

Bearing Burdens: A Key to Discipleship

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[0 : 00] Please open your Bibles to Galatians chapter 6.

! I just want to say I'm thankful and humbled by the opportunity to share with you this morning. And my prayer is that God would speak to us through his inspired word. We're currently going through the book of Galatians on Wednesday nights in youth.

And we're closing chapter 5 this week and getting into chapter 6. And so the Lord had this text already on my mind and on my heart. And in the time of prayer, thinking through, you know, what text would be right to preach on.

I noticed last week that God put similar things on Tyler's heart as he preached from Romans 15. It is there in Romans 15 that Paul is calling the church to encourage one another, to endure with one another, to bear with one another, all for the glory of God.

And we want to be a church that glorifies God with our lives. Amen? With how we strengthen and encourage those around us.

[1 : 26] With how we endure and how we forbear with one another. We want to glorify the Lord. Our text this morning will give us a key to living as the church.

A key to glorifying God with our lives. And a key to discipleship. Restoring one another and bearing the burdens of one another.

This is what we want as a church. We want to cultivate a culture of discipleship. We want to cultivate a culture of discipleship within our church.

We want to be a people committed to one another and ultimately the Lord. And this, as we know, isn't always easy, right? It's not always rosy. Ministry is messy.

And when we get involved in one another's lives as we're called to be, it gets messy and it can get difficult. And so I want to open up this morning with a prayer from the Valley of Vision. A prayer asking the Lord to soften our hearts to correction and reproof.

[2 : 30] Let's pray. Merciful God, when we hear of disagreeable things amongst Christians, it brings an additional weight of burden, a weight and burden on our spirit.

I come to you in my distress. Teach me how to take reproofs from friends. God, even when I think I do not deserve them.

Use them to make me tenderly afraid of sin and more concerned to keep heart. Cause them to help me to reflect on my want of spirituality, to abhor myself, to look upon myself as unworthy, and make them beneficial to my soul.

May all thy people know how little, mean, and vile I am, that they may see I am nothing, less than nothing, to be counted as nothing, so that they may pray for me rightly and have not the least bit of dependence on me.

For it is sweet to be nothing and have nothing. Blessed be thy name for anything that life brings. How do poor souls live who do not have you, Lord?

[3 : 50] Or when helpless, have no God to go to, who feel not the constraining force of your love and the sweetness of communion? God, you captivate the soul and make all desires and affections center on you.

God, give me such fervor in my sanctification and devotion that I may be able to take all reproofs of others as though from your hands and glorify you for them from a sense of your love and out of a need to have my pride destroyed.

Amen. Amen. That is our prayer. It's an intense prayer, but necessary. It's an intense prayer, but necessary.

It's a prayer that goes contrary to our pride. Pride and thinking we are something when we are nothing. This pride and thinking we are something when we are nothing is what will destroy a

culture of discipleship.

And we'll see in our text, which I now want to read together. So let's stand and read Galatians chapter 6, verses 1 through 5.

[5 : 06] Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so you also won't be tempted.

Carry one another's burdens. In this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Let each person examine his own work and then he can take pride in himself alone and not compare himself with someone else. For each person will have to carry his own load. This is the word of the Lord. I want to begin with a question this morning.

What does a spirit-led church look like? What does a spirit-led church look like?

And just thinking really practically, what does a spirit-led church look like 30 minutes before the service, 30 minutes after the service? What does it look like in our community groups?

[6 : 19] Praying for one another? As we're reflecting on the sermon? What does it look like in Sunday school? What does a spirit-led church look like throughout the week?

Our text paints a picture of what that looks like. And as we have mentioned, it speaks directly to a key aspect of discipleship.

And so I think it's right to pause here and clarify this term that we throw around quite often within the church, discipleship. Discipleship can be a reference to our own personal following of Jesus, meaning us looking to him, growing in him, and being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

This is what personal discipleship looks like. It also refers to the helping of others do those things. Helping others look to Christ.

Helping others grow in him. Helping others as they are sanctified by the Holy Spirit through God's inspired word. And this is a spirit-led church made up of people who pursue personal holiness and encourage those around them to pursue personal holiness.

[7 : 45] We certainly see this in our text this morning. As we think of discipleship, we must guard from the idea that discipleship is simply found in programs.

We have programs. We have men's groups, women's groups, Sunday school, youth group, Awana. And those are good and those are right. And discipleship is happening there.

But discipleship isn't a program. It must be a culture. It must be a culture. Discipleship should not be an event that is planned, but a culture that is fostered.

Discipleship should not be an event that is planned, but a culture that is fostered. And if we're lacking in an area of discipleship, rather than try to solve those with just more events, it might be good to reflect on the culture of discipleship and think, how can we foster this culture of discipleship?

Discipleship can be seen in three ways here at Highland Park. The language used to describe these three ways is not original to me. So just a disclaimer. I don't remember where I learned them.

[8 : 59] But the first one is the one-on-one discipleship. This is the before and after service. This is the meeting for coffee or lunch and spending time in each other's homes.

We see this one-on-one discipleship in biblical counseling as we just do life together with one another. This one-on-one discipleship.

We also see the one-on-few discipleship. This is Sunday school, community groups, where there's a small group of people gathering together for discipleship. And then we have the one-on-many discipleship, which is the Sunday morning during this time or during a conference.

See, all of our interactions with one another should be viewed in this way. In our conversation right after the service, discipleship is happening.

The one-on-one conversations encouraging one another, praying for one another, caring for one another. It's discipleship. It's happening. I pray we wouldn't close our Bibles at the end of the time of preaching and think discipleship has ended.

[10 : 21] Discipleship has ended. Let's go to one of the 40 Mexican restaurants in Bartlesville and let's hurry and get out of here before the traffic. Our text this morning calls us to bear burdens.

And how can we do that if we are always in a hurry to get away from one another? Our text doesn't make exceptions for the introverted.

And I just need to confess to you right now, I can be very introverted at times. And there are weeks that I come in here and I feel super busy with life and exhausted and just want to hide away, right?

Anybody else ever feel that way? And I have to repent of that. If we are going to foster a culture of discipleship, we must not think this way.

When discipleship is the culture, we are not looking to leave and see people as in our way. But we actually see leaving as getting in the way of our time with our people.

[11 : 33] When discipleship is the culture, we're not looking to leave and see people in our way, but we actually see leaving as getting in the way of our time with our people. When I was full-time staff at a church, at my church in Missouri, I would occasionally be designated as the one to turn off the lights.

And I was told not to turn off the lights until every single person had left. And that's when I became keenly aware of a culture of discipleship.

We want to cultivate a culture of loving discipleship that is evident in our commitment to one another in the one-on-one discipleship opportunities, the one-on-few and the one-on-many.

Here in Galatians, Paul is writing to the churches in the region of Galatia. The first part of his letter, like many other letters, focuses on right thinking, on right doctrine, and right teaching.

And then he moves to walking according to that truth and reality, that right teaching and doctrine.

Paul defends his apostleship and rebukes the Galatian church for listening to a group of Judaizers who taught that it was works of the law that brought forth righteousness.

[12 : 59] And Paul clearly, in chapter 2, verse 21, says that if righteousness comes from the law, then Christ died for nothing. He then goes on to describe the purpose of the law and the freedom found in Christ.

As Paul describes this freedom in Christ, he talks about the call to forsake sinful desires of the flesh. This is in chapter 5. And to walk according to the Spirit.

To walk according to the Spirit. And this is why we began with the question, what does it look like for us to be a church that is led by the Spirit, that walks in the Spirit? This is where we find ourselves in the text.

That we are free in Christ. We're now forsaking sin and walking in the Spirit. And this is what that looks like. The first call in our text is to restore others.

Let's look again at the first two verses. It says, Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you also won't be tempted.

[14 : 13] The Galatian church was being attacked and members of the church were being devoured and entangled by wrong teaching and wrongdoing. Paul is pleading with his brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, charging them that if one of them is becoming entangled in wrong thinking or trespasses and sin, to restore one another.

To restore one another. This term for overtaken or caught refers to when a transgression is detected. At the first detection of sin, begin the ministry of restoration.

I've flown many times in my life and I have no problem getting through TSA. I don't bring snacks.

I read the labels on the toiletries, you know, everything. I just don't want to be stopped going through TSA. That just stresses me out, just the thought of that, okay?

I just want to get through. But my wife has a 50-50 shot of making it through. She'll have a water bottle that she forgot that's in her bag, or contact solution, or, you know, a number of other things.

[15 : 29] And now her excuse is our daughter's, which I get, but still, it's embarrassing. I go through a different line than her. Just kidding. You know, she thinks, so what?

The worst they can do is throw it away. But I and we are grateful for the security measures taken to keep us safe. The moment, even just a small contact solution bottle that's a little oversized is detected, they're on it.

Paul is telling the church in Galatia that as soon as any wrongdoing or thinking is detected, act. The sin in our lives is not something we are called to tolerate.

Tolerating sin is not walking in the spirit, but rather is walking in the flesh. The term for transgression or wrongdoing refers to a deviation from the truth.

This is a deviation from the truth in words or in deed. And this includes us all. This includes us all. We are not perfect.

[16 : 34] We are not perfect people. If Highland was perfect, it certainly stopped last April when I became a member. We are not perfect.

And when we do life together, we will detect faults both in others and ourselves. And this is actually what drives us to the cross together.

Knowing our mutual need for Christ. Knowing our mutual need for Jesus. The assumption made here is that we are close enough to one another that we can detect deviation.

That we know when something seems off. Like, are you doing okay? Something seems just a little bit off. When I ask my wife if I have anything in my teeth before I go in front of people and she moves away from me to examine, I lose all faith in her.

Right? Why? Because proximity is key to detecting issues and faults. Proximity is key to detecting issues and faults.

[17:40] We want to love one another and be involved in one another's lives so that we can detect when someone is having a bad day. Maybe just received some difficult news.

Or had a difficult day at work. Some of us are maybe not comfortable with this. You know, like, let's keep some distance. But friend, let me tell you that that far too often leads to isolation and loneliness.

We are called to be walking with one another closely. What is the command to follow when someone is entangled in wrongdoing?

What is the correct response? Is it to cast stones like in John 8 with the woman caught in adultery? Start a riot like in Acts 21 when Paul brings Gentiles to the temple?

No, that's a legalistic response. Paul says there in verse 1, you who are spiritual should restore him.

[18:50] You who are spiritual. This isn't meaning that you have special rocks or crystals in your house or start the morning with bare feet on the grass grounding yourself, right?

That's not what we're talking about spiritual, right? Sometimes we can impart our own connotations on a word into the text. We're not doing that. You know, if you were to ask somebody if they're a Christian and they were to say, well, I'm spiritual, you're going to have some follow-up questions. What do you mean by that? But this isn't what Paul is saying. This is someone led by the Holy Spirit. This is talking about the person who has tuned their heart to he who is sovereign and has surrendered themselves to be used as his instrument.

This is the one who is governed by the Spirit. Let that be true of us. That we would not be governed by the direction of the winds of this world which are ever-changing and let us not be governed by our own hearts which Jeremiah says is deceitful above all things.

The one who is spiritual is not the one following their heart but the one that is led by the Spirit. And how do we know this is us? By our fruit.

[20:07] Looking back there at Galatians 5. A heart led by the Spirit overflows love. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

We are redeemed by Christ through faith and the Spirit of God comes to dwell within everyone who believes in him. Notice also it doesn't say if anyone is caught in transgression, you who are elders restore.

The responsibility to restore is not solely placed on the pastors but is the Christian duty of every indwelt believer.

It is the Christian duty of every indwelt believer. And this is part of the culture we are committed to have here, right? Not neglecting our responsibilities to one another but recognizing the call we have here in Scripture to practice the ministry of restoration.

To practice the ministry of restoration. When I was 12 years old I decided to see how high I could jump out of a swing at Don Tyler Park in Dewey. And yes, that's what you do for fun in Dewey.

[21:25] You jump out of swings. I believe to this day I hold the record for the highest and furthest jump out of those swings. But it came at a cost. I fractured my growth plate in my wrist on the sidewalk.

Which not to brag but that shows you just how far I actually jumped. But then I had to walk home with my bike call my mom who took me to the hospital and they had to reset my wrist back in place. And I won't get too graphic but I'll just say I remember it quite well to this day. Restore. This term was used referring to setting bones back into place.

It was also used to refer to the mending of broken fishnets. And this is a command to set right and to mend one another.

For the one walking off path putting your arm around them and bringing them back to the right path. For the one being led astray by worldly ideas it's bringing correction.

[22 : 29] For the one who is battling sin and feeling discouraged when they fall it's a gentle reminder to fix their eyes on Christ. When I confess to you that my heart is feeling discouraged in my parenting please come alongside me and encourage me in love but also in truth.

tell me to fix my eyes on Christ. Speak the truth of God's word describing the Lord's faithfulness to his promises and sovereignty over all things.

Direct me to be faithful in my study and reading of God's word. Restore me. I need it. We need it. It makes us stronger as a church when we do this when we practice this ministry of restoration. It unites us. Don't promise me it will get better.

It may not if the Lord wills it that way. Pray that it will get better but direct my eyes to be set on Christ and his word. We don't just think of the big things. We think of the small areas of our lives.

[23 : 46] Another illustration. My wife and I feel like we live in a constant state of house renovations. Anybody else feel that way? I do. And we were visiting with a friend talking about how expensive it is and the conversations my wife and I have about what our kitchen looks like and how we want it to look like but the budget we have to make it look the way we want it.

And we just feel like we have to settle. And our friend instead of saying me too it will all work out. She said I was the same way but I had to repent and delete Pinterest.

I was bad about comparing my situation with others. It was leading me to throw to-do lists and high expectations at my husband as he's working on the kitchen. I'd say what if we did this to the bathroom?

And I found that comparison was robbing me of contentment and joy in what God has given me. And that sounds like where you are.

She said to Courtney and I just casually before Fourth of July fireworks. It's like but wow I needed that restoration. The Holy Spirit used that word fitly spoken to lead us to that same repentance that she had shared.

[25 : 02] Instead of letting us swim in our discontentment she confronted us. There was discipleship. The restoration found in our text takes training precision and it's painful at times.

And this is why it's so important to know God's word and know how to rightly apply it to our situations. Proverbs 25 11 says a word fitly spoken is like an apple of gold.

In a setting of silver. And just as a piece of gold stands out as valuable and precious so a word spoken at precisely the right time.

But as I said it can be painful. And this is why God's word in the rest of verse one and two tells us how to restore. How to confront biblically.

And this is something we want to embrace as a church. as we continue to cultivate a culture of discipleship. So how to confront. How to restore.

[26 : 08] Let's look at three elements of correcting one another biblically. The first is with a spirit of gentleness. A spirit of gentleness.

For some this call to confront comes very naturally. I'm just a blunt person. I say it like it is and if you don't like it that's your problem.

Right? Anybody else said that? No one in this room of course. But if this is you or you have this tendency we do not want to miss this key aspect of restoration. Restoration is to be done with gentleness and out of love.

Restoration is to be done from a heart in tune with God's heart and a heart that walks in meekness. Restoration is to be done from a heart in tune with God's heart and a heart that walks in meekness. Galatians 5 22 through 25 tells us the fruit of the spirit. It says but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.

[27 : 15] Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the spirit, let's also keep in step with the spirit. Think of a time that you've moved a couch in or out of a house with someone.

The spirit of gentleness and patience out the window or out the door maybe, easier than that couch, but it's out the door. Fixing something with your spouse, right?

It's not helpful for me to bark orders at my wife like I would at a job site or with my brother, right? I need gentleness. This term can also be translated as meekness.

A definition of meekness that I like to use from J. Adams is strength found in our character, not our volume. Strength found in our character, not our volume.

This is the heart posture of the one bringing correction. strength. This is the heart posture of the one being used by God to bring restoration.

[28 : 19] Strength not in our volume, but in our character. Once again, we glean wisdom from Proverbs. In Proverbs 15.1, it says, a gentle word turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

We do not want to be a stumbling block for someone to trip over or an obstacle that they must overcome in the process of restoration due to our harsh tone or our harsh attitude.

Sometimes the harshness may not be found in the words that we say but how we say it. We want to be a people that are able to bring restoration in such a way that glorifies God and that means with a spirit of gentleness, humility, and meekness.

the second key in confronting a brother or sister in Christ is keeping watch over yourself. Keeping watch over yourself lest you also be tempted.

And this is fleshed out in verses 3 through 5 in the call to examine yourself, but we must in this moment recognize that we are not immune to sin. we must not let our guards down where we begin to justify sin or begin attempts at changing God's revealed standards of holiness.

[29 : 44] This is what was going on in the church of Galatia. We must be careful not to turn a blind eye to sin, not just in those around us but also within ourselves. With this caution we may be tempted to look down our nose at those around us, but the text is clear.

God is clear. Keep watch lest you too be tempted. Satan is a solicitor of sin. He prowls around like a lion ready and willing to devour.

Do not be solicited. Do not even crack the door to the solicitation of sin. Satan wants nothing more than you to be caught in sin.

His goal is actually the opposite of these verses. He may say something like this, if anyone is spiritual, you who are caught in transgression should drag them down with you with a spirit of ferociousness and brutality and keep watch on yourself lest you be restored.

Satan does not want to see restoration. let there be a no soliciting sign towards sin on every one of our hearts here at Highland Park. The third step in the process of confrontation is be ready to help carry.

[31 : 13] Be ready to help carry. Look with me there at verse two. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

This is one of many one another's we are called to in scripture. I want to list a few here and as I do I encourage you to write down a few and pray through how God wants you to apply it.

These are a few taken from Stuart Scott's book 31 Ways to Be One Another Christian. Be devoted to one another with brotherly love in Romans 12.

Outdo one another in showing honor Romans 12. Live in harmony with one another again in Romans 12. Build up one another in Romans 14.

Welcome one another in Romans 15. Instruct one another in Romans 15. Do not provoke or envy one another in Galatians 5. Speak truthfully to one another in Ephesians 4. Be kind and forgive one another in Ephesians 4.

[32 : 13] Submitting to one another in Ephesians 5. Comfort one another in 1 Thessalonians. Be at peace with one another in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5. Pray for one another in 1 Timothy 2.

Stir up one another in Hebrews 10. Do not grumble against one another in James 5. Confess to one another in James 5. Be hospitable to one another in 1 Peter 4.

You're like how many is he going to do? More. Serve one another in 1 Peter 4. Have fellowship with one another in 1 John 1. And wait for one another in 1 Corinthians 11.

By God's grace we will be committed to these one another's. The watching world will see us and say that is a people committed to one another in a supernatural way.

Through persecutions, trials, through bad economies, right? Whatever the world may throw at us. they can't be shaken because of their commitment to the Lord and one another.

[33 : 18] This second verse stuck out to me in preparation for this morning. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Bear one another's burdens. Derek Redmond was an Olympic sprinter from Britain in the 80s and into the 90s.

And this is before my time. I just got to say that because some of the youth kids have recently been calling me old. Okay? And it's hurting my feelings. Okay? But he at one point held the British record for the 400 meters.

In 1992, Redmond tore his hamstring in the Olympic semifinals. But he continued the race, limping towards the finish line. Then emerging from the crowd, a man ran out, threw Redmond's arms over his shoulder and helped him across the finish line to a standing ovation.

And this man was his father. father, his father motivated by a love for his son, was ready to help carry. Another example, a young lady in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had herself, her family, and other Christians in her church dragged into the woods by Islamic extremists, and she witnessed members of her family and church killed.

The trauma caused her not to be able to speak for months after the event. But a woman, motivated by a love for her sister in Christ, was ready to help carry and meet regularly with her to give her godly counsel and friendship.

[34 : 49] This is a picture of bearing one another's burdens. It is the action to our prayers. I have felt this here at Highland.

I want to encourage us to continue pressing in here. This praying for one another coupled with a willingness to get your hands dirty and shoulder the weight. I have seen this. I have experienced this with you.

And I am grateful for it. The idea of bearing burdens is to help carry and to help sustain and to uphold. And I am sure many of you have been there like me where at times I just need someone to encourage me to continue.

Times when I have needed the body of Christ to come alongside me and sustain me. Brother or sister if you are here this morning feeling beaten down by sin, shame or some other burden that is a result of this sin wrought world find your solace in Christ and your support in one another.

Find your solace in Christ and your support in one another. This call is to bear with, to carry with.

when I tell my two-year-old I will help bear the burden of picking up her blocks, there are times that if I'm not careful, it turns out I'm not helping bear that burden.

[36 : 12] I am fully bearing that burden on my own as she makes actually another mess. Bearing with means that we shoulder the burden with our brother or sister, with our ultimate goal being restoration.

And it doesn't happen if we don't walk with them through the burden. When we do this, it says we fulfill the law of Christ. And so what is this law of Christ?

Well, let's turn to Matthew 22, 34 through 40. In our context here in Galatians, Paul has been harping on the Galatian church to stop relying on the law to save you, quit opening the door to even that idea, saying don't look to the law for righteousness, don't look to your own abilities, actions or rituals to obtain forgiveness and grace, but actually out of forgiveness and grace that's been shown to you on the cross through Christ Jesus, out of that forgiveness and grace, not to earn forgiveness and grace, but out of that forgiveness and grace, let me tell you of a better way, the law of Christ. Looking there at Matthew 22, verses 34 through 40. When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they came together. And one of them, an expert in the law, asked a question to test him, test Jesus.

Teacher, which command in the law is the greatest? And Jesus said to them, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

[37 : 49] This is the greatest and most important command, and the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. All the prophets depend on these two commands.

The law of Christ is love. Out of our love for one another, we bear the burdens of one another. And by bearing the burdens of one another, we display our love for one another, which is the law of Christ, who is the ultimate display of love.

he who is God took on flesh to die a sinner's death on the cross, taking our place, making atonement for sin and paving the way of redemption for the one whose sins put him there.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. This is the law of Christ. This law of sacrificial, enduring, committed love to one another, this shapes those led by the Spirit.

This love. And this love cultivates a culture of discipleship within our church as we are led by it. So we are instructed to restore one another and given clear instructions on how to do this.

[39 : 07] First, with gentleness. Second, with caution not to fall. And third, ready to help carry. And these go hand in hand and we must remember all three. The second part of our text is we want to cultivate a culture of discipleship is this command to examine self.

Command to examine self. Look there with me at verse three. It says, for if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

See, pride prohibits our unity and dismantles a culture of discipleship. And this is why we prayed the prayer that we did at the beginning of our service.

A prayer of humility. Because when we elevate ourselves in our hearts, we think of others as beneath us. This leads to no restoration, leads to no discipleship, leads to no gentleness, leads to a lack of caution because we believe that we're above falling to sin and leads to rare burden bearing. And any burden bearing that does occur is just to bolster our own ego. Not to bolster or build up our fellow member of the body, but with pride in our hearts, we walk away after helping someone, not with an attitude of praise the king, may he be glorified.

[40 : 33] Pride says, praise me. Look how good I was to a weaker brother. That is arrogance and pride that leads to destruction. And that is pride that prohibits our unity and dismantles a culture of discipleship.

And in our pride, our text says, we only deceive ourselves. We never deceive God. And this is why the prayer of David in Psalm 139 verses 23 through 24 should be a common prayer for us.

There he says, search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see if there's any grievous way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. We should be praying a prayer like this.

Lord, examine my heart. Show me, reveal to me my arrogance and my pride. Humble my heart, Lord, so that I can be reminded of your greatness. Your grace and mercy, Lord, have been shown to me so that I do not deceive myself and elevate myself above others.

This should be our prayer. Continuing in verse 4 from the ESV now, it says this, let each one test his own work, meaning let each one test how he or she is living, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.

[42 : 00] Putting this verse in the context right after verse 3, it is telling us that we should examine our own lives based on our own pursuit of holiness, not in comparison to our neighbor.

The pride of exalting self in verse 3 is detailed in verse 4, which says that if we look at others' faults and failures to rejoice in how we are doing, this is wrong. A true reason to rejoice is in obedience to Christ.

Simply put, we do not look to our neighbor's faults to feel better about ourselves, but we should measure ourselves by our own walk with the Lord and rejoice in that.

Paul is describing a personal responsibility. It is true that Satan prowls around like a roaring lion, but it's also true that I don't always need Satan's help sinning.

The fault of my sin can often be thrown at Satan, but it's often the man in the mirror. There's a responsibility when we stand before God to answer for what we have done, and no one else answers for us.

[43 : 17] We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. That's 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 10.

This is written to Christians, telling Christians that they will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, urging here the Corinthian church to examine their walk.

One commentator said, keeping our eyes on the judgment is a great antidote to conceit and a great help to bearing burdens rather than judging one another.

We see this call from 2 Corinthians here again in our text. Look at verse 5. For each person will have to bear or carry his own load.

And this took me some wrestling with at first. How does verse 5, saying each person has to bear their own burden or load, make sense after reading verse 2, saying carry one another's burdens?

[44 : 19] And one commentator I read said that there are 11 different Greek words translated as burden or load in the New Testament with a variety of connotations.

And we know this to be true, and I looked at the original language, and in fact, these are two separate words here used in verse 2 and verse 5. The first is the burden shared. And think if I'm carrying a table, that is a burden that you can bear with me, right?

You can grab one end, I grab the other, and it just got lighter for the both of us. These are heavy burdens that we can share together in verse 2. Emotional weights, practical needs that we can share, sharing in grief, working together in tears for one another to overcome sin, pointing one

another to Christ.

That's us bearing it together. The second is the burden of answering for your actions. Better said, imagine walking across a narrow bridge, right?

So narrow that only you can be on this bridge. People can encourage you, right? They can cheer you on, but you're the one facing that narrow bridge.

[45 : 38] You're answering for this decision to walk out on a narrow bridge. There are consequences of sin that can be felt by others, and others can uphold you, but ultimately you are the one that must answer for them.

And these are the two that we see in our text. Burden shared and the burden of responsibility for your own actions. I want to move to close with a third burden.

There is a third burden that I would like to close with, a burden that you cannot bear, bear, and no one else can bear for you, because Jesus did.

A burden you cannot bear, and no one else can bear for you, because Jesus did. If you are in this room and have heard this text preached to the believers in this room, those who are spiritual, meaning those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and you've heard this, but sitting there knowing that you are not a Christian, that you are not, in fact, indwelt by and led by the Holy Spirit, there is a third burden that rests on your shoulders and on your life and on your eternity.

And let me tell you, you cannot bear it, and no one else in this room can bear it for you. It is the burden of sin apart from Christ.

[47 : 15] But let me tell you, friend, it was born on the cross of Calvary. Jesus, who is God, put on flesh, 100% God, that he would satisfy the wrath of God for your sin, and 100% man that he would suffer in your place.

He lived a perfect life that we could not live and do not live. Yet he who knew no sin bore our sin upon the cross.

The judgment directed at our sin, he bore it. It's a burden you can't bear on your own, but it has been borne on the cross by our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I pray today you would turn to him in faith, trusting in him for salvation, for salvation comes from him alone, through faith alone. Let's pray.

God, I thank you for a church that is committed to one another in love, word, and deed. That prays for one another, that is committed to disciple one another.

[48 : 39] God, I pray that you would give us the strength to continue to do such things for your glory. God, we ask that you would guard us and guide us.

We confess our need for you and as we run side by side after the cross, not wanting anyone to be left behind.

And God, we recognize that this takes wisdom, patience, gentleness, the fruits of the Spirit. We confess our need for you and your wisdom. And we confess as we're about to, Christ, you are our wisdom.

We pray our church would be a beacon of light to our community and would display a supernatural unity that only stems from the gospel.

God, help us to continue to cultivate a culture of discipleship. Motivated by your love.

[49 : 52] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Thank you.