

A photograph of two hikers on a mountain ridge. One hiker is standing and reaching out to help another hiker who is crouching or falling. The background shows a vast, misty mountain landscape with a valley below. The title 'CARRYING THE weight' is overlaid on the image.

CARRYING THE weight

Pastor Mason Phillips| August 30, 2026

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Day 1: The Gift of Access

Devotional: One of the most staggering privileges of the Christian life is direct access to God through prayer. You do not need a mediator beyond Jesus. You do not need to earn your way into His presence. Because of the cross, the door is open. The four men in Mark 2 understood that their friend's only hope was getting to Jesus. They did not debate whether Jesus would receive them. They simply went. Today, consider the boldness that God invites from you. Someone in your life needs you to carry them to that throne. You have access. Use it.

Reading:

Hebrews 4:14-16 NKJV

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sins. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Reflection: Who in your life are you carrying to God in prayer, and what is keeping you from pressing through on their behalf?

Day 2: Standing in the Gap

Devotional: These are some of the most sobering words in all of Scripture. God was looking for an intercessor and found none. The gap between a holy God and a broken people required someone willing to stand in the middle and cry out for mercy. That is the call of intercession. It is not passive. It is not optional for the mature believer. It is a responsibility born out of love. Andrew Murray wrote that praying only for yourself limits the full potential of your faith. When you intercede for others, your faith, love, and perseverance are stretched and strengthened in ways self-focused prayer cannot produce.

Reading:

Ezekiel 22:30 NKJV

“So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”

Reflection: Is there a person, a situation, or even a community where God is calling you to stand in the gap today?

Day 3: Faith That Carries

Devotional: When Jesus looked down at the paralyzed man lowered through the roof, He did not see the man's faith. He saw the faith of the four friends who carried him there. Their belief became the bridge between the man's helplessness

and the healing power of Christ. This is the heart of intercession. The people you are praying for may have no faith of their own. They may not be seeking Jesus. They may even be hostile toward Him. None of that disqualifies your prayer. Your faith, offered on their behalf, can become the very thing that brings them into contact with the living God.

Reading:

James 5:14-16 NKJV

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Reflection: Are you praying for someone who seems far from God? How does today's reading renew your confidence to keep interceding for them?

Day 4: Pressing Through

Devotional:

The four men in Mark 2 could not get through the crowd. Rather than turning back, they climbed to the roof, broke through it, and lowered their friend down to Jesus. Intercession often looks like this. There will be resistance. There will be moments when the way forward seems completely blocked. The enemy works to crowd out the name of Jesus with worry, doubt, and distraction. But the call of God is to press through. Persistence in prayer is not a sign that God is not listening. It is the very discipline that shapes your faith and deepens your trust in the One who always hears.

Reading:

Luke 18:1-8 NKJV

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man." "Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get Justice for me from my adversary.'

"And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 'yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

Reflection: Where have you been tempted to give up in prayer? What would it look like to climb to the roof and try a different way?

Day 5: For His Glory

Devotional: The story in Mark 2 does not end with one man healed. It ends with an entire crowd glorifying God. That is the ultimate aim of intercession. When you carry someone into the presence of Jesus and He moves on their behalf, the glory belongs entirely to Him. Every answered prayer is a testimony. Every breakthrough declares that God is real, that He hears, and that He acts. The benefits listed in Psalm 103 are not just for you to enjoy privately. They are meant to be displayed publicly so that others stop and say, "We have never seen anything like this." Your intercession participates in that display.

Reading:

Psalm 103:1-8 NKJV

A Psalm of David.

Blessing the Lord, O my soul;

And all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Bless the Lord, o my soul,

And forget not all His benefits:

Who forgives all your iniquities,

*Who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
Who satisfies your mouth with good things,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
The Lord excites righteousness
And justices for all who are oppressed.
He made known His ways to Moses,
His acts to the children of Israel.
The Lord is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.*

Reflection: Think of a time God answered a prayer you prayed for someone else. How did that answered prayer increase your faith and draw others to glorify God?