

# Galatians 6:2 "Bearing One Another's Burdens"

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 21 July 2019

Preacher: Derrick Harris

[ 0 : 00 ] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

In extraordinary supernatural ways. And these instructions are extraordinary because they're given to us by Paul the Apostle. To be an apostle meant that you saw the resurrected Messiah, you were taught by him, you were sent by him.

To be an apostle with a capital A. Where all apostles with lowercase a's were sent out if we believe in Christ to spread his message. Well the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is the same power that's at work inside everybody who says they believe in Jesus Christ.

And that power is the Holy Spirit. By the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, we're able to not only listen to what God says, but we're able to actually live differently.

And when we live that way, he tells us we experience the love of Christ in a deeper way. And we join him in his work of bringing life to this decaying and dying world.

[ 1 : 14 ] And we join him as he's making all things new, as Revelation says. Until Jesus returns and renews all of creation. So let's listen to what God is saying to us today through his word.

His inspired word, scripture. Now kids, today when you listen, I added a little thing on your sermon challenge. It's called, it says, you can say amen when you hear three of those phrases. So you can listen and catch the words, but if you want to say amen, go ahead, let's practice.

One, two, three. Okay, one more time. One, two, three. Amen. And parents, we're all really children of God, so you can say it too if you want. So what's being said to us through this passage?

Let's read. This is on, whoa. This is on page 975 of your Pew Bible. It's Galatians 6.2. It's pretty basic, pretty short.

Here's what it says. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

[ 2 : 19 ] So bear one another's burdens. Let's start there. So in this passage, it's Paul writing, and he's writing specifically to the church in Galatia. If you live there, you are called a Galatian.

So those who have put their faith in the resurrected Jesus is who he's writing to. And he's writing specifically about how they are to live and to love one another after having been disciplined.

And at the heart of his writing is restoration. How to lock arms towards restoration after having walked through serious struggles with a particular sin. And after having felt the consequence of the sinful actions.

So that's specifically what he's writing about. But today we're going to discuss this passage in even broader applications because it actually applies to all believers who desire to live as Christians in this world of broken relationships.

So what does it mean first when he says bear one another's burdens? Well, this phrase is written in the present tense. And that's important because it means it's to be an ongoing behavior.

[ 3 : 23 ] Christians are expected and called to continually bear one another's burdens. Christians are called to carry with endurance one another's heavy loads.

The parts of our lives that are the most difficult to lift and to carry on our own. We all have these heavy loads. And none of us are designed to carry them alone.

As the song says, sometimes in our lives we all have pain. We all have sorrow. If there's a load you have to bear that you can't carry, I'm right up the road.

I'll share your load if you just call me. But we don't call each other, do we? That's the hard part. Call me. I'm not going to call you.

No? Because you might think bad of me. He doesn't say that song, right? Let's talk about our hearts for a minute. But in order to live the way that we're called to live as Christians, we first have to admit

that we actually can't carry all the burdens this life gives us on our own.

[ 4 : 30 ] Whether it's sickness or loneliness or addiction or financial struggles, disabilities, divorce, anger, depression, bullying, feeling like you don't fit in or simply thinking that you just don't matter.

God has not designed you to carry that load alone. In fact, he's given you first himself and second, the church, people who confess Christ as king to help you.

But one of our greatest obstacles to accepting this help is our sinful pride. We don't call each other because we think that our burdens show our weaknesses, and they do.

So we live like we don't have them sometimes. We never ask for help from God a lot of times for the things that we really need to ask him for help on or others. That's pride.

It's the I think I'm better than you, so I'm not going to tell you what I'm dealing with sort of mentality. Or I'm too scared of what you'll think of me, so I'm just not going to talk about it at all.

[ 5 : 34 ] This, I do this. I'm the same as you. But I just happen to be standing up here today. But I did this. One time my family was coming in town into Birmingham, and I had to impress them.

So instead of calling someone to fix the sink, I chose to do it because I know nothing about plumbing or anything. So there I am screwing the top off of this faucet handle because it had just been dripping.

And so I was like, well, let me just unscrew this. And it was hot water. And it was a 1950s house. So I was in there. My wife, she could tell you. She came in shooting, gushing, steam hot water in my face.

I have a towel doing this. And I'm trying to turn off the hot water valve underneath, which also won't turn off. And I look. At one point, I just submitted to it. Let the water fall on my face. And I look over, and all of the water was neatly and nicely draining down the vent.

Just shh. And that was because I didn't want to call anybody for help. Sometimes it's the little things, right? Sometimes it's big things. Serious.

[ 6 : 43 ] We got the call many years ago that my brother-in-law, my wife's brother, had taken his own life. He never talked about it. We had no idea out of nowhere.

And it changes you forever. You know, even if you think about a teapot, right? If it didn't scream, everybody would get burned. And that's how we are.

And we're not meant to hold that stuff in. As this song said, please swallow your pride if I have things you need to borrow. For no one can fill those of your needs that you won't let show.

So here's the challenge. I want to encourage you to do two things. I want you to go to God this week or today or whenever.

And I want you to ask him to show you the burdens of your life that you're holding on to and not bringing to him. And I want you then to ask him who you should share that with.

[ 7 : 44 ] That's a challenge. Because bearing one another's burdens means that we must be willing to be uncomfortable, to let people in, and to let others know that we don't have it all together.

That starts by us helping ourselves first. We can't help others if we've got ourselves in the way. So we have to get out of the way. And how do we do that? We do that by casting our own burdens on Christ.

Kids, here you go. Bearing one another's burdens begins by casting our own burdens upon Christ. Okay, how it'll work. Let's look at what scripture says about this.

1 Peter 5, 6, and 7 says, Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you.

Psalms 52, Cast your burden on the Lord and he will sustain you. You see, God is our ultimate source of strength.

[ 8 : 45 ] It's not in our own strength that we do this, but we call upon the power of his Holy Spirit to enable us and to sustain us. And we do this through prayer.

Will, can I get you to come up here and help me? And Sarah Pittered, would you mind just coming up here? Okay, so y'all come stand up here with me. And in these backpacks are bricks.

Oh wait, this is yours, isn't it? And this is yours. Now imagine we're all friends, which we're not. We all hate each other. But we're going to act like we're friends today.

And these guys are my friends. They're over here in the world marching around, carrying their heavy burdens. Y'all stay here doing that. When I say carry our burdens to Christ, what I mean is going to Christ, going to the cross through prayer, kneeling if you kneel, and saying, Jesus, show me what I'm carrying on my own.

What happens inevitably is when I leave there, I go back into the world, I see my friends. Sarah, I didn't know that you were dealing with that too.

[ 9 : 59 ] I was just taking this stuff to Jesus. You deal with this too? Not just me? Wow. Well, here, let me help you out there. I would love to pray for you.

I really would. It would be awesome. And Will, you got problems? 99 problems? Wow. Okay. Let me see here.

I know something about that. I heard the same thing, and I prayed to the Lord. You know what? It helped me. Can I pray for you? Could we actually just go pray together? Come on. Let's go.

Let's go to Christ together right now. And let's just let him know together. Just tell, Lord, show us. Show us what we need to do. Show us where we're holding our own burdens. Take them out and cast them before the Lord. Amen.

[ 10 : 58 ] And then inevitably what happens? We go back out into that world, and we've got more room to meet more people to share more burdens. Thank you all.

These are lovely. Lovely. So, that's what those verses are saying. In a illustration, right?

Bearing one another's burdens begins by casting our own burdens upon Christ. Amen. When we do this, you need to realize that most of the time, God's going to answer your prayer by sending a person.

God wraps his gifts in people, and those people are going to help you bear your burden. It's usually going to be his church. It doesn't have to be, but many times it is. Paul did this.

Let's read where Paul did this. For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn, fighting without and fear within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus.

[ 12 : 00 ] And not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. You see, he prayed, he cast those burdens, God sent him a Sarah and a Will, and they took them together, and they told him of all the things that other people had done to take their burdens.

This is the body of Christ. Because bearing one another's burdens begins by casting our burdens upon Christ. So here's a challenge. Do you have time in your schedule that's necessary for you to be able to cast your burdens upon Christ?

That's a question I want you to ask yourself. Because bearing one another's burdens is impossible without relationships. And relationships take time.

But time is something that we really struggle with today. We live in the consumer world, and at any given moment, there are so many competing options for our time.

I was reading something about Netflix the other day. Boom! That's supposed to be the Netflix sound. According to Automated Insights, there are around 34,000 hours of material on Netflix.

[ 13 : 14 ] That means that if I watch Netflix three hours a day, it would take me 31 years to watch everything on there. It would take me 31 years. Now, if I watch Netflix 24-7, no bathroom breaks, no food, no coffee breaks, it would take me around four years to consume all of the material on there right now.

That's not even mentioned in social media. We're all so busy, aren't we? We're all moving so fast, too, in the middle of the busyness. I was driving, getting on, I live over the mountains, so I was getting on 431 one day, and there was this long line at five o'clock and this Ferrari pulls up.

The guy in the Ferrari tops down, everything you could imagine, hair blowing, sunglasses, music going, and then, of course, he goes, pulls right up to the front and cuts in front of everybody.

Then we both turn on to 431 and guess what happens? Traffic jam. Then guess what happened? Rainstorm. Guess who was laughing?

This guy. That's what you get. Mr. Ferrari man. But we're all like that Ferrari, aren't we? We're in a hurry to go somewhere really fast and we want to look the best we can when we're going there, but God reminds us that we're going to be stopped by things that are completely out of our control, loads that are too heavy for us to carry, and rainstorms that we don't plan for.

[ 14 : 40 ] And we need relationships to sustain us, but relationships take time. We have to slow down for them. That's why God took time to incarnate with us, to come to earth, to pay the penalty for our sins on the cross so that we may, through him, have an eternal relationship and thereby have relationships based on that foundation with one another.

So when we take the time to slow down and we cast our burdens on Christ, we stop and we listen to him through scripture, through prayer, in the ordinary things, our spiritual eyes are actually more focused to see God's extraordinary work in new ways and experience the care that he provides for us through his people, the church.

Bearing one another's burdens is impossible without relationships. So here's another challenge. I want to encourage each of you this week to ask Google how much time you've got for God.

I want you to take out your calendars. I want you to look at all the stuff that you've got on there. I want you to analyze it as families, as couples, as individuals, and ask, do I have any time carved out here to cast my burdens on Jesus Christ, to develop a relationship with him?

Do I have time to develop a relationship with others in his name and even bear their burdens? God is not an energy drink that we drink once a week to boost our spiritual energy on Sunday to go back out.

[16:12] He's our very existence. He has every moment, every breath, every tick of the clock is his. Imagine if we just brushed our teeth on Sundays. Man, our breath would stink all week. Nobody would be our friends.

It's not much different with our faith. Does your faith stink right now? Do you have time for God? Do you have the time necessary to go cast your burdens on Christ and to develop relationships with him and others?

Bearing one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Sorry, the verse isn't there. But as the verse goes on, bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Bearing one another's burdens fulfills the law of Christ. That sounds pretty important. Fulfilling the law of Christ. It's right to say the negative of that that if Christians do not bear one another's burdens, they are not fulfilling the law of Christ.

What does Paul mean there? What is the law of Christ? Let's read John 13 to help us out. A new commandment I give to you that you love one another just as I have loved you.

[17:24] You also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. The law of Christ is love.

And what is love? Let's see what scripture says. Love is patient and kind. Love does not envy or boast. It's not arrogant or rude. It doesn't insist on its own way.

It's not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things believes all things hopes all things endures all things love never ends.

Are any of us all these things on our own? No. And that's the point. This is a description of Jesus Christ through us and his Holy Spirit.

Christ at work in us his body allows us to love this way and we're not going to do it perfectly. This isn't a list of morality check boxes but it's a description of Jesus the attributes of God himself and we the church are the body of Christ who is our head and in his power we're called to bear one another's burdens and live this way as we love one another and in so doing in his strength we embody his law of love and the world takes notice.

[18:43] Not only that it's through this love his spirit's power at work in us that he draws his sheep into his loving arms. How you love each other preaches the gospel.

How you don't love each other does not preach the gospel. Me too. When I say you I mean me. But God calls us the church to shine his light to the world.

To live according to his commandments. And the more they get together the brighter that light. And when we do that he calls us salt. Salt and light. Salt as additives of seasoning and life to this dying world.

Preservatives of the goodness of God in a decaying world of darkness. When we carry our burdens to Christ Christ frees us up to bear the burdens of others.

When we put away our shame when we take off our masks it's a scary thing and we live in the light of the gospel. Gospel centered community is what you hear around here a lot.

[19:49] It doesn't have a reason to hide. It's at the heart of everything we want to be here at Southwood. Gospel centered community provides a harbor of safety in a hurricane world.

It's a haven of safety for people where they can be known for who they are as opposed to what they have to offer. And it's this type of community that we all need and we all long for and the church the body of Christ it's this type of community that God's calling us to be.

Where Christ is the goal of all things his love his life his light. What does Matthew 11 say? Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden I will give you rest take my yoke upon you.

Jesus' backpack is not heavy. Learn from me I'm gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. You see we've spent all our time walking around carrying our own burdens when he took them.

In this world of loneliness y'all God calls us his body the church to bear these burdens to carry it first to him so that we can carry one another to him.

[ 21 : 05 ] Because bearing one another's burdens fulfills the law of Christ. That law is love and when we live this way in gospel centered community listening and living the way he tells us to not only do we experience the love of Jesus but the world around us sees the love of Jesus and they take note but to do this we first have to be willing to take off our own masks our massive performance security reputation status money so that we may be free to help others take off theirs but there's a problem getting in our own way right our busyness and our sinful pride I went to the grocery store the other day all I was buying was a small container of tiny miniature croissants I get in line put my croissants on the conveyor belt thingy and guess what happens what the guy in front of me does he goes and he gets that divider and he just slams it down separating my tiny box of croissants from his large pile of groceries good for you sir

God forbid we get a little bit over here right he turns around and looks at me with that fear and he just picked up that divider and he slammed it down and then turned right back around so many times that's how we treat each other in the church isn't it where we're willing to stand next to each other and sing the praises of God in public rather than publics but we don't want it to cost us anything don't put that on my bill that's your problem right but Christ is calling us to pick up that divider and share the cost that's what it means to bear a burden that cost is time that cost is reputation that cost is comfort you know how I see my own sinful pride and ours work out here a lot at Southwood half-calf latte

Christianity a Christianity where we give lip service to gospel-centered community but we demand that it's on our own terms where we treat ourselves to the best things thinking that we deserve them though saying we don't expect everyone else around us to give us that which we deserve I'm guilty of this with you it goes like this I can't tell you how many times I've had conversations like this I'm lonely can you help me find community and then the person responds to me sure have you tried this this and this yeah I have I have but you know it's just those people aren't like me well have you considered this other group over here yeah I have but I'd like that but the people they make me feel a little uncomfortable they're kind of weird they're not like me or I'd like that but only if it meets at this place at this time in this part of town with this age group or it's just so hard for me to connect with such and such a group because the people they're different than me and you know my last church we were more similar and we were just similar there Derek

I'm the one who does this though or I do better around people who are I mean don't tell anybody okay I'm praying for them just fill in the blank what's wrong with that person you just ordered a half-calf latte I just ordered a half-calf latte and the church doesn't serve half-calf lattes that's not what we're supposed to do that's not what ministry is supposed to be and everybody in the world knows it they sniff out the lack of authenticity and half-calf latte Christianity and they leave some are addicted to it so they go somewhere else looking for that somewhere else and they will get it they will find that but that's not what Paul's talking about rather than ordering half-calf lattes with our life God calls us to serve one another each other and those who never even realize how thirsty they are realize my goodness I don't need coffee I need water that water is the living spirit of God welling up within me to eternal life a spirit where I will never thirst come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden

I will give you rest for your souls we gotta ask ourselves as a church I have to ask myself as a pastor and a human being do I care more about the color of the carpet or the cancer of the soul do I care more about the strength of the coffee I'm drinking on Sunday morning or the strength of the Lord do I give more time and energy to saving my money for me and my comforts and my vacations guilty or to saving souls one of these lifestyles is totally different than the other which one sticks out to you which one shines to you gospel centered community requires thermostats not thermometers and the thing is I'm a perfect thermometer so are you we know what the temperature of a place is and we talk about it all the time and we pray for that temperature to change but God calls the church to be the thermostat to change it we change it here with each other and we change it in the

world how are you going to change it today how are you going to change it today gospel centered community the kind that Paul is talking about that bears one another's burdens that fulfills [ 27 : 02 ] Christ's law of love that shines the light of Christ requires and demands our willingness to be uncomfortable but we are addicted to being comfortable so maybe that's the first thing we take to God you see the church is supposed to be more like a family and not a club but it's easy to get it mixed up because we live in a world of clubs where we give a certain amount of money and we get something in return don't we a club is consumer based you pay your dues and in return you get certain benefits and you get access to certain privileges a church on the other hand is covenant based so that changes the entire way that you relate to the community or it should when things get messy because of differences whether those are arguments differences personality wise cultural political whatever it may be we don't peace out on each other rather we press in and we pursue each other because Jesus reconciled us to himself when while we were still sinners while we were messed up while we smelled bad while we weren't lovable we were different he didn't abandon us therefore we really don't have a legitimate reason to abandon other people just based on our personal preferences

I do realize things change and things get different but a family is different the ministry that Jesus calls his church to is a ministry of reconciliation restoration that was at the heart remember of what Paul is talking about and that's how the world is going to know that we belong to him most of us choose our friends in here on the basis of shared interests or something that we like that we have in common shared affinities and when the friendships disappoint us a lot of us have a tendency to move to other friends I do this sometimes it's other towns sometimes it's other churches with family it's different we don't get to choose our family we aren't able to discard our family because they're our family and when we speak of the church did you know that the word used is composed when talking about the body of Christ God has composed the body of Christ this way as Martin Luther writes the word composed signifies a harmonious mixing it's a word sometimes used to describe blending colors an artist's blending colors to make a new color

God's arrangement of the members in the body does away with the clashing and it blends all into one harmonious whole and when we bear one another's burdens that way we fulfill Christ's law of love through our differences working together God creates a new color that the world sees and they marvel at they've never seen that color before and that color is the color of God but it's a spiritual color and that color is love love defined biblically Christ laid down his life for us while we were still sinners he died to redeem us from the curse of the law by becoming the curse for us literally bearing our sin on the cross our burden to all those who look to him in faith he promises to adopt us as children family family doesn't peace out on each other sons and daughters of the most high God and a family that casts our burdens upon Christ we take the time to share those burdens don't we and we listen to each other and as together in community and relationship we carry our burdens to our Savior we shine the light of love and when we do that we fulfill the law of Christ so here are the three challenges

I'm not perfect I'm messed up in everything I just said okay so I'm challenging myself with you we are together church we are Southwood and we're called here to do something with our faith to do something that impacts each other and this community and we will not do it in our own strength so here's the challenge this is the best way I know where to say to start and I'm going to trust Jesus with the results because it's not a check box okay I'm just trying to call us to do the things that this says and I need you to help me do it too and here's the challenge one go to God and ask him what burdens you're carrying on your own would you do that would you ask him then to help identify the other burdens like that if you were here when I did the Easter egg idol sermon when you remove one you see something else is underneath it when you remove that something else is underneath it as we carry our burdens in him he's going to break idols and we're going to see more and more and more but ask him to help you identify your idols your burdens two ask him to show you who you need to share your burdens with in that sense who you can encourage in your life they're going to be probably hard they're probably going to be like a prickly pear or a cactus trying to hug a cactus it's a lot of times what God calls us to and three look at your calendar and ask if you've got the time carved out enough to start that relationship to start that time with the Lord and then time for each other just start small start somewhere if you aren't spending time with the Lord start with five minutes at least go and further your relationship with him don't brush your spiritual teeth once a week

Jesus cleanses you every moment you've got to remember that so those are the three challenges if you don't have that time just carve it out may the Lord be praised as we take our burdens to him as we bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ let me pray Lord Jesus hard words to hear from Paul because I'm guilty of not doing it I don't do this with my neighbor you know the horrible thoughts I have literally about people in my own neighborhood just because they get in the way of my schedule and what I want to do would you please Lord Jesus take that off of me show us in our own hearts Lord where we are and how we can be your light in this world where we can be a solution for loneliness as we take people to you and as we really love one another and help us to know how to start small Lord because you're big and you work through small things may we not get overwhelmed but may we trust you Lord because your burden is easy and may we fulfill your law of love help us experience that thank you Holy Spirit we can't do it without you and we beg you and we ask this in the name of your son Jesus Christ

[ 33 : 32 ] Yahweh Amen for more information visit us online at [southwood.org](https://southwood.org) thank you for joining us for joining us for joining us for joining us for joining us for joining us today let's start rosy for joining us for joining us for joining us