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“UNSHACKLED!” - Pacific Garden Mission
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Daily Devotional

“Heavy Burdens” – Jenny Kang

ANNCR: April 15th, “Heavy Burdens.” Have you ever been backpacking? It’s an incredible sport that requires a person to carry on their back everything they might need for survival while traversing lengthy wilderness trails. Because of this, each ounce of cargo must be carefully considered. So imagine if a someone decided to pack their finest china and maybe their trombone. We may wonder why they’ve chosen to make the sport so much more difficult for themselves. These are unnecessary items! Likewise, our Christian walk can be laden with unnecessary items. Here’s a woman to share with us her true story of carrying a crushing burden on this UNSHACKLED Daily Devotional.

JENNY: I’m Jenny Kang, I’m Korean-American, and my hunger was for achievement, a need to impress others so I wouldn’t shame my parents. I wasn’t gifted like friends and relatives and had to work doubly hard in school. I craved attention and tried to commit suicide at thirteen. I knew I would never be good enough.

Then I became anorexic, hiding food so I wouldn't have to eat, losing weight. When my parents tried to force me to eat, I became bulimic, throwing up. My parents sent me to a nutritionist, then to a clinic for weeks after I became too weak to even sit up. I became childish, stealing and throwing tantrums. I had no friends because all I thought about was me. My parents took us to Europe several times, and on one trip I met some Christians who reached out to me, planting a seed of hope.

Finally, my sophomore year of high school, I began to heal. The focus of my entire life became studying to get accepted at Yale. There I met a Christian who mentored me. When I felt suicidal, she gave me Bible verses to read. I longed to have the peace she had. I began reading the Psalms and went to church with her. I hungered to know this God she seemed to know.

On Thanksgiving I went home, where God provided an old friend to lead me in a prayer asking Christ to forgive me and to come into my heart. At last my hunger was satisfied with the Bread of Life. At first my parents worried that I had gone overboard; but now they see the fruit of joy and peace in my life that only Jesus Christ could give me.

ANNCR: Jesus says in Matthew chapter 11, verses 29 and 30, *“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* Friend, it is true that the Christian life is not an easy road, but are you choosing to carry more weight than is necessary? If we are not careful, our faith can evolve into a list of extreme expectations. But this is contrary to God’s freeing grace! Instead, we have been given the Holy Spirit who will help us walk rightly and honor the Lord with a grateful and joyful heart. Will you receive this truth today?

CREDITS: Unshackled Daily Devotionals are produced by Pacific Garden Mission along with our Unshackled Audio Dramas. To find even more true stories of God’s saving, transforming power, visit our website, unshackled.org.

This episode was written by Kennetha Gaebler and Elizabeth Kupfershmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and Judith Easton.

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