

Lack of Burden Causes an Inferior Church

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfreda, Georgia. This is the next message in our series on the book of 2 Corinthians, entitled, We Faint Not.

Take your Bible, if we would, turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 12. 2 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 13. 2 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 13.

I'm excited to get to talk to you today about something that's a very rough subject. The apostle Paul is now getting ready to end his letter to the Corinthians, the second letter.

And as he ends it, he says to them today, you are an inferior church. You are an inferior church. That had to sting harsh and deep.

That had to hurt to get reading through the story. You know, they swapped letters. They would have read the letters to the other churches and they read this letter and it says that they were an inferior church.

[1 : 04] Read with me if you would, 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 13. I don't want us to be an inferior church. You might not write this down somewhere. A lack of burden causes inferior churches.

A lack of burden causes inferior churches. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 12, verse 13. For what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you?

Forgive me this wrong. Behold, the third time I'm ready to come to you and I will not be burdensome to you. For I don't seek what's yours, but you.

For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

But be it so, I did not burden you, but nevertheless being crafty, I caught you with guile or I tricked you. Did I make a gain of you by any of them which I sent unto you?

[2 : 07] I desire Titus and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps? God, I pray that vision would not be ever an inferior church.

I pray that today we would take steps to not be an inferior church. I pray your blessings on your people. I pray you'd open the scriptures. I pray you'd make them come alive to us.

And I pray God that you'd help us not to be in any way inferior as a church, as leaders in our homes, as Christians, as servants of yours.

Help us today to measure up and be strong and stand up and be counted. And I will give you praise for all that you do. In Jesus' name, amen. Now take your Bible and I hope you have it open there in the book of 2 Corinthians.

Get your ink pen ready and let's underline some things. Let's go back through that passage of scripture. The first thing I want you to put a circle around is this, inferior to other churches. Paul said that, guys, what made you inferior to other churches?

[3 : 10] He said, when I measure up all the other churches, you're a less favorable church. You're an inferior church. You don't measure up to those other churches. And then he said, and I want you to mark this word if you would.

He said, I wasn't burdensome to you. Look in verse 13 and put a circle around the word burdensome. And you're going to find he uses that word. That's kind of the common word in here. He said, I was not myself burdensome to you.

Look it down in verse 14. You're going to find burdensome to you again. And then if you go down to verse 16, he said, I did not burden you. And then in verse 17 and verse 18, he said, I didn't make any money off of you.

I wasn't trying to make a gain of you. I did not take advantage of you. I wasn't trying to get money from you. Now I want you to go back up to chapter 12, verse 13 and circle this or draw an arrow to it.

And Paul said, forgive me this wrong. Forgive me this wrong. Now here's what happened. There's a lot of false teachers. And boy, they've really been playing with the church at Corinth.

[4 : 13] They went everywhere Paul went. They followed along behind. They were trying to bring legalism in. They were trying to bring false doctrines in. They were trying to bring in a Jesus that Paul didn't preach.

They were trying to bring in a spirit that Paul didn't have. They were trying to bring in a gospel that wasn't another gospel. And the Corinthians, man, they were following right into it.

The false prophets and the false teachers had really made headway there. The apostle Paul, when he served there, never took a salary from them. He never let anybody.

He never let anybody buy stuff for him. He didn't take a salary from them. He didn't allow them to take care of him. Fact is, he was there like a missionary and he was robbing his words, other churches.

He got other churches to pay the bills. So the Corinthian church had no burden and the Corinthian church didn't have to pay the bill. And so he never took money from them. Well, these false teachers, one of their accusations would easily be, hey, if Paul was any good, you'd pay him.

[5 : 12] If Paul had a good ministry, you wouldn't mind giving him money. If Paul was a real man of God, you'd be glad to put money there. But he wasn't. And Paul said, I'll just be honest with you. I didn't come to get your money.

And that was never my purpose. I was never after your money. Look, if you would, in verse 14, he said, I seek not yours. I'm not there to get your stuff. I'm not here to get your stuff.

He said, children ought not lay up for the parents. It's not the kid's job to pay the dad's bill. It's the dad's problem to give the children something. And so Paul says in verse 15, one of my favorite passages of scripture for any of us that are serving God is, he said, I will gladly spend and be spent for you.

Paul said, I don't hold anything back. I'll spend all of my money. I'll spend all of my energy. I'll spend all of my resources. I'll spend all of my ability, even though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

So I want you to go with me today and consider the fact that they didn't have that Paul wasn't a burden. The fact that this church didn't bear up its own responsibility caused them to be an inferior church.

[6 : 20] The characteristics of false teachers real quickly, before we get started, you know, false teachers are proud. They seek fame and popularity and prestige. They play to the crowd and they seek the limelight.

They are selfish. They seek their own comfort and their prosperity. They are destructive. They have no regard for the person of Christ, his truth or his word. They're abusive.

They hurt people and they lead them into sin and error. That's, that's, those are the people that've been down at Corinth. They had come into a group of people where Paul told them the gospel and how they could be saved.

But what Jesus did on the cross and they twisted that and they turned it from a gospel of grace to a gospel of law. They turned it from what God did for them to what they ought to do for God.

They turned everything totally around. Paul said, those guys are out to get your money. Those guys are out to sell their books. Those guys are out to sell their CDs. Those guys are out to make money off of you.

[7 : 16] They don't love you. They're just trying to get a following. And they accused Paul of preaching a message. It wasn't worse than anything. But Paul said, I didn't ever want to be a burden to you. And I never took anything from you.

So what with me go through this number one, the first thing the Corinthians had an inferior church. Maybe he uses that about how they felt about themselves. Maybe he uses that because they weren't as blessed as other churches had been.

But of all the churches that Paul writes a letter to, this is the most problem-ridden church that Paul sends a letter to. This church has great sin problems.

This is the church where a man is sleeping with his daddy's wife and the church isn't doing anything about it. This is a church where the members are suing each other in court and nobody's doing anything about it.

This is a church where when you came into church, they were sitting over here in one faction and said, I'm on Peter's team. And another guy said, well, I'm on Paul's team. And another guy said, well, I like Apollos. And another group said, well, we don't like any of them.

[8 : 19] We like Jesus. And Paul's trying to get them to straighten up these attitudes. This is a church that had taken the spiritual gifts and twisted them horribly and use them for their own glory and to criticize.

This is a church that was being led down the wrong path. And Paul says, you're an inferior church, inferior church. The first thing it starts with is they don't understand the gospel.

So I'd like to show you just a little bit about this. Paul led these people to Christ. It was Paul who led them to Christ. It was Paul who showed them the gospel in chapter 11 and verse two, Paul loved God and he loved them.

He loved Jesus. He loved what Jesus did on the cross. And he said, I am jealous over you with a godly jealous, jealousy for I have a spouse. You to one husband that I may present you as a chaste version to Christ.

Paul said, I led you to Christ. I showed you how to be saved. I showed you how to be freed from your sin. I showed you how to know Jesus as your savior and you got saved. And man, I am so excited about that.

[9 : 19] And it's my burden. And it's my job to get you all the way to God, to get you all the way chaste and pure and right. And that's, that's what I preach. And that's what I teach.

So you know what to believe and you know who you are and you know how to live it out. He said, but I'm afraid that some people I'm afraid. Maybe I've wasted my time. I'm afraid that I came to your church and I wasted my time in chapter 11 and verse four or three.

He said, I fear less by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety. So your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that's in Christ. He said, guys, I taught you about Jesus.

I taught you about the gospel. I taught you about salvation as simple as it is in Jesus. And it is so simple. There's, Hey, you can throw away all your rule books.

You can throw away all the other junk you want to do. Here's, here's the simple truth of the gospel that Paul preached. Paul preached. You are a sinner. You have sinned against a holy God.

[10 : 20] There is none righteous. No, not one. There all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And he said, you've sinned. He said, the simple truth, you have a problem.

You are going to go to hell when you die. That was his message when he got there. And then he said, but there is a solution, but it's not a man-made solution. It's not what you do. It's not what you can do.

It's what God did. And he said, and God sent his son from heaven and Jesus died on a cross and Jesus took your sins and he paid the price of your sins. And you're simply going to trust him.

And that's all there was. He told him, he said, it's by grace that you're saved. It is a gift from God. It's not what you've done. And it's not what you've earned. He said, it's simple.

Then those guys came down from Jerusalem and they came down. And they were like, we are doctors of the law. We have studied at the right seminaries. We have much learning. Paul just preaches an emotional thing and tells you, you can be saved, but there's a lot more to it than that.

[11 : 20] Let me explain to you. You're going to need to be circumcised. And after you get circumcised, you're going to have to quit eating pork. And after that, you're going to have to be careful not to do anything on the Saturdays. And he gave them all these rules.

Paul comes and says, man, I'm scared to death. I told y'all it wasn't what you did. I told you it's what God did that got you saved. And I'm worried. I'm scared that you're not believing Jesus.

And now you're starting to believe you. Could I just stop and say, no, this one fix to tell you. See, there's only two ways to be saved by religious terms. There's only two ways to God through religion.

One of them is a lie. And one of them is the truth. One of them is the man way. And the other one's the God way. The man way is works. It's what can I do to make God pleased with me?

And so a man starts trying to do everything he can. Not very simple. Because he has really got a busted. I mean, if you ever sin in the past, how do you make up for that? Do you think if you do a good deed every day, you can make up for one bad deed you did in the past?

[12 : 22] The Bible says that we've sinned and we've come short of the glory of God. So there's the man way. There's the works way. There's a be good way. There's a moral way. There's another way.

And that's the way is the God way. And the God way is you stink and you can't. You have it and you won't. And you will never do it. So I did it. I did it.

And I came down and I took on human flesh and I died on a cross and I paid your sin debt. And I'm the one that can save you. And all you do is receive a gift I give you.

Paul said, I want you to get back to the simplicity. In Galatians chapter 4 verse 11, he said this, I'm afraid of you. He said to the Galatians, lest I bestowed upon you labor in vain.

Maybe I wasted my time teaching you. In Galatians chapter 4 verse 4, he said, He that cometh, excuse me, chapter 11 and verse 4, he that cometh preacheth another Jesus.

[13 : 20] 2 Corinthians 11, 4, he that cometh preacheth another Jesus. A guy we did not preach to you about. And you have received another spirit which you have not received. Or another gospel which you have not accepted that you might bear with him.

You guys listen to garbage. You let somebody come in and they talk to you about another Jesus. Listen to this. Let me just listen to you. I really aggravate you today. But there's a lot of churches that have a whole nother Jesus.

He's got the same name. They try to paint him in the same picture. But they don't tell the same story. There's some of them that will even say stuff to you like, Hey, this Jesus is a brother to Lucifer.

They'll even say to you, this Jesus is a God. Like you can become a God. They'll even say to you, this Jesus died to save you. But there's a lot more you got to do to add to this Jesus.

And they'll come to you with a different Jesus. Paul said, don't believe that. Maybe they'll come to you and they'll say, Hey, there are saints that you can follow. There are virgins that you can follow.

[14 : 20] There are works that you can do. There are things that you don't eat. There are things you do. He said, that's another Jesus. I didn't want to work in your life that way. Galatians chapter 1 verse 6 through 9.

Paul said, I marvel that you were so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another. But there'll be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

He said, they're trying to get you away from the grace of Christ unto another gospel. But it's not another gospel. They want to pervert the gospel of Christ. Verse 8 says, though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than that which we preached unto you, let him be accursed.

That's a very nice way of saying, if they tell you about another Jesus, let them just go to hell. That's where they're headed. Let them have the curse of God on them. There's only one Jesus, only one truth, only one way to be saved.

You know, you came to church this morning and you say, well, I'm a Christian and I'm moral and I've been baptized and I've been circumcised and I've just done everything I've ever been told to do and you somehow think you're going to get to heaven.

[15 : 32] That's another gospel. That's another Jesus. The true gospel says, everything you've ever done stinks. The only thing that matters is what Jesus did, what he did.

Paul said in verse 9, I'm telling you again, if he's preaching another gospel, let him be accursed. Galatians chapter 3 verse 1, he said, how can you be so foolish, Galatians?

Somebody must have bewitched you. Somebody must have deceived you. Somebody must have put a hex on you because you saw Jesus evidently set forth, crucified among you.

I showed you Jesus crucified. Do you understand? Listen to me. An inferior church doesn't understand this. It's Jesus and him crucified that brings salvation.

It is, hey, Paul said, I pictured it for you. I painted it real. I showed you Jesus on a cross. I showed you Jesus dying. I showed you God in human flesh dying.

[16 : 32] I didn't show you anybody else. I preached a God who loved you enough to go to a cross in your place. I preached a God that loved you enough. And he said, now you guys think that after you got saved, you got to start doing a bunch of stuff so God will be happy with you.

Would you listen to this? Listen to me. Look this way just a second. You weren't good enough for him to like you in the first place. Are you ready to hear a wild one? And you still ain't good enough for him to like you. The only thing that makes you good is Jesus.

The only thing that saves you is not your goodness, but the goodness of Jesus. And it's hard work for a preacher, Paul says, to get the children, the people he's preaching to, to have Christ formed in them.

In Galatians 4, 19, he said, my little children of whom I travailed in birth again until Christ be formed in you. He said, I'm working as hard as I can. I'm praying as hard as I can.

I'm preaching as hard as I can to you understand what Jesus did. And if you're trusting Jesus, please don't leave here thinking the Vision Baptist Church did anything for you.

[17 : 42] Please don't leave here thinking that somebody baptized you or somebody prayed a prayer with you and that fixity thing with God. Please leave here knowing this, that you didn't go looking for God.

He came looking for you. And he found you. And he convicted you. We love him because he first loved us. But God commended or showed his love toward us and while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

And God's the one doing a work in us. It's God. Paul's desire was to see them grow into maturity. He said in Colossians 1, 28, whom we preach warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect or mature in Christ Jesus.

You know, we preach through the Bible here. I go chapter by chapter and verse by verse so you'll learn the Bible. So you know it's not what Austin says. And it's not what Baptists say. And it's not what religious people say.

And it's not what some fancy guy said in some book a long time ago. You can read it in your Bible. It's Jesus. It's the simplicity of Christ. It's Jesus and what he did for you.

[18 : 49] And Paul's at work at that. But the Corinthians didn't appreciate Paul. They didn't respect him. In 2 Corinthians chapter 11, verses 5 and 6, he said, I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest of apostles, even though I'm not a good speaker.

I may be rude and I may not have a good way of speaking, but my knowledge is okay. And I've showed myself to you. I've made myself transparent.

I've shown you my heart. I've shown you my walk with God. I've tried to get you to learn how to love Jesus. Paul had to always defend his ministry. Everywhere Paul went, these guys from Jerusalem came behind him saying, to be saved, you have to be like a Jew.

To be saved, you have to adopt our customs. I just stop and say, it scares me to death that you think being a Christian has something to do with what's called American Christianity.

And American Christianity is as wicked as this Judaism. Somehow you've figured out that we got all these American ideas of Christianity and all these American ideas of what knowing God is and all that, and it's not Bible stuff.

[20 : 05] And it turns out to how moral you are, and do you give to the March of Dimes, and do you tithe, and do you attend church, and have you been baptized, and it all comes down to you.

And you think it's about you. But salvation's not about you. It's about him and what he did on the cross of Calvary. There will not one person stand in his presence and utter one single word of bragging.

Nobody will stand in heaven and go, whew, I thought I'd make it. I'm a pretty good guy. Man, I knew I'd get here. Not one person. That's why he saved us by grace.

So there'll be no bragging in heaven. The only bragging in heaven is going to be, thank God for Jesus I got here. That's the only thing we're going to say there. The Bible says in Galatians, Ephesians chapter 2, verse 8 and 9, for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves, even that's not of you.

It's a gift of God, not of works, so you can't brag. I spent a lot of my life working on all that bragging stuff, working on all that comparing stuff.

[21 : 11] He's already talked to us about that in 2 Corinthians. You know how we are. I live a holier life than you live. God must like me better than he likes you. And God's looking down from heaven and saying, I didn't like you to begin with except because I love you.

It wasn't anything about you. There's something about, there's something in our heads that seems that we think God looks down and says, man, everybody around there stinks, but Austin, I like Austin. God looked down and said, no, you stink too, Austin, but I like you.

That's why I sent Jesus to die so you could trust him and be saved. Paul was defending his ministry even though he had the signs of an apostle in 2 Corinthians 12, 12. You know, they made fun of Paul.

2 Corinthians 10, 10, they said his letters say they are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech is contemptible. You know, Paul, as long as he's hiding behind a desk and writing letters, he does a real good job, but man, when you see him, I mean, you look at him, you're like, who is that little wimp?

Who is that scrawny little guy? I mean, he ain't much. When you look at him, you ain't impressed. And then when he starts preaching, you're like, my soul, that stinks.

[22 : 20] You better go write a letter quick. You're not very good. Paul said, I know that's what you say about me. You know, they put up with people that taught trash and didn't tell the truth.

And Paul admits something in this passage. Paul admits that the big problem the church had was he was never burdensome to them. Look at 2 Corinthians 11, in verse 7.

Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that you might be exalted because I preached to you the gospel of God freely? There's a saying, and you learn this on the mission field, a lot of times they say, whatever's free is cheap.

If it doesn't cost you anything, it doesn't mean anything to you. And Paul said, I came there and I never charged you. I was never a burden and you never paid my salary and you never paid any of the expenses and you never cared for any of the things about the ministry.

You just came in and sat there like spoiled children and listened to all the truth. Reading a book right now about a great preacher and he was preaching at this church.

[23 : 29] They'd asked him to come preach. He was preaching every Wednesday night and nobody was ever moving. Lives weren't being changed. And one of his friends came to him and said, are you wasting your time here? He said, have you not noticed not one person's changed?

Not one person's moved forward. Nothing seems to be happening. It's not the ministry, but these guys have itching ears. They love to hear, but they don't like to apply. And his name was Leonard Ravenhill and he said, that's it.

I'll not be back. So true. Paul said, I preached to you the gospel freely. He took his salary from other churches. In 2 Corinthians 11, he said, I robbed other churches taking wages of them.

In chapter 11 in verse 9, he said, and when I was present with you, when I lived with you guys and I had something I needed, something I wanted, my shoes wore out or I needed a new change of clothes or I needed something for breakfast, I was chargeable to no man.

I didn't ask anything from any of you. But for anything that was lacking for me, anything I needed, the guys that came from Macedonia, they brought that to me. I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you.

[24 : 34] And by the way, I plan on keeping it that way. You see, what happened was the church had taken the gospel, which is a free gift, and they had treated it lightly and not been responsible with what was given to them.

It's kind of like this new grace that goes around right now. It's kind of like this new grace that's irreverent. It's kind of like I'm saved by grace so I'll live any way I want.

It's kind of like grace means I'm free to do what I want. It's not that grace made me free to serve God. It's kind of like you like to use grace as an excuse to cover your sins.

Hey, we're not under law. We're not under law. We can do what we want. He loves us anyway. Might as well do anything we want. It's a cheap way of doing it. It's not taking the burden of what happened.

The Lord was at work in their lives. Paul said, I hadn't been burdensome to you. I didn't want to be burdensome to you. I never wanted you guys to say I preach to get money. It's probably one of the hardest things any pastor or preacher does.

[25 : 46] One of the hardest things a preacher or pastor does is he preaches and everybody pays him and it's kind of like, wow. He said, they think I do this just because I get paid for it. And Paul said, that's why I would never let you give me any money.

In 2 Corinthians 12, verse 13, he said, for what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches? Let me tell you what made you inferior? Except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you.

Forgive me this wrong. He made tents. He worked other jobs. He robbed other churches, but they never paid him a salary and they never took his preaching seriously because it didn't cost them.

Paul loved them very much. He didn't want them making money. He didn't want them making money an excuse not to love Jesus. 13 again, what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you.

Forgive me this wrong. He had good intentions. Behold, the third time I'm ready to come to you and I will not be burdensome. I'll be back the third time but no love offerings, please.

[26 : 55] I'll be back the third time but don't y'all get me a place to stay. I'll be back the third time but nobody fixed me anything to eat because I'm not out to get your money. I'm there to give you the gospel. Forgive me this wrong.

Don't forget he said that. I'm not coming to get your stuff. Parents ought to do something for the children not the other way around. The other way around. His mistake is the same one parents make of being too good to their children.

It's the same mistake parents make of being too good to their children. Have you ever noticed sometimes you're so good to your children you ruin them? In the old days we used to call it spoiling them. I know we don't use that term very much anymore probably because all the kids are spoiled.

But what we did is we did so much for them they never learned responsibility and when it became time for them to man up and woman up and take responsibility they didn't do that. The Spanish word for that is malcriado and malcriado translated means poorly raised.

So anytime you see one of these brat kids around here don't think of the kid as a brat think of the parents as brats. Oh I knew that wasn't going to get me an amen. But that's kind of what the Spanish word meant.

[28 : 09] There's a lot of Spanish speakers here check me out. Malcriado. Paul didn't want them to accuse him of taking advantage of them. So Paul said you know what I will spend and I will be spent verse 15 I will spend and I will be spent for you.

Though the more abundantly I love you the less I'll be loved. He loved them he was doing everything in his power for them. The more he did for them the more they just took it. The more he loved them the less they loved him.

But he's telling them in this verse it's now time for them to step up and take responsibility for their church. Watch this.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 5 they were bragging about their tolerance. They were tolerant people. They had grace and so they let a guy sleep with his daddy's wife and they didn't say anything about it because well they're not under law and there are no rules and they were a tolerant group.

They wouldn't take responsibility. And Paul writes and he says I can't understand you. You ought to be puffed up. You ought to be mourned. You ought to be you ought to be excuse me you are puffed up.

[29 : 17] You're proud but you ought to be ashamed. You ought to be scared. You ought to be standing up and saying no this is the house of God and we're God's people and we're not putting up with that. But you won't do it because you use grace as an excuse.

One of the sad things but I don't want to be a legalist. Been there. But one of the sad things is some of us just like it's like glad I'm at vision man.

At vision there are no rules. Thank God I live any way I want to. Well it ought not be that way unless what you want to do is what the Lord that lives in you wants to do in you. It's not your life it's his life.

It's not a cover up for fornication. It's not a cover up for homosexuality. It's not a cover up for loose living. It's not a cover up for not serving God. It's not a cover up for laying out of church.

It's not a cover up for not praying. It's not a cover up. Hey it's rise up and grow up and be men. Pick up your burdens and be who you ought to be. Yeah you're saved by grace. Yeah you are.

[30 : 15] Thank God. Well you know what you're saved by grace but that don't mean you need to lay on your lazy backside spiritually. I will put out my resume tomorrow.

Second Corinthians chapter 12 verse 17. Paul said I don't ever want you to think I was in it for the money. Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent to you?

Did I even send somebody to get money out of you guys? I desired Timothy and with him I sent a brother. Did Timothy make a gain of you? Just let me finish up with an application to our church.

Listen to this. Church. We have the most wonderful beautiful message in the world. Salvation is purely and totally a work of God.

If you tithe or don't tithe it won't affect your salvation. If you attend or don't attend God won't love you less or love you more. If you do these things or don't do these things it won't get you one brownie point with God.

[31 : 24] But mature Christians who have Christ formed in them who are maturing in Christ take Jesus seriously.

They take the message seriously. They take the relationship seriously. I could easily say to my wife of so many years. I know you love me and I know you put up with me all these years and so I can do anything I wanted to but that would not be the right relationship or the right way to treat her.

And she is such a good woman and she is so godly she would put up with probably anything. But if I am mature and if I take seriously the blessing God gave me of being her husband instead of following rules I will do more than any rules you would ever mention to me because I am in love with her.

There is no such thing as cheap grace. It is good to have a burden to carry. In Lamentations chapter 3 and verse 27 the Bible says it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

We live in a society where we want to take all the yoke off. Make it easy for everybody. Now salvation is easy. But you know you come to church and you expect me to feed you and you don't ever open your Bible the rest of the week.

[32 : 57] Hey Austin chew it up and spit it out and let us eat it. Regurgitate and we will swallow.

It is just not the biblical way. You should grow up and become a self-feeder. Can you repeat these two words of me? Self-feeder.

If you can say that say it with me. Self-feeder. You know what that means? There is a day when your kid can chew their own food and you don't have to give them that stuff out of a jar. That's a great day when it was you.

But somehow spiritually you've left your Bible on the shelf and on Sundays you go looking for it. But you're not looking in the word. You're not trying to serve God. It's good for somebody to help you.

In Galatians 6-2 he said bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. But if you skip down to verse 4 he said but let every man prove his own work and then shall he have rejoicing in himself and not in another.

[33 : 58] For every man shall bear his own burden. You see used to you might have been serving God out of guilt and manipulation and that ought never be. It might be that the preacher threatened you, cajoled you, manipulated you, and guilted you and that's how you did things.

And you were like an abused spouse. You were there serving God because you was going to get another beating and you'd take it and you'd like it.

And some of you found grace and you're so excited. But instead of understanding what grace means and realizing he loves me, he loves me, he loves me, he loves me, it doesn't mean he frees you to not love him back.

It ought to mean man, glory to God, he loves me. I'm going to run at him. I'm going to seek him. I'm going to search for him. I'm going to surrender myself to him. I'm going to live for him. Nobody's ever loved me like Jesus loves me.

So I'm not sure the grace you got is the real Bible grace. Bible grace isn't I'm saved so fully on everything. Once saved, always saved.

[35 : 06] That's not the grace in the Bible. You're responsible to be a self-feeder. You're responsible to personally repent and believe. Some of you honestly think you're saved because your mama told you when you were saved.

The reason you're not sure of your salvation is you aren't personally responsible. You need to realize, no, did I come to a point in my life that I realized that I had sinned against the Holy God? Don't you tell me some preacher told you you were saved.

Bear your own burden. Grow up. Look at yourself and say, did I come to a place in my life where I sinned against the Holy God? I knew I sinned and I trusted Jesus. Bear a burden.

This is your church. Take responsibility. It's a burden. The church here is a burden. Cost us a lot. Missions cost a lot. You should have a burden to take care of this church, its leadership, its ministries.

You should have a burden to get the gospel of the world. You are responsible and you need to live and act like it really depends on you. Depending on what others will do only makes you weaker and inferior.

[36 : 16] Pay your way. Carry your burden. Do your share. Get involved. Paul said, how are y'all inferior?

Well, the main point Paul's going to make in this passage is that they didn't pay his salary. And since they didn't pay his salary, they didn't take his teaching seriously. Well, that's not the truth at this church.

You more than will pay me and the other guys that work here and we're fine with that. That's not the point. But I do think that maybe somehow along the way you picked up the idea that since we are saved by grace and this church, boy, it's different.

Man, they don't guilt you. They don't manipulate you. They don't push you. They don't fuss at you for not reading your Bible. They don't fuss at you for not giving. They don't fuss at you about nothing there. And I'm glad we don't.

But I'll tell you this. If you're in love with Jesus, you ought to wake up in the morning saying, ain't nobody ever loved me like you. What do you want from me today? I am crucified with Christ.

[37 : 24] I am dead with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not me. Yet not I. But Christ liveth in me. And the life that you see me living in this body is not my life, but it's his life.

He's living through me the faith of the son of God who lives through me. You are not your own. This is not a Sunday morning game you play. How could you let those false teachers come through and mess you up?

How could you swell up in grace and let a guy sleep with his daddy's wife? How could you all mess up the spiritual gifts as much as you did? You're an inferior church. I don't ever want that to be said about us.

So listen to me. Every man in this room, man up. Lead your home. Go home and say to your wife and say to your children, I am going to be the man of God I ought to be.

We're going to have some Bible reading and prayer around here because I love Jesus. Be a praying man. Be a giving man. Be a Bible reading man, a church attending man.

[38 : 31] Be a guy who lives out who you are. Man up. Christ formed in you. No. No guilt.

You don't have to impress Austin. He's a nobody. But if you love Jesus, how can you take this lightly? Watch this.

I'm afraid some of us take our spiritual life far lighter than we take our marital life. We take our spiritual life far lighter than we take our hobbies.

We take our spiritual life far lighter than we take our work. We take our spiritual life far lighter than we take anything else. We aren't seriously in love with Jesus. Check up time.

Check up time. Father in heaven, I ask you to work today. I pray you convict. I pray you cause Christians, Lord, to decide today they would man up and they would do what you've called them to do and that they would live out who you've made them to be.

[39 : 34] God, I pray that you'd help us to man up under the maturity that you've given us to know you and to seek you and to search for you and to love you, to seek you first.

You have been listening to Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church. For contact information, location, service times, or more audio and video recordings, log on to www.visionbaptist.com.