

Verse 6:2: 'Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.'

Last time we ended with the previous verse: 'Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.'

Remember, this is not talking about someone who runs headlong into sin, wanting to stay there, like the one in 1Cor.5 where Paul told them to turn him over to Satan for the destruction of the body that his soul may be saved as though by fire. Here, he's talking about any of us who might be blindsided by a temptation we've battled in the past and it just sort of snuck up on us. The temptation might have come out of our memories or thoughts but also, remember, who is the tempter? It's Satan and all of his evil spirits. They constantly work to try to draw us into sin. Remember what James said: 'Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.' The temptation might come from the suggestion of an evil spirit but we are free and at liberty to reject it but as soon as we choose to receive that thought and begin to think on it... that is when we are susceptible to falling and being overtaken by sin.

To the Hebrews it was written: 'Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, (*since Scripture gives us the witness of so many champions of the Faith*) let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.' Heb 12:1

We are told to lay aside every weight and sinful practice but sometimes, even real Christians are caught in the sin which so easily ensnares us. When that happens, our responsibility is to: 'Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.' (***this is referring to sin... not sickness***) Jas 5:16a. But we don't always confess to each other; out of shame or guilt, we remain silent as the sin metastasizes, finally, into death. But before that happens, either our sin will become evident or God will reveal it to another believer. When that happens, if we are that 'other believer,' we are commanded to gently and lovingly restore that one: 'The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.' James 5:16b

Bearing one another's burdens means, helping with whatever the burden might be. If it is sin, we are to do our best to help them get out of it. If it is physical or financial, the same is true; if God allows us to see what that burden is, then we are commanded, by God, to do whatever we can to carry it with them and to help them lay it aside.

We're always commanded to 'fulfill the law of Christ.' What is the law of Christ? 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and you shall love your neighbor, especially all other believers, as yourself.'

Verse 3: 'For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.'

This, in the context of bearing one another's burdens, means, it's easy for us to see ourselves as quite important to God if we're the one He has sent as His messenger, His angel... to help another: we might consider ourselves more spiritual or more intelligent or more financially blessed by God because we're soooo good and such fiiiiine Christians! It's always easy to deceive ourselves or to be deceived by an evil spirit.

We're commanded to always be 'looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame,' and: 'Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.' Phpp 2:4

Verse 4: 'But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.'

What is the most important 'work' we do? We've been told, 'if a brother is sinning, help him get out. Bear

one another's burdens; love each other but if he thinks he's something, but nothing, he deceives himself.' So, then, what is the work we are to examine with rejoicing? What is the most important 'work' we do?

Obviously, our first priority is to love... period! After that, what's most important is how we cooperate with God in His work within us. We don't, in any way, cooperate with God in our Salvation: that is the worst heresy in every false religion. The Lord Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of *our* faith; He began it, when He chose us from the foundation of the World; He then revealed Himself and gave us the faith to believe and He is one Who is keeping us saved and He is the One Who will bring us home in the full culmination of our Salvation at the Rapture, and, while we are still down here, 'He Who began that good work in us will continue to complete it until the Rapture.' But while He does, we have this work to do: with every trial He brings, and they never stop, with every situation, we are to cooperate in making ourselves respond in Godly patience. Patience is the first and foremost aspect of love; love is patient. Every trial is created by God to mature us in patience. 'My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.' See that? Patience is the end-all, be-all, cure-all magic potion from God. When patience is allowed to have its free reign in our lives it will bring about perfect completion, lacking nothing. **Patience!** When we recognize that we are faithfully doing the work of being patient; that is our cause for rejoicing. 'Now no chastening (no trial, no correcting) seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness (**patience**) to those who have been trained by it.' Heb 12:11 How does it yield that peaceable fruit of righteousness... as we patiently endure and patiently respond. 'Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.' Jas 1:12 **Persevering under trial means, patiently enduring.**

When we recognize patience growing in us, when we are faithful to do the work of patiently being patient, of responding in patience, that is the work in which we can rejoice; that is when we know we are being formed more and more, day by day into the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is when we are pleasing to God because we are choosing to be more like the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself.

Verse 5: 'For every man shall bear his own burden.'

Didn't he just say, 'Bear one another's burden?' They are completely different Greek words. For his command to bear each other's burdens, the Greek word is: **Baros**. It means, heaviness, burden, weight, trouble. It is probably from **Basis** which means the sole of the foot with the idea of going down. It's the idea of humbling yourself to go down and under the burdensome weight of your brother; it's a burden which can be shared. The burden might be sin, it might be financial, it might be grief but just as the Lord Jesus Christ humbled Himself to come down to bear our complete burden of sin, giving Himself up for us... so, too, must we with each other. If the burden is sin, it's the idea of going down to help, encourage, support the brother who is caught in sin with the idea of helping him rid himself of the burden.

On the other hand, that each one must bear his own burden, the Greek word is: **Phortion**. It means, 'faults of the conscience which oppress the soul.' This is the burden we carry. Before salvation, that burden is our slavery to sin through our sin nature inherited from Adam which loads us down to crush us but when we are born again, that slavery is removed as we are yoked with Jesus Christ in a yoke of freedom and liberty. Jesus used this word when He said, '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.' We carry our own burden as Jesus Christ carries it with us. Part of the burden which each one must bear but which the Lord Jesus Christ is with us to bear, is when we are to take up our individual, personal cross daily and carry it through the day. Then, the next morning, we are to take it back up but knowing that the Lord Jesus Christ is carrying our load with us.

Verse 6: 'Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.'

Here, on the heels of saying, both, that we help carry each other's burdens and that each one must carry his own burden, he makes clear that someone who is faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God should not, also, be burdened with making a living. In 1 Cor 9, Paul makes clear that he has never tried to be a

burden on any of the Churches he planted or ministered to but he repeats, again, that those who are faithful in ministry should be able to be supported in that work:

'Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the offerings of* the altar? (the priests who worked in the Temple were able to eat some of the offerings that were brought) ¹⁴ Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.' 1 Cor 9:13

If someone works hard in studying and preparing to teach others and who has been gifted by God in the ability to teach, we should recognize our duty to help support that person.

Now this is not to say that anyone and everyone should want to be teachers of the Word in order to gain an easy living because one who is faithful in that ministry is not one who is making an easy living. First, they must spend many hours in preparation and usually they're not making a good living at it, financially, and, also, demonic forces work hard to derail every one of them: 'My brethren, let not many of you become teachers knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ² For we all stumble in many things.' Jms 3:1

A teacher of the Word is going to answer directly to the Lord Jesus Christ regarding his faithfulness or his unfaithfulness in exposing the truth of God's Word to all of God's children whom he's been given to shepherd.

Verse 7: 'Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.'

This is meant for all of us: everything we do is eternally important; if we are faithful in what we do, we will receive unimaginable eternal rewards from the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ when we stand before Him. Every action we take, every decision we make affects forever now. Everything we think, say or do will either gain unimaginable rewards or they will cause us to suffer the loss of some eternal reward.

Jesus said that even so much as our giving a cup of water to one of His children will not fail to receive some eternal reward from Him... 'He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. ⁴¹ He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴² And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold *water* in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.' Matt 10:40

'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' 1 Cor 2:9

This is exactly what Paul is referring to: we will reap what we sow; every day, everything we do, think or say... we are sowing. Eventually, when we stand before Him, everything we have sown will be ready for harvest.

'For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, *you are* God's building. ¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?' 1Cor3:9

Verse 8: 'For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.'

Our flesh is still corrupted by sin and everything we do that is based on gratifying our flesh's desires grows into a crop of corruption. Our spirits and souls are righteous and holy in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ even though our souls are still being refined and polished by God as He continues His work of our sanctification: everything we do that is based on gratifying our spirits, that is, doing, thinking and saying what is pleasing to God, Whose Spirit is one with our spirits, will grow into a crop of praise, glory and honor when we stand before Him: 'Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance

incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,⁹ receiving the end of your faith the salvation of *your* souls. 1 Pet 1:3

'...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will (continue to) complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;' Phpp 1:6

He will continue His constant work of putting us through trials and tribulations; how we respond to each one will demonstrate our spiritual maturity or lack thereof and will result in eternal rewards or loss of the same. 'Consider it all joy, my brothers *and sisters*, when you encounter various trials,³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.' James 1:2

Verse 9: 'And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.'

We are not saved by doing good works; we don't stay saved by doing good works; we are not loved by God more when we do good works and we are not loved by God any less by not doing good works. Our salvation is all God's Work from beginning to the end; our only work involved in Salvation is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and even then, our faith to believe was the gift of God.

However, it is God's will that we are faithful in good works but He is the One Who planned those good works and He is the One Who guides us into them and strengthens us for them.

Apart from God's incredible love for us, we were dead in sin; we were completely incapable of even doing any good work pleasing to Him. We could only please Him when we came to Him, by the faith which was His gift.

'But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.' Heb 11:6

'But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.' Eph 2:4

Never forget: right now, here, this is not what's most important to God regarding us, His children. Right now, here on Earth, in this, the first tiny segment of our eternal lives which will never end, we are being trained up, as children, in the way we should go so that when we begin to get much, much older He will be able to effortlessly slip us into the ministries of authority, ruling and reigning with Him, first, for 1000 years over His Earthly Kingdom and then forever over His newly recreated vast and endless Universe. Just imagine!!

'His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Matt 25:21

That, when we stand before Him after the Rapture, is the moment for which we are being trained, now, through our entire Earthly lives; that is the moment for which every trial, with how we've responded to each one, and every good work, depending on our motivation has been preparing us.

Verse 10: 'Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.'

We were created for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them: love and kindness: first, to every believer and then, also to those who are outside the faith.