



Bear One Another's Burdens

With Bishop Ronald K. Powell

Galatians 6:1-5 New American Standard Bible

6 Brothers *and sisters*, even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you are not tempted as well. ² **Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.** ³ For if anyone thinks that he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴ But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have *reason for boasting, but* to himself alone, and not to another. ⁵ For each one will bear his own load.

God calls us to carry each other's burdens. But what does that look like?

So often our church doors open to those who are suffering. We've all known a friend carrying a heavy burden and yet so often, we don't know how to help even when we want to.

Today I'm going to share some practical tips and encouragement from Scripture on how to carry one another's burdens.

Maintaining boundaries starts with our own hearts.

Without a constant and intimate connection with the Lord, it will be impossible to love others as we are called. Are you in constant communion with God? Is your heart at rest with His peace?

We must find our fulfillment in God alone. We must allow His grace and love and strength to fuel us.

As we surrender to Him, we will find His strength and compassion fill us and fuel us.

After you fuel up and grow in intimacy with the Lord, you will find the strength and excitement about serving and striving to carry another's burden come naturally.

Jesus Bore Our Burden First: Avoiding Judgement

We must be careful to remain humble when walking alongside those who suffer.

It is so easy to slip into the trap of thinking more highly of yourself than you should when you are surrounded by another's shortcomings.

Jesus Took Our Burden of Sin

The first thing to remember when bearing another's burden is that Jesus died for you and for me to bear our burden. Without His complete sacrifice, we would not have the blessing and promise of eternity and hope.

Jesus bore our burden, one that we had no hope of escape from. And because of this, we can walk alongside others who are suffering and encourage them.

The Purpose of Suffering

It's also important to remember this: God allows suffering for several reasons.

- ***He uses times of suffering to break chains in our hearts.***
- ***He allows suffering to purify us and bring us closer to Him***
- ***He allows suffering to strengthen us in discipline***

Suffering is not always a sign of something we are doing wrong. Sometimes we suffer so that God can prepare us for something greater.

Don't judge another's burdens.

It's so easy to look from an outside perspective and create our own opinions of why someone is suffering or what they must do to get out of a difficult time.

- **We are not called to pull others out of suffering.**
- **We are not called to explain away other's suffering.**
- **We are called to walk alongside them and carry their burdens.**

As we cling to the redemption we have in Christ, the Holy Spirit will transform us and empower us to love others in this way.

What Does it Mean to "Bear Burdens?"

When we stand beside a brother or sister in a time of struggle, we are living out the call of our Heavenly Father.

We Can Fulfill the Law of Christ

Jesus says, *“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ” Galatians 6:2.*

We are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is the law that Jesus gave us as He walked this earth. We must serve others and in doing so we can help carry their burdens.

So, what does it look like?

- **We can’t always take away suffering.**
- **We can’t always pray away suffering.**
- **But we can be the support.**

Bearing Burden’s in Scripture

God called Moses to raise his staff into the air for the entirety of a battle to ensure Israel’s victory. When Moses’ hands grew tired, his friends came alongside him and held them up for him.

Can you imagine holding a staff in the air for an entire day? Your muscles would begin to quiver, and your fingers would grow numb. But the moment your arms lowered; your people began to lose.

Moses could not displace the task that God had commanded him, but it was up to his friends to help him stay strong through the pain.

His friends came alongside him and supported him as he followed God’s call. In doing so, Israel won victory over an entire nation.

Another great example is when Jesus performed an amazing miracle in raising Lazarus from the dead.

Can you imagine what Lazarus was thinking as he walked out of the tomb where he had been dead for four days, the grave clothes still wrapped around his face and body?

In **John 11:43** he commands the loved ones of Lazarus to take off the grave clothes.

Jesus worked the miracle but left it up to his friends to unwrap the dirty clothes.

We are called to hold up the arms of our friends and to unravel the grave clothes of our brothers and sisters in need.

This is what bearing each other’s burdens looks like:

Allowing God to do the transformative miracle and being there to support them each step of the way.

Point Them to the Deliverer

We carry another's burdens when we humbly come alongside them and support them wherever they are in their walk with God.

We must remember that God is the one True Deliverer. It isn't up to us to alleviate suffering.

Carrying another's burden does not mean taking away their pain. It simply means to hold them up and point them to Christ.

Think of those who are suffering in your community. *How can you reach out to help them hold their hands high during pain?*

How can you help them to unravel the dirty grave clothes of brokenness in their life?

Practical Ways to Bear Each Other's Burdens

So, what does this look like in real life? Because if you're anything like me, you might get inspired and encouraged when reading a post like this and then walk away and not know what's next.

Pray for Compassion

I would encourage you to start by praying for compassion for those around you. Compassion is critical.

We cannot give so much of our time and energy and heart to those who are suffering if we do not have compassion.

Ask God to open your eyes and your heart to those who are hurting. Ask Him to fill you with His compassion for His children.

Understand Your Purpose

We may view those who take our time, our energy and our resources as an inconvenience, but this is a lie from Satan.

All that we have is from God, including each breath we take. We were created for a purpose and that purpose begins with sharing God's love. God bore our burden and so calls us to walk alongside those who are struggling.

We must be willing to be inconvenienced.

I mean think about the ministry of Jesus. As busy as he was, as much as he was doing, **he was never too busy to stop and love another.**

As we shift our priority towards sharing the love of Christ, we will find purpose in loving others and sharing all that God has blessed us with.

Don't Become Weary

Just a few verses after we are told to carry each other's burdens, Paul reminds us not to become weary.

Let's not be weary in doing good, for we will reap in due season, if we don't give up. -Galatians 6:9

What we are doing may not look like it is paying off. We may not see the harvest, especially in the timing we hope for.

But God is using you to plant seeds. He is using you to spread the very love that Christ spread when he walked this earth.

Don't believe the lie that what you're doing isn't making a difference. As you walk in obedience to this command in Scripture, God will bless you and He will use you.

Some Practical Ideas...

- **Make a meal for someone**
- **Offer to watch a family's children so the mom can take some time to herself, or the parents can go on a date**
- **Visit an elderly person**
- **Get to know someone and make the time to talk – even be willing to be vulnerable yourself (this has opened the door to so many deeper conversations in my life)**
- **Pray with someone – even if it feels awkward**

Closing

Honestly, one of the best ways to bear another's burdens is to spend time and build a relationship. As we do this, we can walk alongside those who are suffering and build the trust that is needed to truly encourage and share the hope of the gospel.

Are you ready and available? The Lord wants you to be the type of person that He could use to restore suffering saints to wholeness. Get ready by putting your own life in order so that you can help others return to fellowship with God.

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2