



August 30 – Carry the Load

Weekly Reading – Galatians 6 – Ephesians 4

This Week’s Passage – Galatians 6:1-10

Main Point

Spirit-led believers care for one another by restoring gently, carrying burdens, and faithfully doing good.

Key Verse

Galatians 6:2 – “Carry one another’s burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

Life Group – The Flow

• 15 minutes – Conversation and relationship-building • 5 minutes – Looking back • 5 minutes – Introduction, Background, and Christ Connection • 30 minutes – Study and apply the Bible • 5 minutes – Application exercise • 10 minutes – Pray Through the Passage & Prayer Requests • 5 minutes – Conclusion	If Time is Limited... Focus on: • Main Point and Key Verse • Background and Christ Connection • Read Galatians 6:1–5 • Passage 1 questions 1 and 3 • Read Galatians 6:6–10 • Passage 2 questions 2 and 4 • Application Exercise • Pray Through the Passage • Final Takeaway
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Looking Back (5 min)



Use this time to celebrate obedience and encourage growth. Invite members to share how they sought to apply last week's challenge and what God taught them along the way. Focus on God's faithfulness and the progress He is making in our lives, not on perfect execution. Scan or click the QR code for last week's challenge.

Last week, we studied what it means to live in the freedom Christ has given us. Paul challenged believers to reject the desires of the flesh, keep in step with the Spirit, and allow Him to produce Christlike fruit in our lives.

Discuss one or more:

- Where did you become especially aware of the choice between following the flesh and following the Spirit this week?
- Did you have an opportunity to use your freedom to serve someone through love?
- Which aspect of the fruit of the Spirit did you especially need this week?
- Did anyone take the Stop, Yield, and Step approach into a real situation? What happened?

Transition to Introduction:

“Last week, Paul showed us what a Spirit-led life looks like within us. As he continues into chapter 6, he shows us what that kind of life looks like when someone around us is struggling.”

Introduction (5 min)

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Ask

- What's something you've tried to carry or move by yourself before finally admitting that you need help moving it?

Allow members to share examples: furniture, appliances, moving boxes, home projects, luggage, or anything else that comes to mind.

Follow-Up

- Why do you think we sometimes wait so long to ask for help, even when we know something is too heavy to handle alone?

Say

“Some loads are manageable by ourselves. Others simply were not meant to be carried alone.

The same is true in life. There are responsibilities each of us must own, but there are also seasons when sin, grief, pressure, loss, or hardship becomes too heavy for one person to carry alone.

Paul says one of the marks of a Spirit-led Christian community is that we notice those burdens, and move toward the people carrying them.”

Transition to Background:

“That instruction did not come out of nowhere. It flows directly from what Paul has just taught about walking by the Spirit.”

Background

The Background and Christ Connection sections are designed to provide context and a gospel lens for the lesson. Feel free to summarize these sections rather than reading them word-for-word.

The opening words of Galatians 6 continue Paul’s teaching from the end of chapter 5. There, Paul contrasted the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit and called believers to “keep in step with the Spirit.” Among the fruit produced by the Spirit are love, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 6 shows what those qualities look like when lived out in Christian community.

Paul had spent much of Galatians defending the gospel of grace against false teachers who insisted that believers needed to keep the Mosaic law in order to be fully accepted by God. Yet freedom from the law did not make Christians independent from one another. Instead, grace creates a new kind of community.

When someone falls into sin, believers restore rather than condemn. When someone carries an overwhelming burden, believers help shoulder it. When pride tempts us to compare ourselves with someone else, we examine our own lives instead. And when doing good becomes tiring, we continue faithfully because we trust God with the harvest.

Transition to Christ Connection:

“Paul calls this way of life ‘the law of Christ.’ To understand why Christians willingly carry one another’s burdens, we first look to the One who carried what we never could.”

Christ Connection

Jesus did not remain distant from the weight of our sin and brokenness. He came near. At the cross, Christ bore the guilt and judgment we could never remove ourselves. He gave Himself for people who could not rescue themselves and, through His resurrection, gives new life to everyone who trusts in Him.

We therefore do not carry one another’s burdens in order to earn God’s favor. We do it because we have already received His grace. Jesus taught His followers to love one another as He loved them. That self-giving love is what Paul describes as “**the law of Christ.**” As believers restore, support, encourage, and serve one another, they reflect the character of the Savior who first loved and served them.

Transition to Passage 1:

“Because Christ has shown us this kind of grace, Paul now turns to what grace should look like when another believer is struggling—and what responsibility each of us has within the body of Christ.”

Study and Apply (30 min)

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says and how we can apply it in our lives this week.

Passage 1 - Galatians 6:1-5

Restore and Carry

READ THE PASSAGE - Have a volunteer read Galatians 6:1-5.

Bear One Another's Burdens

- [1] Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
- [2] Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- [3] For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

[4] But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.

[5] For each will have to bear his own load. (ESV)

Commentary

Use the following commentary to prepare ahead of time. As you lead, feel free to summarize key insights rather than reading it word-for-word.

Verse 1. Paul begins with the situation of a believer who is “**caught in any wrongdoing**.” The wording may describe someone overtaken by sin rather than deliberately planning a life of rebellion.

Paul does not instruct the church to ignore the sin, gossip about the person, or distance itself from them. Instead, “**you who are spiritual**” are to restore that believer.

The word *spiritual* does not describe an elite category of unusually mature Christians. In the immediate context, it refers to believers who are walking by the Spirit and displaying His fruit.

The word translated **restore** was used for bringing something damaged back into its proper condition. The goal is not punishment, embarrassment, or proving who was right. The goal is restoration to faithful fellowship with Christ and His people.

Paul specifically says restoration should take place “**in a gentle spirit**.” Gentleness was one of the fruits of the Spirit listed just a few verses earlier. Biblical gentleness does not ignore sin or minimize its seriousness. It approaches a struggling believer with humility, compassion, and a sincere desire for that person’s good.

The person doing the restoring must also **watch himself**. No Christian is beyond temptation. Remembering our own vulnerability protects us from approaching another person with arrogance or superiority.

Verse 2. Paul broadens the principle to “Carry one another’s burdens.” The word translated burdens describes a weight heavy enough to overwhelm the person carrying it.

In context, this may include the spiritual weight associated with sin and failure, but the principle applies naturally to other overwhelming burdens believers encounter: grief, illness, financial pressure, family crises, discouragement, or seasons of intense difficulty.

Paul says carrying these burdens fulfills “**the law of Christ**.” Earlier he summarized God’s command as “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus likewise commanded His disciples to love one another as He loved them.

Christian love moves toward people who are struggling and asks, **“How can I help carry this with you?”**

Verse 3. Pride makes burden-bearing difficult. Paul warns that anyone who considers himself to be something when he is nothing “deceives himself.” A person who feels superior to the struggling believer is unlikely to restore that person gently.

Someone else’s failure can easily become an opportunity to feel better about ourselves. Paul rejects that attitude completely.

The appropriate response to another believer’s weakness is not: “I would never do that.”

It is: “Apart from the grace of God, I am vulnerable too. How can I help this person move toward Christ?”

Verse 4. Instead of constantly evaluating someone else’s performance, each believer should “examine his own work.” The term Paul used carries the idea of testing something to determine its genuineness. Christians should honestly evaluate their own motives, obedience, and faithfulness before God.

Paul is not encouraging prideful self-congratulation. He is removing comparison from the equation.

Our standard is not whether we appear stronger than another believer. Each of us is accountable before God for how faithfully we respond to what He has entrusted to us.

Verse 5. At first glance, verse 5 may appear to contradict verse 2: “Carry one another’s burdens,” and “Each person will have to carry his own load.” However, Paul uses different words. The **burden** of verse 2 refers to something unusually heavy or overwhelming. The **load** of verse 5 can describe an ordinary pack or responsibility a person is expected to carry.

The principle is important:

Christian community means helping people carry what has become too heavy without taking away the responsibilities God has given them to carry themselves.

Healthy community avoids both extremes. We should never say, **“Your problems are your problems. Handle them yourself.”** But neither should we expect other people to assume responsibility for decisions and obedience that belong to us.

Christians take responsibility for their own walk while coming alongside one another when the load becomes too great to carry alone.

Consider This -

Optional illustration to reinforce the passage.

Rick Hoyt was born with cerebral palsy and quadriplegia. As a teenager, he told his father, Dick, that he wanted to participate in a five-mile charity race. Dick—who was not a distance runner—pushed Rick in his wheelchair for the entire course.

That first race eventually became more than 1,000 endurance events together, including marathons and Ironman triathlons. Rick was fully part of the race, but there was a load he could not physically carry by himself. His father stepped in and helped carry it with him.

Bearing someone's burden does not mean living their life for them. It means refusing to let them face an overwhelming load alone.

Guide Discussion

You do not need to cover every question. Use the questions that best help your group engage with the passage. I do encourage you to use the Reflective question to provide more engagement from your Life Group.

1. **Good for Students:** What responsibilities toward other believers do you see in verses 1–5?
2. **Discuss:** Why do you think gentleness is especially important when helping someone who has fallen into sin?
3. **Deeper Dive:** How do verses 2 and 5 work together? How can we tell the difference between helping carry someone's burden and taking responsibility for something they need to own?
4. **★ Reflective — Index Card:** When you see someone struggling, which response comes more naturally to you: moving toward them, trying to fix them, judging them, or avoiding the situation? Why?

Teaching Insight

The Teaching Insight is intended to help you identify and emphasize the main truth of the passage. Consider using it as a brief summary after discussion or a way to clarify the lesson's central message if your group gets off track.

Say:

“Biblical community is more than being friendly when life is going well. Spirit-led believers move toward one another in weakness. We restore without superiority, help carry what has become overwhelming, and still encourage one another to take responsibility for faithful obedience.”

Transition to Passage 2:

“Paul now widens the lens. Carrying burdens is one expression of doing good, but faithful care for others is rarely accomplished in a single moment. It requires a pattern of sowing good seeds—and the perseverance to keep going when the results are slow.”

Passage 2 - Galatians 6:6-10

Sow and Don't Give Up

READ THE PASSAGE - Have volunteers read Galatians 6:6-10.

[6] Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

[7] Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

[8] For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

[9] And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

[10] So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (ESV)

Commentary

Verse 6. Paul instructs the person who receives teaching in the Word to “share all his good things with the teacher.” Most interpreters understand this as a call for believers to provide material support for those who devote themselves to teaching God’s Word.

Paul has just said that each believer must carry his own responsibilities, but that principle should not be used as an excuse to neglect those who serve the church through teaching. Christian community includes generosity. Those who benefit spiritually from faithful teaching should willingly help meet the practical needs of those who provide it.

Verse 7. Paul warns: “Don’t be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap.” The agricultural picture is straightforward. A farmer cannot plant one kind of

seed and expect an entirely different crop. In the same way, the patterns we repeatedly cultivate in our lives eventually produce consequences consistent with those choices.

To mock God is to live as though His truth can be ignored without consequence. Paul warns believers not to deceive themselves into thinking that daily choices do not matter. Our habits, priorities, attitudes, relationships, use of resources, and responses to temptation are continually planting seeds.

Verse 8. Paul identifies two possible fields in which a person may sow.

1. To sow to the flesh is to continually invest in sinful, self-centered desires. The eventual harvest is corruption.
2. To sow to the Spirit is to order our lives under the Spirit's leadership and invest ourselves in what pleases God. The harvest is eternal life.

Paul is not teaching that good works earn salvation. Throughout Galatians, he has repeatedly insisted that sinners are justified through faith in Christ rather than works of the law.

Rather, the harvest reveals the direction of a life. Those who belong to Christ have received the Spirit, and the Spirit increasingly produces a way of life consistent with the eternal life God has promised them.

Small choices matter because repeated choices become patterns, and patterns reveal what we are cultivating.

Verse 9. Doing good can become tiring. Paul acknowledges this directly: "Let us not get tired of doing good."

The phrase can carry the sense of becoming weary, discouraged, or losing heart. Sometimes doing good produces visible results quickly. Often it does not.

A person may pray for someone for years. Parents may repeat the same instruction hundreds of times. A volunteer may serve faithfully without receiving recognition. A believer may continue showing kindness to someone who seems unresponsive.

Paul encourages believers not to measure faithfulness only by immediate results. There is a "proper time" for the harvest, and that timing belongs to God. The promise is not that every act of obedience will produce the particular outcome we want. It is that faithful obedience offered to God is never wasted.

Verse 10. Because the season for doing good is limited, Paul says: "As we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all."

Believers should actively look for opportunities to benefit others rather than waiting until generosity or service becomes convenient. Paul includes **all people**, showing that Christian goodness should extend beyond the walls of the church. Yet he adds: “especially for those who belong to the household of faith.”

Christians have a particular responsibility toward their brothers and sisters in Christ. The church is not merely a weekly gathering of individuals. It is a spiritual family whose members are called to notice, serve, encourage, restore, and support one another.

Guide Discussion

1. **Good for Students:** What repeated actions or commands do you notice in verses 6–10?
2. **Discuss:** What tends to make doing good especially tiring or discouraging over time?
3. **Deeper Dive:** Paul uses the picture of sowing and reaping. If our ordinary choices are seeds, how do small decisions eventually shape the direction of a life?
4. ★ **Reflective — Index Card:** Where are you most tempted to grow weary and stop doing good because you have not seen the results you hoped for?

Teaching Insight

Say:

“Faithfulness is often less dramatic than we imagine. Much of the Christian life is simply planting good seeds again and again – praying, serving, encouraging, giving, forgiving, showing up, and obeying – while trusting God with a harvest we may not immediately see.”

Transition into Application Exercise:

“Paul has given us two challenges: notice the burdens people around us are carrying, and refuse to grow weary in doing good. Let’s make both of those concrete before we leave.”

Application Exercise (5–7 min)

Notice • Carry • Continue

Supplies: Index cards and pens

Ask members to privately work through three prompts.

1. Notice

- Who around you may be carrying something that has become too heavy to carry alone?

It could be someone experiencing:

- grief
- illness
- family pressure
- financial difficulty
- discouragement
- loneliness
- spiritual struggle
- caregiving responsibilities
- another demanding season

You do not need to know every detail of someone's situation in order to notice that they may need support.

2. Carry

- What is one specific way you could help lighten that person's burden this week?

Examples might include:

- checking in
- praying with them
- providing a meal
- helping with a practical task
- listening without immediately offering advice
- offering transportation or childcare
- encouraging them with Scripture
- gently initiating a needed conversation
- connecting them with additional help

3. Continue

- Where are you tempted to grow weary in doing good, and what is one faithful action you need to keep doing?

Write down one action you intend to continue even if you do not immediately see results.

Say

“You are not responsible for fixing every problem in someone else’s life, and you cannot carry every burden you encounter. But you can remain attentive to the people God has placed around you and faithfully respond to the opportunities He gives you.”

Transition into Pray Through the Passage:

“We cannot carry every burden in our own strength, and perseverance does not come from simply trying harder. Let’s bring our pride, our weariness, and the people God has placed on our hearts before Him.”

Pray Through the Passage (10 min)

Led by the Prayer Champion:

Read the verse/passage, then read the prayer prompt out loud. Allow a few moments between prompts for reflection and prayer. Encourage members to personalize each prayer by filling in the blank with their own response.

Prompt 1 - Adoration (have people pray this prompt out loud)

Galatians 6:7 – “Don’t be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a person sows he will also reap.”

- God, I praise You because You are holy, just, and trustworthy. Your truth does not change, and Your ways are always right.

Prompt 2 - Confession (can be silent)

Galatians 6:3 – “For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”

- Lord, forgive me for the ways pride, comparison, or self-reliance have kept me from seeing my own need for grace or responding gently to someone else’s weakness.

Prompt 3 - Gratitude (have people pray this prompt out loud)

Galatians 6:2 – “Carry one another’s burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

- Jesus, thank You that You have not called me to follow You alone. Thank You for the people You have placed around me to encourage, support, and help carry burdens with me.

Prompt 4 - Response/Obedience (have people pray this prompt out loud)

Galatians 6:9–10 - “Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all.”

- Lord, help me not to grow weary in doing good. Show me how I can help carry [person’s name]’s burden this week, and give me the faithfulness to follow through.

End the prayer prompt time and transition to the next section:

Prayer Requests, Praises, and Follow-Up

1. Take a few minutes to ask the group for updates from the previous week’s prayer requests. Encourage the group to celebrate answered prayers.
2. Next, identify specific needs that can be prayed for throughout this coming week. Encourage members to be vulnerable and open in their needs so members can better and more fully support each other in prayer and in tangible ways.
3. Record requests and praises, share them with the group during the week, and follow up on them at the next gathering.

Transition into Conclusion:

“Some burdens can be lifted quickly. Others require people who are willing to keep showing up. As we close, Paul reminds us that faithfulness means carrying what we can, owning what God has entrusted to us, and continuing to do good without giving up.”

Conclusion (5 min)



Scan or click the QR code and share the link in your Life Group’s group chat (e.g. GroupMe, text or email thread, etc.) so they can see This Week’s Challenge. Encourage your group to keep these questions in mind, review/memorize the Key Verse during the week, and engage in the Year of Prayer reading plan this week.

Final Takeaway

After discussion concludes, read the takeaway statement:

Spirit-led Christians do not merely notice when others struggle. They move toward them with gentleness, help carry what has become too heavy, and keep doing good even when the results take time.

This Week's Challenge

Respond – *What will I do this week?*

Return to your Notice • Carry • Continue card. Follow through on the specific action you identified to help someone this week. Do not wait for the perfect moment. A text, phone call, meal, conversation, prayer, or practical act of service may carry more weight than you realize.

Reflect – *What is God showing me?*

Consider:

- Do I tend to move toward people who are struggling or keep my distance?
- Am I quick to restore gently, or quick to judge?
- Am I carrying something that has become too heavy but refusing to let anyone help?
- Am I expecting someone else to carry a responsibility God has given me?
- What seeds am I planting through my ordinary choices?
- Where am I tempted to stop doing good because I have not seen results?

Review – *How will I keep God's Word before me?*

Review Galatians 6:2 throughout the week: **“Carry one another’s burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”**

Ask God each day: Whose burden can I help lighten today?

Read – *How will I prepare for next week?*

This week's reading is **Ephesians 5 – Philippians 3**. You can access the Year of Prayer reading plan [here](#).

Prayer

Either pray something like the guide below, or invite someone in the group to close in prayer.

“Father, thank You for the grace You have shown us through Jesus. Forgive us when pride causes us to judge others, when busyness causes us to overlook their burdens, or when discouragement causes us to grow weary in doing good. Give us the gentleness to restore, the humility to receive help when we need it, and the love to carry burdens with one another. Help us faithfully sow what pleases Your Spirit and trust You with the results. Make our Life Group a community where people do not have to struggle alone. In Jesus' name, amen.”