent the relationships we have to turn over into the hands of the ultimate Authority. You love them, you care about them, but they cannot sit next to you on this flight. You have to walk up to the counter of grace, check them in, and trust God to handle them.

But this is where the enemy traps so many believers—separation anxiety. We get up to the ticket counter, the Holy Ghost tells us to hand the relationship over, and suddenly we don't want to let it go. We want to drag it through security. We want to force it down the narrow aisle of our next season. But hear me clearly: if you refuse to put that bag into the hands of the agent, you are not going to make the flight. The airline is not going to change its elevation policies just because you have an emotional attachment to your luggage.

If you refuse to let it go, you and your bag are going to be left on the ground. You will literally miss your flight into your destiny because you were too busy sitting in the terminal hugging a checked bag. You have to break the separation anxiety and realize that letting them go is not losing them; it is trusting God with them.

Quote: "Stop sacrificing your elevation trying to carry people who are committed to staying on the ground!"

When you check a bag, you have to let it out of your sight. You have to trust that the airline knows how to route it, and that it will eventually meet you at the destination. God is saying, "I can take care of them better in My cargo than you can in your cabin." You are stressing yourself out trying to carry people who God told you to put on the conveyor belt. Let God deal with their healing. Let God deal with their attitude. Let God deal with their deliverance.

Here is how you recognize a Checked Bag relationship:

They demand more emotional energy than you have the capacity to give in this season.

Their current mindset is grounded, while your spirit is trying to take off. You constantly have to compromise your peace to accommodate their presence.

Stop fighting the gate agent. Turn that bag over to Jesus. Break the anxiety, put them on the altar, love them from a distance, and trust that the God of the journey knows exactly how to get them where they need to be.

2. CARRY-ON BAGS: THE RESTRICTED RELATIONSHIPS

Proverbs 25:17 KJV

Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.

Then you have your carry-on bags. These are the relationships that can

actually go with you to the next level, but they require strict boundaries. A carry-on bag is allowed on the plane, but before you take off, the flight attendant will walk down the aisle and make sure that bag is put away. It has to go in the overhead bin. It cannot sit in your lap. It has to be separated from you during the most critical moments of the flight: takeoff and landing.

These are the compartmentalized relationships in your life. These are folks you can fellowship with, people you can do business with, and friends you can enjoy—but they do not get unrestricted access to your personal space. You have to know how to put them in their proper compartment. My father used to have a saying, and it is the absolute truth: if you keep a people in their place, you won't have to keep putting people in their place.

Quote: "Some people aren't destroying your peace because they're powerful; they're destroying it because you've given them too much access!"

But here is where we mess up. Many times, we try to make people carry-ons that we know should be checked in. We don't want to let them go at the ticket counter, so we drag them onto the flight, only to find out that they don't fit the space that we have. And you know they don't fit because you can't close the door.

Have you ever watched somebody on a plane trying to force a massive, overstuffed bag into the overhead bin? They are pushing, shoving, and sweating, trying to make it work, but the compartment door just keeps popping back open. That is exactly what happens when you try to force a relationship into a space it was never meant to occupy. They refuse to stay in the boundary you gave them. They spill out into your peace.

If they cannot fit into the space you assigned them without keeping the door open to drama, the Holy Ghost is letting you know they don't belong in the cabin. Stop forcing it. When you try to make a check-in bag a carry-on, you delay the whole flight. If the door won't close, you need to take that bag back to the front and check it.

3. THE PERSONAL ITEM: THE REMAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Proverbs 18:24 KJV

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Finally, you have the personal item. This is the handheld bag. The airlines tell you that this bag can remain close to you throughout the flight. It can be tucked right under the seat in front of you. You can reach into it during the flight. It stays in close proximity to you from the moment you board until the moment you deplane.

The reason this bag stays so close is because of what is inside of it. The handheld is where your valuables go. Anybody with basic travel sense knows you don't put your valuables into a checked bag. Why? Because once it goes down that conveyor belt, it is out of your hands, and it might get lost at any moment. You also don't put your most precious items into an overhead carry-on, because once you close that bin, you don't know what's going on with them while you can't see them. You don't know what is shifting around or who is bumping into your stuff while it is out of your sight.

No, your valuables—your identification, your wallet, your emergency items—go right there in your handheld bag. In the spirit, your valuables are your heart, your deep trust, your vulnerability, and your emotional bandwidth. You only give those things to the people who are in close proximity, the ones God has ordained to be in your inner circle.

Quote: "Stop giving front-row access to people who have repeatedly demonstrated back-alley loyalty!"

The problem with many of us is that we are giving our most precious cargo to people who were never meant to hold it. Stop investing major emotions into people who are only designed to play minor roles in your life! You are getting your heart broken because you put a handheld valuable into a checked-bag relationship. You are losing your peace because you put your deepest trust into a carry-on connection, and the moment they got out of your sight, they mishandled what you gave them.

You don't need a lot of personal items—in fact, most airlines limit you to one. But the few close relationships that you have are essential. These are the ride-or-die covenant connections. These are the people who can handle your turbulence without panicking. They don't mind the altitude, and they aren't intimidated by your elevation. Scripture gives us beautiful examples of this kind of loyalty in Ruth's commitment to Naomi and Jonathan's friendship with David.

As you prepare for this next takeoff, I challenge you to look at the luggage you are dragging. Stop apologizing for packing light. Break the separation anxiety and let go of the bags you need to check. Stop trying to force check-in people into carry-on spaces where the door won't close. Protect your valuables, hold your personal connections close, and get ready.

You are cleared for takeoff!