

## An Armload of Wood

Dr. Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965), theologian and medical missionary to Africa, was 85 years old when Andrew C. Davison of Colgate Rochester Seminary visited his jungle hospital at Lambarene on the banks of the Ogowe River.

“You can imagine the deep and profound effect of that three-day visit, which included opportunity for some leisurely conversation with that great humanitarian, theologian, musician and physician,” Davison wrote. “But one event stands out in a special way.”

It was about 11 o'clock in the morning. The equatorial sun was beating down mercilessly as Davison and others walked up a hill with Dr. Schweitzer. “Suddenly, he left us and strode across the slope of the hill to a place where an African woman was struggling upward with a huge armload of wood for the cookfires.

“I watched with both admiration and concern as the 85-year-old man took the entire load of wood and carried it on up the hill for the relieved woman. When we all reached the top of the hill, one of the members of our group asked Dr. Schweitzer why he did things like that, implying that in the heat and at his age, he should not,” Davison said.

“Albert Schweitzer, looking right at all of us and pointing to the woman, said simply, ‘No one should ever have to carry a burden like that alone.’”

In the responsibilities we have in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, we may not encounter individuals toting a load of wood. Some of them, residents or associates, may be struggling with a physical trouble, or the issue may be emotional or spiritual in nature – the illness of a family member or friend, a diagnosis just received personally, a financial difficulty or a broken relationship.



Let us be alert and ready to offer help, so that the individual need not carry that burden alone.

– Beecher Hunter