

D. W. ... Mar. 11, 1917 H.M.

## "BURDEN BEARING"

Gal. 6:1-8

### INTRODUCTION:

There is a wonderful man by the name of Professor Black who was called in his hometown. And he had moved from New York to Pa., in 1882. He had made quite a name for himself as a Gospel worker, and as a composer of hymns and sacred songs. He interested himself in the work of Methodism. And as a composer, he had a rare gift for picking out melodies and tunes that caught the popular ear.

One day he was walking through an alley not far from his home at the corner of Market and Front Streets in Williamsport. He saw a little girl sitting on the front porch. From her appearance, her ragged clothes, and her torn shoes - he knew her to be very poor. As she turned, he recognized her as a member of a family that he had heard had a drunken father, and a mother who was forced to take in sewing and washing, in order to provide for her little ones. He figured her to be about (13 years) old. He was impressed by her pretty light hair and soft blue eyes. Calling her by name, Mr. Black asked if she would like to come to Sunday School the following Sunday morning. A wistful expression crept into the girl's eyes while he noted a tear. Looking up with a crimson face, she said - "yes, I would like to go but" . . . And the man of God replied, alright, Bessie, I understand. The next day a new (dress, shoes, hat) and (other things) dear to her heart found their way to the girl's home. And a week later, when Black made it is his business to pass that way again - he asked Bessie if she would like to come to Sunday School. She replied gratefully - yes, indeed. She not only showed up on the (following) Sunday. But every Sunday after that, for many weeks. She finally joined one of the classes in the church and became a faithful worker. Having known nothing but misery and poverty, for many years - the new life and the discovery and the fellowship of the church became a bright spot in her life.

At every regular meeting, she was always found in her accustomed place. One night the roll was being called. Each member responded with an original expression or some Bible quotation. As each name was called, the member responded until the 99th name was called. When the secretary called the name "Bessie", there was no response. Again, her name was called - and again, there was no answer. Thinking that she had not heard her name, Mr. Black rose and repeated it for the third time. Again, everything was as still as death. And not a person stirred or spoke. In a moment, the musician had a strange presentment. What if this girl should never answer again? he thought. What if she should die? What if when the final summons came, she would plead - and fail to answer. These thoughts flashed through his mind in an instant.

Looking through the hymnal to find some hymn or song to fit the occasion, he was unable to discover anything suitable. Walking home after the meeting, he thought of the incident, he said it was a trifle in one way and in another way it was sorrow. As he entered the front door of his home - he was struck anew. What if she should never answer? Almost unconsciously he blurted out these words -- when the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, and time shall be no more, and the morning breaks eternal bright and fair, when the saved of earth shall gather on the other shore. And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

No sooner had he said the words, than his trained ear told him that there was something wonderful here. He went immediately to the piano and struck up the music almost spontaneously. And in a remarkable time, he had finished the hymn, in which not a single word or note has been changed since that memorable night.

Later to his dismay he learned from his friends that Bessie was indeed sick that night. And it was an illness that was so serious, that in a few days, it claimed her

life. There is no finer hymn that specifies burden bearing than this hymn. Let us  
labor for the Master, from dawn til setting sun, let us talk of all of his wondrous  
love and care. And when all of life is over, and our work on earth is done, and the  
roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

Burden bearing - Mr. Black bearing the burden of that little girl. And somehow  
this brought about this wonderful hymn which is a challenge even to us on this Sunday  
Morning. To think about Gal. 6:1-8.

Here is the fact of restoring - V. 1. Relieving - V. 2. Remembering - V. 3-6.  
Reaping - V. 7-8.

### I. RESTORING - V. 1

"Dear brothers, if a Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are Godly should  
gently and humbly help him back on to the right path. Remembering the next time, it  
might be you - one of you who is in the wrong." This has to do with someone who has  
been guilty of wrong doing. Wrong doing is generally identified with some kind of  
sin. In this case, Paul may have had some specific case in mind - we do not know.  
But in any situation, he said, if there is a man caught in wrong doing - which is  
translated overtaken, (any wrong doing) This emphasis the suttle nature of sin. It  
is a snare that takes one.

The real point of the verse is not (how) the wrong doer is discovered, but how  
a fellow Christian (can help) to set him right.

You who are spiritual - he is calling on all believers who are led by the Spirit - and anytime a Christian sets out to help someone guilty of wrong doing, he needs to be led by the Spirit. The spirit of gentleness and seek to set right the erroring brother.

The idea here to restore is a Greek word which means (setting a broken bone) Or mending a torn net.

The stress of the word is this - getting the wrong doer back where he should be!

Paul adds a word of warning. "Keep an eye on yourself, for you may be tempted too. This spirit of restoration must be undertaken, and it must be done gently and humbly, as by a fellow sinner. Whenever a Christian seeks to help a brother who has done wrong. He must remember that he too is a sinner. He has done wrong, and he is capable of doing wrong again. We cannot afford to be puffed up, harsh, judgemental, but we must be humble and careful.

This is needed in the modern church. It is evident that as Mark Twain once put it - church people are sometimes good in the worst sense of the word. They may have the Spirit of the Pharisees. They are morally upright - but they are too stern and unforgiving.

They may have too much impatience with the person who is in sin. A little girl prayed once, Lord, help bad people to be good. And help good people to be nice.

There is the danger in the other direction to be permissive. To easily tolerate sin. To allow a person whatever he wants. This too, can be deadly. And instead of retoring him - may be a problem to him. But here is a eternal truth. If a man allows the lower side of his nature to dominate him, the best of men may slip. Not meaning to go into deliberate sin. But here is a man on an icy road. He is on a dangerous path. And it's a danger here of trying to live the Christian life. We have to judge others in sin harshly. Many good people to whom you could not go and sob out a story of failure and defeat, and mistake - because they would be unsympathetic towards you.

But the real Christian duty is to get this person on his feet again. And the correct word that we ought to be using here is the word restoring. That is, repairing. Like a surgeon who sets a broken limb.

The atmosphere here is stressed that it is important. That it bring about a cure.

Now Peter who really loved the Lord - but when he was challenged as being one of his disciples, he was so filled with fear that he denied the one that he declared he would never forsake. It is important for us to distinguish between those who will willfully, deliberately sin - when one has put away a good conscience and embarked on a course of evil.

And the person who is caught off guard. How many fall under such circumstances. The power of appetite - the flesh of the passion. A quick temper, and unjudged pride or vanity. One goes on, unconscious of danger, and finds himself in circumstances in

which he is not prepared. He has sinned against the one who loves him most. It is easy for others who do not understand the hidden springs of action to blame him very severely.

The easiest thing in a case like this is to say lets excommunicate this wrong doer.

But here is a better way - Paul says to these people. Ye which are spiritual. In the spirit of meekness. He says, bring about restoration in the life of this man.

There is a story of an old Scotch minister who was calling one day on one of his members. He had been very neglectful in his church (attendance). In fact, he had not been attending at all. They sat together in front of the fireplace, The man expecting the pastor to rebuke him for his absence, and really lay him out, like many today who feel they can be a good Christian without participating in the fellowship of the church. There are people today who feel, well, I am a member of the church - and I really don't have to go - do I? After awhile, the pastor sitting there before the fire with his friend, he took a poker and he raked from the fire a glowing coal. For a time, it burned brightly upon the harth. And when the glow began to fade, soon the coal turned cold and black. And the fire in the fireplace burned brightly on. The man said pastor, you don't have to say a word. I understand your message.

Now we desperately need each other - and we need this frequent fellowship and relationship together. Fellowship in the Gospel is not just getting together but it is going together. Christians are bound together not only in a common experience, but in a common task. And this fellowship is an enjoyment with each other and a sharing

of the Gospel with other people. What happens to a church when it loses sight of its mission, and the fellowship. Disharmony, disunity, discontent plagues the church. And God takes His blessing away from that church. And ceases to bless it.

Paul knew that at times when he was in prison. He missed this fellowship and relationship as he wrote from prison what this loss meant to his own heart and to his own life.

## II. RELIEVING.

Share each other's troubles and problems and so obey our Lord's command. Bear ye one another's burdens.

Here was a person who was stricken suddenly away from home. They were rushed to the hospital and lay ill for many days. Only after they began to recover did they learn that others had been working and bearing the burden for them. As a Christian, he was most impressed with what the people of the church had done. The church had come immediately to him - to the aid of him, his wife, and children. And during those critical days and times, members of the church took turns along with the family staying with him. And beyond that, they lifted him up in prayer on his behalf.

And the man after recovery said, I never before really appreciated what it meant to be a member of the church but now I do. Paul says, you are a fellowship of love and concern.

The Christian can help an erroring brother. There are many other burdens that people are weighted down with. And there are many burdens that are too heavy to carry alone. Man was not made to bear these alone. He was made to have help from God and from others.

The very nature of the church is to share with one another. The good and the bad, joys and sorrow. Paul says we rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. Rom. 12:15. I Cor. 12:26 - If one member suffer - all suffer together. The preacher once emphasized this in his sermon. As one of the primary characteristics - he asked the question, how many of you love everybody. "An old cogger stood up and said - there ain't nobody I hate. All them critters that done me wrong are already dead. " Sometimes it is more of a problem to love the living than the dead. Now we can show that we are sentimental about the dead. But the living have a way to exasperate us. And this puts our Christianity to a real test.

You know, for years we have heard at weddings - I have heard it and you have. Someone sings - You Have Come To Me With Naught Save Love. " Now this is love's idealism - it is rosy. It is with what blissful ignorance that most people enter into marriage. When they stand at the marriage altar - they still feel that love is enough. Some young people. Although, they have not thought about it. They are bringing into their marriage a great deal more than just love. They bring themselves for example. They bring their backgrounds and their personalities. Their likes, their dislikes. And a whole lot of things come in their marriage. While love is basic, to their happiness. There are other factors which can bang that love around until it stands helplessly disintegrated.



Someone made a study about successful marriages. And how to demonstrate your love. I would think most women today sympathize with that Nashville housewife who during the football season put an ad in the newspaper which read -- "For Sale. <sup>one</sup> Husband and T. V. set, cheap."

Now Paul has some precious words here on mutual concern for others. Bear ye one another's burdens. And so fulfill the law of Christ. The law of Christ is the law of love. And love seeks to help others in their distresses, shares their load.

There is something in this word - translated it signifies (lending) a hand to help. By (lifting) heavy loads. It does not mean that there is going to be involved a transfer of the burden, but it means that you are going to assist this person with his burden. When over taxed by crushing loads, this is marvelous relieving.

### III. REMEMBERING - V. 3-6

"If anyone thinks he is too great to stoop to this, he is fooling himself. He is really a nobody. Let everyone be sure that he is doing his best. For then he will have the personal satisfaction of work well done. And won't need to compare himself with someone else. Each of us must bear some faults and burdens of his own. For none of us is perfect."

Here is a caution that the Apostle is given - in V. 3 he deceiveth himself. When he thinketh he is good enough. He can save himself. Or he must wait until a better time before he can be saved. Or he is doing the best he can while doubting God. That if he is lost, he is not to blame. Or that something more must be done than

believe. And at the same time, wondering if he can escape if he goes on neglecting this great salvation. The warning here is about the kind of deceit that is blind.

In V. 4 - there is a very sober advice. When a brother is guilty of wrong-doing, a proud person will not take steps to help him. He may actually inflate his own ego and contrast himself with his problem. He may be proud of himself. It is difficult for most people not to be proud. Of what we have done without having to compare it with someone else what he has done.

V. 5 - Some have felt that this verse - 5 and 2 there might be a contradiction in the matter of bearing one another's burdens. Here he says, a man is going to bear his own burden.

There are two different kinds or words for burden. And we need to note this in V. 2. The principle of mutual sharing. Some burdens are heavy. Too heavy for one to carry alone. Christians must have the help of one another to carry these. V. 5 there are other burdens that are the responsibility of the individual. And only he can fulfill this mission. Each one must give an account of himself. Each one must carry his own sack.

This does not mean that you are going to carry this assignment totally alone. You are going to have the help of God. Paul was responsible for doing it. A mature Christian knows when to accept help from others. And he knows that others cannot live his life, and make his decisions, and fulfill his own calling.

If we grasp the picture here, Paul speaks about these burdens that come as crisis or emergency, some sorrow descends upon a man. Christ is there to help him. And then there is that burden that you must bear as a person. It is the same word as a soldier's pack. There is a duty that none can do for us. We are responsible to carry that pack. We cannot push off on someone else.

#### IV. REAPING

11 Don't be misled - remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. A man will always reap just the kind of crop that he sows. If he sows to please his own wrong desires, he will be planting seeds of evil. He will surely reap a harvest of spiritual decay and death. If he plants the good things of the spirit - he will reap the ever lasting life, that the Holy Spirit gives him.

Now, reaping - this is something that every farmer knows. The literal translation of V. 6 - tells us that - let the one being taught the word share with the one teaching in all good things. He describes the shared life as a mutual thing - a mutual sharing. And this is the Christian side of things. Based on Christian love. I must ask myself, am I fulfilling my ministry. Do I do my best in the spirit of Christ. Every church member must ask himself - am I fulfilling my ministry and mission. And am I helping my church to do and fulfill its mission.

And Paul wraps it neatly up - when he says, I want to contrast to you. The results of things, the inevitable harvest of such living. Each will reap, he says. Each is sowing.

Because they have suffered no evil, some people think that living according to the flesh, <sup>highly</sup> they are just getting by with something. And they wonder if there is ever going to be a judgement day. Or God will do any thing about it. They conclude that God neither knows, nor does God care how they live. Do not be deceived - God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man sows, that he will reap.

Numbers 32:23 - be sure your sin will find you out! Be sure that God will find out about your sin. God already knows about your sin - that is not the issue. The warning is not - God will find you out. But sin will find you out.

There is built a moral law. Sin carries seeds of corruption and death. No one escapes. We shall be what we are in the process of becoming. The ultimate outcome of your life is just as predictable today as though you were in eternity already.

If you will tell me the kind of life that you are living today, I can tell you without fail, exactly what you may expect, None of us should be taken by surprise. Whatever we are sowing now - we will be reaping later. The choice that we make in our habits, are forged into our character. They are going to be in our destiny.

There is no contradiction about the salvation by grace, because Paul says here - that he that sowth (sparingly) is going to reap sparingly. If you expect to gather corn in the Fall of the year, you must plant corn in the Spring. Every farmer knows this. Job knew this in the Old Testament 4:8. Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

Now every man somehow thinks that he can cheat on God. He can sow one thing and reap another. You cannot sow evil and reap good. Be not deceived - God is not mocked. Literally he says, stop being led astray.

The word mocked here, is a Greek word for nose. It means to turn up the nose at someone. Paul says, you cannot turn up your nose at God and get away with it. If you live by God's law you will be blessed. If you turn up your nose at God by living contrary - you must pay the price. That which you will will be what you sow. To sow to the flesh means to reap the lust of the flesh. To sow tares and weeds.

The matter is very simple. Pie in the sky after this life may be a noble hope or dream. But God's law says there is a harvest. And the harvest depends upon the sower. Every farmer knows he must wait for the harvest. And he knows that he must destroy the weeds.

J. C. Penney, the son of a Baptist preacher, started a work at a very early age. As a boy, or young man, he got a job in a store where he was working. He noticed that there was something wrong when he looked over the stock. He found that some men's sox were selling at two different prices. Although they were exactly the same in quality. Some sox were priced at 25¢ a pair. The others, at 2 pairs for 25¢. When he mentioned this to the owner of the store - the man became very angry. And said to him, young man, it is your business to sell and not to establish prices. Penney had been reared according to the strict rules and principles of honesty, of his preacher father. He resigned his job. At a later time, he established his own store on the principle of the Golden Rule. He sought to put the Christian ethic in the employees that he had. He developed a great chain of stores. And once a salesman approached a businessman about a proposition where he could make a considerable amount of money.

But this business man said, if I have got to make money that way - I'll just go out of business.

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Sowing and reaping is a remarkable fact, and it is never pays to be forgetful of the future. It is the fact - the acts of the moment, that are going to take part in the coming harvest. If you sow recklessly wild oats and hope for a good harvest, this is not in accordance with the Scripture.

God asked - does men gather grapes from thorns, or figs of thistles. And he declares that every good tree bringth forth good fruit. But every corrupt tree bringth for evil fruit. Matt. 7:16-17.

Israel sowed the wind = the prophet said. And he predicted they would reap the whirlwind. Hosea 8:7.

This is self-evident, yet how easy it is to forget. How readily do we hope than in some strange, unnatural, transformation of our sinful folly - will God overrule and produce the fruits of righteousness.

Now whether this be the case of an unsaved person, or a failing back-slidden Christian, the law is going to be fulfilled. We reap and we sow. How important then it is to walk carefully before God.

When the home of D. L. Moody was destroyed in the Chicago fire, few things were saved. Among them was a valuable painting of the evangelist Moody. He himself refused to travel through the streets of the burning city with his own portrait. His wife, cut the canvass out of the frame, rolled it up, and carried it herself. Moody was far more concerned about carrying the image of Christ. Upon the canvass of his own flesh, than an image of himself.

enter Scotland

Bearing burdens, what is your concern. What kind of image are you bearing today.

Matt 11:30  
Jesus said, "Come into me my yoke is easy - My Burden light"  
 Prof. Black "When The Roll is called - all Be There"