

Care For One Another

Opener: What's your favorite way to help someone who is carrying a heavy load?

Scripture: Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

For each one should carry their own load. Galatians 6:5

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. Galatians 5:13-15

But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. I Corinthians 12:24-26

Discussion Questions

1. God never intended for us to walk alone with no help or love from other Christians. He puts us together so we can care for one another when we face hard times or discouragement. Galatians 6:2 states that by bearing one another's burdens, we fulfill the law of Christ. What is the law of Christ, and how is it related to caring for one another?
2. Compare Galatians 6:2¹ which tells us to bear each other's burdens, with Galatians 6:5² which tells us to carry our own load. Do they contradict one another, or are they both true? What burdens should we help with and what loads should each person carry on their own?
3. Have you ever had to decide whether to help someone who didn't like you or had hurt you? What thoughts went through your mind? Why did you decide to help or not help that person?
4. What are some potential barriers to people seeking or accepting help and how can they be overcome?
5. In what ways can bearing one another's burdens strengthen relationships? What help would you want when you're the one with burdens? Should we always give to someone else what we would want given to us if we were in their situation? Why or why not?
6. In Galatians 5 Paul contrasts serving and loving one another with biting and devouring each other. Is it possible to do both at the same time? If so, how? If not, what's involved in choosing one over the other?
7. I Cor. 12 shows us how interconnected the church should be. There should be no division because all its parts should have equal concern for one another. How does this relate to bearing other's burdens?

Wrap Up: People with burdens have an irritating way of poking the spiritual fruit on our table, only to reveal just how many of those apples and pears are plastic. It's possible, frighteningly possible, to technically obey the command to bear other's burdens with a mind utterly at odds with Christ. It's so easy to give money or volunteer with a smile that hides resentment or a messiah complex. But Jesus showed us how to really care for one another when He sat with the confused and listened to their struggles, encouraged the hopeless, and fed the hungry. That's what God has in mind for His church.

¹ In Gal. 6:2 "burden" means "a weight of personal & eternal significance" such as a character flaw, struggle, or moral requirement.

² In Gal. 6:5 "load" refers to "an individual burden that's not transferable."