

The Burden of Love

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

When it comes to talking about burdens, most people think of the loads that they must carry. Many become entangled in legalistic thinking in a system of works. They try so hard to do what God wants them to do.

The Bible, however, reveals that when we are yoked up with Jesus Christ, our burden-bearer, we will find that His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).

As Christians, our burden is to fulfill the law of love. This simply means that we are to love others as Jesus loves us, having an attitude of restoration and reconciliation.

By looking at Galatians 6 and other scriptures, this booklet will examine the topic of burdens in simplicity and clarity.

Chapter One

FOCUS ON RESTORATION

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

“For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

“But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

“For every man shall bear his own burden.

“Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things” (Galatians 6:1-5).

What does it mean to bear your own burden? Consider that question for a moment. To bear your own burden means to fulfill the law

of love by bearing someone else's burden.

Our burden should simply be the burden of restoring someone. Our burden is to follow God's method of restoring a loved one or a friend privately (see Matthew 18:15).

One way to bear someone else's burden is to restore a brother overtaken in a fault, keeping in mind that God is everywhere present, He has all knowledge, and He has all power. Understand that God was there when that person fell. He has all knowledge about what happened, and He has the power to correct the situation all by Himself. Instead of judging someone, God wants us to restore him.

God's Unusual Law

God has established a most unusual law in the spiritual realm. Thousands and thousands of Christians are suffering because they do not observe this law. They suffer because they do not practice the following verses:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19).

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and

with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:1-2).

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between them-

selves:

“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

“And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

“Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

“Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

“Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

“Who knowing the judgment of God, that

they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

“But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things” (Romans 1:18-2:2).

The way we judge others will be measured back to us. We are inexcusable because we do the “same things.” Maybe we are not doing the exact thing that another person is doing, but we do something else that is mentioned in Romans 1:18-32. Several sins are mentioned in that chapter, and sooner or later we are doing one of them, so that makes us just as guilty as the one we judge.

Chapter Two

STRENGTHEN THE WEAK HANDS

Bearing our own burden also speaks of having a ministry of reconciliation with specific words to reconcile others (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). In Hosea 14:4, regarding the people of Israel, God promised to heal their backsliding. He also promised to love them freely, saying “mine anger is turned away.”

Reconciliation always involves covering the other person. Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). Proverbs 10:12 says that love covers all sins. He who loves, covers transgressions (Proverbs 17:9), but the one who repeats a matter separates friends.

“Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days” (Ezekiel 3:15).

“Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm

the feeble knees” (Isaiah 35:3).

“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

“And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Hebrews 12:12-13).

“Lift up” in Hebrews 12:12 is a Greek word (*anorthoo*), which speaks of encouraging someone who has fallen so he can be strengthened and have another opportunity. It is the act of communicating life, love, and light so that person can have a new structure and be established in a faith life of restoration.

Finished Work Coverings

“And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:

“And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

“And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

“And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness” (Genesis 9:20-23).

Noah planted a vineyard, made wine, and got drunk. Some people try to find excuses for Noah's behavior by saying that Noah didn't know the wine would cause him to feel good. I think Noah knew what he was doing, and he wound up drunk and naked in his tent. Ham, Noah's son, looked upon his father's nakedness. Then, Ham came out and told his brothers, Shem and Japheth, about it.

Shem and Japheth would not look at Noah in that condition. Instead, they put a blanket on their shoulders and backed into the tent to cover their father. Their eyes never saw Noah's nakedness. Those two sons applied the covering of the Finished Work over the one who represented spiritual authority in their lives.

Chapter Three

SENT ONES: PEACE TAKERS AND PEACEMAKERS

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (John 20:21).

“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me” (Luke 10:16).

Many people refuse to recognize that God ordains certain people for specific tasks on earth. Every single Christian is a “sent one.” When we fail to treat one another as being sent from God, we become common and familiar with each other.

This very thing happened when Jesus visited Nazareth, according to Matthew 13. Jesus spoke in the synagogue, and the people were amazed at His wisdom and His mighty works. But they responded by saying, “Is this not the

carpenter's son? We know his mother and his brothers and his sisters." The scribes and Pharisees were offended because they considered Jesus to be of lesser social standing, yet He was operating with such authority over them.

He left, saying, "A prophet is without honor in his own country." Jesus could do no miracles in Nazareth because of their unbelief; they did not realize that Jesus Christ was a sent One.

Go Forth with a Purpose

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16).

Every blood-bought believer is chosen by God's grace, because God knew before the foundation of the world that he would accept Christ. Every believer is sent into this world to have Christ revealed in him and through him (see Galatians 1:15; 2 Corinthians 4:9-10).

Two couples with serious problems of adultery and perversion were referred to me. They were really lost. One at a time, I counseled them and presented the plan of salvation.

We wept together. We got on our knees in

prayer and they got right. Today, both couples are doing great—all because they discovered that they could be restored through a ministry of reconciliation and through love that covers sins. The words of reconciliation gave them a brand-new beginning and power to never go back into their filthy lifestyles.

The Path to Blessing

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

“And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall

be called the children of God.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matthew 5:1-12).

These statements by Jesus are not just about what will happen during the Millennial Reign of a thousand years. These remarks were directed to the Pharisees and scribes of that day and toward those who carry their spirit today.

The “poor in spirit” are blessed when they recognize that they are nothing in themselves. “Those who mourn” are comforted because they respond to conviction that leads to salvation and conversion. “The meek” are blessed and shall inherit the earth because they are conscious of God’s work, God’s presence, and God’s love.

Jesus continued to speak of the filling that comes to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. He spoke of the mercy obtained by the merciful. He said that the pure in heart

will see God. The peacemakers, especially, shall be called children of God.

Those who have secret problems of incompatibility in their marriages should learn to be peacemakers. In order to be a peacemaker, you have to be a peace taker, according to Colossians 1:20: “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

Persecutions, revilings, evil speaking against you—all of these things will bring great rewards in heaven, just as they brought great rewards for the prophets long ago (Matthew 5:12). Persecution leads to reigning (2 Timothy 2:12), and there are great rewards for those who bear God’s burden of love in this world.

CONCLUSION

Every one of us has been given a burden to love and to help others out of their failure. This should be our only burden. To prove our own works and to rejoice in ourselves means that we relax as we practice the law of love.

Bearing the burden of one overtaken in a fault is fulfilling the law of love. I don't think this is taught enough. So many people are trapped and weighed down by their failures and follies.

My burden is to help those who have been overtaken in a fault—not because I am a pastor, but because I am commissioned by God with a ministry of reconciliation. Furthermore, I have been sent out with a ministry of reconciliation.

We have the words of restoration. We have received God's peace for ourselves, and we can help others to make peace with Him as we show them the way to Calvary.