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COMFORT ONE ANOTHER

A friend told me of a visit to one of our local doctors. "Doc," he complained, "Sometimes I hurt in my knees, sometimes in my hands and...ah, I just seem to hurt somewhere all the time." Without blinking an eye the young but very professional physician grinned then replied. "Harry, at your age if you don't hurt, you're dead."

If that's the criteria I guess I've entered "that age" as well. Now I've always believed that age isn't really counted in years or decades but rather by attitude and fortitude but I confess that these days the most positive of attitudes have been trumped by those maddening bodily aches and pains. Plain and simple, there are few days now where I don't hurt somewhere. Hurting got so bad last week, I headed to the emergency ward and the comfort of a couple of shots of very potent pain-killers. A week of lying in a hospital bed made me own up to how many decades of life I've racked up.

In recounting the past ten days I regretted that I hadn't been able to write last week's column – you, my readers, have become like special long-distance friends. But even during the difficult days there were some beautiful moments between the hazy morphine-induced fog. Two friends from the church brought meals to the house, a couple made several trips to visit me in hospital and yet another phoned me once I got home to encourage me.

Instructions to the New Testament church include exhortations to remain true to Christ's teaching and doing that includes supporting one another. "Bear one another's burdens", "comfort one another" and "by love serve one another" are just some of the injunctions.

We never can carry another's burden but there sure are a lot of ways by which we can help lift it.