

**Galatians 6: 5; “Bearing Your Own Burden”, Message # 57 in the series –
“Christ has Set us Free”, a Bible Study conducted on August 24th, 2016,
by Pastor Paul Rendall at his home.**

Thus far, in the study of this chapter, we have seen that it is the solemn and loving responsibility of those who are spiritual in the local church, to restore one of their fellow-members who has been overtaken in a fault. This restoration is to be done in a spirit of gentleness, not harshness or in anger, or contempt for the other person’s sinful weakness. And while the process of restoration is taking place, those who are attempting the restoration are to consider themselves; they are to look to themselves, lest they also be tempted to sin against the one overtaken; or to be overtaken, in a similar manner as they were. We are not to become conceited, provoking one another or envying one another, but rather we are to examine ourselves in regard to our own attitudes and our own works, and not to focus inordinately upon the failure of the one who is being restored. We are to undertake this responsibility in such a way that that person will come to the place where they will repent and desire greatly to walk more closely with the Lord. And, hopefully in time, they will be brought to the place of spiritual maturity and usefulness to Christ and to His Church. This is not just the responsibility of the pastor or elders of the local church. It is the responsibility of everyone who is spiritually minded in the local church. This is what it means to bear one another’s burdens, we have seen, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

Now this evening, I would like to set before you this complementary truth: That every Christian shall bear his or her own load. It is a follow-up to our learning how to bear one another’s burdens. It is, 1st of all, the truth that each of us is responsible to bear our own particular burden; that of dealing with sins, and with pursuing righteousness. (verse 5) And 2nd – the truth that each of us is responsible for how we provide for our own needs and look out for the needs of others in the local church. Let us consider these things for the well-being and strength of our church as well as for the well-being and strength of our own souls. (verse 6)

1st of all – Let us understand that each of us is responsible to bear our own particular burden; that of dealing with sins, and with pursuing righteousness.

Verse 5 says: “For each one shall bear his own load.” “For each one shall bear his own burden”, says the King James translation. It ought to be apparent to us by now that each Christian person is responsible for how they deal with the burden of their own sins. This text is speaking to us about each Christian’s learning to deal with the burden of their sins in an on-going sense that shows that they are coming to know themselves better. They are growing in wisdom in terms of dealing with their own particular sins and with the indwelling remaining corruption which in the letters of Paul is known as “the flesh”. Each Christian must come to terms with how to bear this burden, for in their doing so, they will be glorifying God in the way that they live, and it will help them greatly in terms of their being able to be of help to others who are struggling with issues of sin.

Let’s start from the beginning of the Christian life. For a true Christian, when they came to see themselves as a sinner, and when they became convinced that they needed to do something about the heavy burden of their sins, they believed in Jesus Christ. They came to the Lord Jesus to deal with that greatest of burdens. Turn with me over Matthew 11, verses 28-30. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Notice with me that the person who comes to Jesus is weary and heavy laden with their own particular sins, and they read the promise that Jesus will give them rest for their soul which has been trying to deal with sins but can’t and would like to be free from the burden of sin, but know that they cannot without His help. And

so, they believe. Now, they no longer have to bear the burden of their past sins, for Jesus has suffered and died, having made provision for that, at the cross. Their sins are all taken away; removed from them as far as the east is from the west.

But then I want us also to notice that there is a learning process that goes on after conversion to Christ, where the one believing in Him is to take up His yoke and learn from Him because He is gentle and humble of heart. This yoke is learning to do and keep the commandments of God from the vantage-point of Christ Himself helping them by being a yoke-fellow with them. There is a burden in this, in dealing with sin in the on-going sense of sanctification, but as Christ says, that yoke is easy and the burden is light. Why? It is because of Christ's grace; His strength and wisdom helping you to break up the fallow ground of your heart, and to sow the seed of the word by His grace into your heart so that you are sustained in bearing your own burden on all levels; of confession of sin, of forsaking of sin, and of your obedience to Him. Look with me over at Psalm 55, verse 22. "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved." This is the great advantage which is given to every Christian man or woman in bearing their own burden; Christ is there pulling in the yoke with them. Christ is there with them daily helping them to bear their burden. Look at Psalm 68: 19 – Reading from the New American Standard Bible it says: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, the God who is our salvation." The New King James says: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, the God of our salvation!" The reason that we are able to bear our own burden is because the Lord is helping us to bear it, and He is loading us with the benefits of imputed and imparted grace day by day. This is how we grow stronger in the faith; this is how we can come to the place where we not only bear our own burden, but we can undertake to bear the burdens of others also.

Now turn with me over to 1st Peter chapter 3, verses 21-25. "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed." "For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." You can see here what every true Christian does in relation to their believing in the gospel; they came to the foot of the cross in their mind and heart, and they believed in Jesus. Like the hymn writer says: "They laid their sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God. He bears them all and keeps them from the accursed load." They believed that He bore their sins in His own body on the tree. And they were saved.

But this text in 1st Peter goes on to tell us what our responsibility is following conversion. Christ who suffered for us has left us an example, that we should follow in His steps. It is, that we, having died to sins, through His death, would now to live to righteousness. We have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls; we who were going astray. We came to know that He who is merciful and kind to sinners, bore our sins in His own body on the tree so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. This is "bearing our own burden"; dying to sin and living to righteousness. In the process of living this way, unto God, we find there is a burden of daily cares and responsibilities. And the Lord Jesus helps us with this as well. Listen to the hymn writer, Horatius Bonar again. "I lay my wants on Jesus, all fullness dwells in Him; He heals all my diseases, He doth my soul redeem: I lay my griefs on Jesus, my burdens and my cares; He from them all releases, He all my sorrows shares."

Now, this is bearing your own burden, but you will learn to do it all with Christ's help. You will at times have burdens related to sickness and loss of loved ones. You will at times have burdens related to your job, and burdens related to being able to provide for our family. You will

at times have sorrows and disappointments related to your own ability to fulfill all the responsibilities which you have been given in living the Christian life. But, by the grace of Christ, you will take up these responsibilities and you will, by faith in Christ, go about to live obediently to God's holy word. In the process of bearing your own burden, you may indeed become weary, but with Christ's grace, it will be a burden that He will help you to bear. This is why the Lord Jesus says to each of us who belong to Him: "Come unto Me all you who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest." This is the great principle that undergirds a Christian's bearing their own burden. And it will be confirmed for us if we will turn over to Jeremiah 31, verses 23-26 – "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: 'The Lord bless you, O home of Justice and mountain of holiness!' " "And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks." "For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." "After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was sweet." The Lord was, through the prophet, telling the children of Israel how He would bring them out of their captivity and back into their land again. His work would be so effectual that Israel would be called a home of justice and a mountain of holiness. This, we should understand is a prophecy not only of the Old Covenant restoration of Israel to their land and to the privileges and blessings of material and spiritual prosperity, but it also can be legitimately apply to the Church during the days of her prosperity during this present evil age. The principle to be understood is this: God would bring these great things about; the farmers and those going out with flocks; a picture of churches, of pastors, and their people.

It is God through Christ who will satisfy the weary soul, and it is Christ who replenishes every sorrowful soul. How do we know that it is Christ that will do these things? If you look back at Jeremiah 31: 22 you find this: "How long will you gad about, O you backsliding daughter?" "For the Lord has created a new thing in the earth – A woman shall encompass a man." This is referring to Christ; first of all being encompassed by the Virgin Mary in her womb; and then in the fully realized sense, it is referring to the Church, all those persons in all generations since His Incarnation, surrounding Him, looking in Him by faith to Him, to be satisfied and replenished in their souls. This is the principle of grace in the heart; being watered and nurtured by His presence, His power, and by the purpose of our great God and Savior, who does all of these gracious things. This is what allows you to bear your own burden. Take heart, dear Christian. Christ is with you to sustain you and to satisfy you when your soul is weary, and He will replenish you when you are sorrowful and you look to Him. Let this great truth be believed by each of us.

2nd – We now want to consider the truth that each of us is responsible for how we provide for our own needs and look out for the needs of others in the local church.

Let consider together a couple of examples of what it means to "bear our own burden" in terms of our providing for our own needs. The first is an exhortation given to us by the apostle Paul in 1st Thessalonians 4: 9-12, "But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia." "But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing." Part of bearing your own burden comes from being able to be satisfied with the life that the Lord has given to you; being content with living a quiet life, not thinking that you need to be the center of attention; working hard at what the Lord has given you to do, and walking properly towards those who are outside. (That is – outside the church) Your greatest desire will be to glorify Christ right where you are, being satisfied with the responsibilities and the work that He has given you to do. You will not be a meddler in other

people's lives and business. You will pay attention to yourself and the way that you live; first and foremost of all, and not how others are living. You will humbly, but diligently provide for the needs of yourself and your family so that you will lack nothing.

In the process of this growing in grace and in this kind of simple straightforward obedience, we will at times see other Christians around us, who are not living up to the standard set before us in the word of God. What are we to do? Well, sometimes those who are spiritual need to attempt to restore such a one. So turn with me over to 2nd Thessalonians 3, verses 6-15. "But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us." "For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us." "For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work neither shall he eat." "For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies." "Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread." "But as for you brethren, do not grow weary in doing good." "And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed." "Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

Here is a person who it appears is a brother, but he is walking disorderly. He is eating other people's food and mooching off of them. He is taking advantage of their generosity. He doesn't really think that it is necessary to work and provide for his own needs if others are willing to give him what he needs. This is actually a fault that he has been overtaken in. He might consider himself to be wise in living this way, but he needs to be restored. What can be done? Well, the apostle would have us obey this word in this epistle. "Note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed." "Yet do not count him as an enemy but admonish him as a brother." Positively, what else should we do? Well, we can keep up a good example before such a person, pray for such person, and do not grow weary in doing good. And what is that but bearing your own burden in action? May the Lord give us understanding in these good things which glorify Him and truly help others.