



THE SIMPLE GOSPEL

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GALATIANS: HELPING OTHERS AND WORKING ON YOURSELF

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Scripture Reference: Galatians 6:1-10

Good morning, Doxa. Today we will be reading Galatians six verses one through 10. "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." This is the word of the Lord. You may be seated.

Morning everyone. Morning. Hey, everyone have their fingers? 4th of July. I had to just make sure. I know. I was thinking maybe 20% we'd probably lose to, uh, but I feel like we're doing pretty good, right? We got our feet. Is anyone missing a foot or anything? Okay, good. We're good to go. Uh, happy 4th of July weekend, everybody, if you're new, my name's Eddie. I'm the lead pastor here. Glad you guys could all be joining us. We're gonna pray for our friends, I know a lot of people are traveling this week, so we wanna make sure we're doing that in a second. But first I just wanna invite you as we wrap up, Galatians, you're gonna, you know, you may hear some things throughout, uh, the passage even ongoing at Doxa here, um, that, you know, excite you, fire you up for Jesus. And that's great. We want that to be the case. I don't want you though, to have a fear of expressing that. I don't want you to feel like in, in your, in your worship, in your mind that you're afraid to go, Hey, like amen to that. Like that is good. There

may be things that you hear and you may wanna say that. I want to give you permission. That's okay. Okay, you can do that. I'm not going to mistake your, uh, shouts of praise for me. Like that's why you're coming. Well, amen, Eddie. Like I'm thinking, I know you are talking about Jesus. Okay? Like, I, I get that. So if that's a fear of yours, please let that one go, and also don't be afraid of what others around you are saying. If you feel like something's important to you, feel free to do that. That's between you and the Lord. Okay? Amen. Okay. <Amen!> That's right. So be it, right? That's good.

We're in Galatians chapter six. If you have a Bible, please turn there. Uh, we are going to be in verse one starting, and if you don't have a Bible, don't worry, we'll have it on the screen as well. Let's pray. Well, Lord, I wanna pray, uh, first for all of our friends that are traveling this week, we know that the, the airports are hectic this weekend and last weekend. And so, Lord, we're praying for safe travel. We're praying for people getting to where they need to go to in a timely way. We pray that those that are watching online, those that are, uh, out, Lord God, that they would be, um, they would be protected by the Holy Spirit. And additionally, we pray for that same protection here, that the Holy Spirit would be present in this space.

Lord, would you seal this place with your power? Would, uh, what's communicated and coming outta my mouth, Lord God, would that whatever comes from me, would that just be, you know, gently rejected, but anything that's coming from you, Lord God, would it seed in and stick with my friends? Lord, I pray for courage that I could communicate your word with boldness, for clarity, that I might say it with sharpness and for calm, that I might have an inner ballast, um, that demonstrates your power, Lord God. I pray for my friends. I pray against the enemy, his allies, his works and effects. And would this place be a place where we can all hear from you clearly without distraction, just for a moment and just for today. In His name. Amen. Amen.

All right, well, we made it guys nine weeks in the book of Galatians. We did it. Okay, now, last time I preached Galatians, I felt like, you know, it was so exhausting because I felt like it was twice as long as it was, and I felt like I needed to shower like constantly because it's just so, it was so difficult to, to, to get through that passage. But this time I preached it. It's exactly the same thing. I felt exactly the same amount of stress. And so I'm, I'm happy we got to study this book together. I'm also happy we get to study something else. So this has been really good for us, but we're not done yet. Okay?

Now, the book of Galatians, if you haven't been with us, has been about maintaining one thing. And that's the simplicity of the Gospel. That the Gospel's impact on us and on really on the world, uh, really has nothing to do, uh, with our work with what we put into it.

You see, the gospel is the story of Jesus. It's the story of our sin. It's the story of our brokenness. As Galatians teaches, it separates us from God. And it's the story of how Jesus selflessly, uh, went to the cross to free us from the death. That is the penalty for sin. And that Jesus execution pays the penalty for our sin and that his resurrection secures our freedom, not just for eternity, but for today. Peace and joy. And... Amen! That's right. And all that is required of us and our salvation from sin is to place our faith in Jesus. That's it. That's it.

You see, even now I know that the little lawyer is figuring out a way to decide how you fit into the story and how you earn it. Here's the thing. We live in a me-centered culture and society.

Human beings like us, we often try to add ourselves even back into this equation. We long to believe that if we're saved by Jesus dying on the cross and resurrecting that somehow it had something to do with how awesome we are. And we brought something to the table. We made ourselves appealing to God somehow, either with our work for God or how well we follow God or even, you know, how apologetic we are when we finally do fail. Something we did contributed to our salvation.

But ultimately, Galatians is written to remind the readers that God acts first, not us. And that all we can do is respond to the great, great grace, rather, that we've been given from God and our salvation -- we respond to it. So today is about our response. How do you and I live the way of Jesus in such a way that it would honor the work that God put in on the cross? How would we live in such a way that we would honor the freedom that has been unlocked by Jesus' saving grace? How do we live in that way?

Well, if you've been paying attention throughout the book, then you know there's an underlying theme of all of Galatians we've touched on, but haven't mentioned in depth, that answers these questions. Now, while the Galatians, those religious legalists and really even us have been worrying so much about ourselves while we've been talking about the nuances of, are we saved by works? Are we saved by faith? Or are we legalists? Are we licentious? All of this stuff. While we've been thinking about that, the answer to how to live in light of Jesus has been under our noses the entire time.

I'll point you back out to Galatians chapter five, verse 13. Look what it says --

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

You see, while we were off trying to fulfill the whole law by doing all God's rules correctly or rejecting God himself and following our own moral laws that we've created for our own moral compass, God says, actually, actually you can fulfill the entire law of God, not by coming to church, not by going and participating in your small group, not by making sure you listen to the right sermons. No, no, none of that stuff. You can fulfill the entire law by doing one thing -- caring for the people that God has made around you.

Now, it's not popular or cool to say, okay, that's not gonna get a lot of clicks. It's not gonna go viral. It's not relevant. There's no cool relevant call to your purpose, or there's no man-centered thing in there for you that you can sort of share or any of us can share on social media. But if we're so changed by God that he deeply impacts our lives, that we'll naturally begin to care for the people around us in a way that honors God and serves them, not ourselves. And how easy it is to serve other people for the sake of ourselves. Very easy.

Now, as I've been alluding to all series, it's hard enough for human beings to not always think about ourselves. That's been the crux of a lot of what Galatians is about. But it's even tougher when all of culture and society is telling us that we are the center of our own universe. Amen? It's hard when you turn on the news, what's it about? It's about you somehow. You go in the supermarket, what's it about? It's about your deals. What are you gonna get outta it? Everything's about you, marketing's about you. Churches have become about you and that's

become an issue. Church has been guilty of softening the blow of the Bible in order to get you to stay. We've changed the message of the church, which is Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

The book of Galatians is all about that. And we've morphed it into something for you. How you can find your purpose and your meaning and your value here in order to, in an effort to market you, to get you to stay here. And I will say those things are great and you do get them, but they're all byproducts of why you should actually be coming. They're byproducts of the good news of the resurrected king. And you do get those, but you're not here for them. You get them in about a self forgetfulness as you look upon the cross.

Churches try to get you to stay, but in an effort to not do that this morning, I wanna be straight with you, okay? I'm gonna give you some truth. Be straight. I'm gonna be straightforward, and I hope you still stay after I tell you this, <laugh>, it's gonna be hard, okay? Here it is. You're selfish. You're selfish. Amen. Amen. You're selfish. Listen, you care a great deal about your comfort. You care a great deal about your work and how you're getting promoted. You care a great deal about your family. You say, I care about people. Do they all have your last name, huh? Okay, well, seems to affect you, right? You want what you want and you will do what you have to do to get it. That's human nature.

Now listen, this isn't my opinion. I haven't been like following you around for the last two years and sort of peering at your life or staring at you get coffee and going, she getting coffee just for herself, huh? I haven't been doing that, okay? I haven't been analyzing your life. In fact, this is sort of the way we've leaned from the womb. It's all over the Bible. The human heart is wicked above all else. Who could understand it? It says. I was conceived in iniquity. King David said that. This is our story as human beings. But maybe so, even the little lawyer right now is coming to your defense right now and thinking, and maybe you're thinking this, and this is what I thought too, as I was going through it, I can be selfish at times, but come on, I'm not selfish. Like that's not my, like that's not who I am. I can be selfish at times. There's moments, like I've seen it, but usually I'm not selfish in general. In fact, I'm not even consider myself selfless or at the very least, neutral, right? Neutral... Okay.

Even psychology today, a secular magazine agrees that human beings generally hold the following traits. Now, as you listen to these, just just assess yourself a little bit and not in the way they're gonna tell you to check this out. First thing, self-serving bias. You hold these. This is the tendency to attribute success to one's work and character and one's failure is to external circumstances.

So translation, when you do well in life, it's your fault. And when you don't, it's someone else's. So like you hear this all the time, football like, yeah, I would've been great, I would've gotten to this and this and this, or I would've gotten to the NBA, but you know that coach, he got my way. Right? It's always some coach that was there, right? Or you know, I would've gotten that promotion. But you know that boss. It's always someone else, it's never you, right?

We'll keep, let's keep going. The social desirability bias, this is the tendency to want to present at least in surveys as better than one actually is. This tendency can either be conscious or unconscious. Got you. When a result of ego defense. So check this out. When you take a survey,

you tend to think everybody else has got some issue and they probably can't see this clearly, but you, you of course you've been gone to a public university and you've solved all of the world's problems you can see very, very clearly. And so maybe you're biased a little, but you're not as biased as everybody else, of course, right? Let's keep going.

You think that's not true about you? Look at this one, the biased blind spot <laugh>, the tendency to believe that you are less biased than your peers. Oh, I'll just let that one sit.

And then finally, the backfire effect, the tendency to reinforce one's own beliefs when confronted with contradictory evidence. And that's what you're doing right now. I'm giving you evidence for your bias and your selfishness and you're in your mind going, oh, no, no, no, no, no, no. That's not me. Well, yeah, it is now me. Of course, of course.

Now, since I'm on the stage, I'm not all of these things, that's why I'm able to better tell you all where you're wrong, okay? Amen. Amen. Oh boy, you don't know me very well. Do you?

Not only do you and I hold many of these things, but holding them means we likely don't know we hold them. Meaning it's difficult to know how selfish we actually are, friends. Okay? Here's the issue, God says, the one way that you can fulfill the entire law of God is not by living a good moral life. It's not by fulfilling the entire law and walking around all 600 and something in your pocket trying to do 'em all. So being a really good person, the way you can fulfill the entire law is the exact opposite of our selfish predisposition. It's to care for other people selflessly. This means you and I have a lot of work to do, doesn't it?

Galatians six is about to give us a bit of help in how we can sort of care for other people well, but still care for ourselves and still be God honoring all at the same time as we live in the grace that we've been given from Jesus.

Okay? So get unlock this. Let's start in verse one and see how we can find out how we can start serving others well and living out the law of Christ. Verse one --

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Now, one of the things that strikes me about this section is this phrase, the law of Christ. It is, is beautiful language. Even though the word law is often a threat to our minds and our supposed liberty to say, do and be whatever we want, we hear that law and it sort of, it scares us.

This one shouldn't threaten you, okay? This law shouldn't threaten you. Now, if we were to sum up the life of Jesus Christ, in a nutshell, we essentially could get a single law. That's what Paul's talking about. And this would be essentially the law of love. It's the law of loving your neighbor as yourself. It's the supremacy of all loves that have been created and grafted and and thrown into the world for us to enjoy. But this is the supremacy of it. And we see it here in verse two, how we do it. And it's the first part of how we care for people. And it's this to carry the burdens of others. The law of Christ dictates that we are not to let people walk alone and carry their burdens alone. Now, you might go, that feels a bit obvious that I'm supposed to do that. If I'm gonna love people and I, yeah, maybe. Well this is what it is. Burdens can be a number of things

-- helping others with, you know, their regular responsibilities, okay? Helping people meet the needs of caring for children. Bible talks about caring for widows and orphans and the poor very often. And of course, uh, burdens can also just be serving people when they lack resources or need counsel or advice, okay? All those things.

But primarily in verse one, we see that this burden bearing that Paul is talking about is about someone being specifically caught in a, what he says is a transgression, a sin. So you who are spiritual, he's not saying that pejoratively to mock people like we do today. He's saying you who are essentially believers in the ways, in teachings of Jesus are supposed to help other people navigate messy, sinful situations that they find themselves in so they can recover, so that they can repent and so that they can recommit their lives to Jesus in some way because they are carrying a ton of bricks. They are walking around with backpacks that are heavier than any of us maybe can carry with the sin that they've done, the things that have happened to them. And we should walk alongside them and grab some of that and help them along the way. Okay? This is what Paul's talking about with when he talks about bearing one another's burdens.

Now I wanna give you a few insights of what it actually means to help somebody do this, okay? I wanna give you a few insights I'm seeing in this passage. Here's the first thing, it's nearly impossible to actually help with a deep burden when you're not close to anybody. It, in fact, it would be rather weird if you did, right? Like someone's eavesdropping in on a, like a serious marriage confrontation you're having and they go, hey, do you need my help with your marriage? And you're like, nah bro, I don't know you Jordy like get outta my business. <laugh> It would be odd, right? It would be super weird if that were to happen.

So you may look around in your life and you, maybe you don't see anybody you can serve cuz you're not close to anybody and you're thinking, I, I wanna bear people's burdens, I'm reading this sounds exciting. And yet you don't know anyone at a deep enough level to even make that conversation. Or you may see people, but again, you're not close enough and you haven't pressed in well enough with them. And so you offering your advice would be odd. This is why Doxa creates environments for you to foster deep relationships, right? This is why we have MCs, this is why we have DNA groups, this is why we have our Sunday gatherings and all these other gatherings that happen because we want you to be able to foster these relationships so that way when someone is carrying something too heavy for themselves that you can put your hand on them and help them out and help them walk through something that's difficult, okay? Divorce, blind spots with money, greed, addiction, pride and the like. All of these things, people need one another.

And this is the disease of our day. People are walking around like just lone rangers, lone wolves, wandering the wandering the eastside here, doing what you think is best and carrying so much all by yourself and it's too hard. And eventually that's gonna catch up with us. We need one another. Okay? So the first insight is that it's nearly impossible to actually help anyone if you don't know anyone and you're not close to anyone.

The second thing is, many of us want to help but can't or we don't think we can because we're too busy or we don't have enough time or we don't have enough emotional energy available to help someone when they're actually walking through it. Sound familiar? Yeah. Well cuz here on the eastside, again, we love to overcommit. We've got really important jobs, right? I mean work

is important. And then of course we've got starting to have kids or we've got friend circles or we've got college, and man it's busy and there's commutes and I mean there's soccer here and track there and vacation here and then mom's in town there and then there's just no time.

Oh man, like you're so busy. It's hard isn't it? To help bear another person's burden, right? It it's because it's a lot to try to help Susan not divorce her husband or help Frank actually realize he's been neglecting his family. That's challenging. It should cost you something guys. If you only bear burdens when they are convenient for you, then you aren't really bearing burdens because burdens by definition are inconvenient. If you only help people when you have margin and you only help people when you got nothing else going on, then what's dictating you bearing their burdens? Is it their burden or is it your ability or inability to actually add too much to your plate? Bearing burdens is supposed to cost you something because it's called a burden and it's hard for that person walking in that thing that they've done or that's been done to them and they need someone to like put some stuff on the back burner and come alongside them and help, right?

And it's kinda like the car guy on the side of the road. Like we assume that like there's some Johnny Do-good are coming by, they're gonna help 'em at some point. Right now, they're coming at some, someone will stop, right? When you see that need, that's your opportunity to fulfill the law of Christ and serve them. And so in so doing, fulfill the entire law along with it, no more worrying about your circumcision or worrying about your multiple different clothes you're wearing or eating crawfish. You get to actually fulfill the entire law of Christ by just stopping and helping.

Another insight, here it is. When you do decide to bear someone's burdens alongside them, there is a demeanor with which to do. So when we bear burdens and someone's walking through something serious, it's not helpful to go in guns blazing and just sort of like try to solve all their problems as you see fit. Oftentimes it doesn't work. Paul says right here in verse one to do it with a spirit of what? Gentleness. Gentleness. This is like a curse word for a lot of people, right?

This is hard to understand, but many times people, and I'll, let's just be honest. Often Christians, we go right with bearing burden? I'm going right in for the rebuke. I'm going right in, I'm going right in with shame on you. What have you done wrong? Like did you, why didn't you see that before? How come you haven't failed. And you go and I, you start quoting scripture, can we just meet, open bibles together and you're just reading off -- boom. Like, and these verses feel like landmines and they're stepping on, and you're lobbing grenades at them with the scripture as if that was Jesus' intention for you helping them walk through their burdens.

You're creating more burden, you're not helping at all. Gentleness guys, this means kindness. Christians, man, we love killing gnats with sledgehammers. We love it. And you know what happens when we do that? We put holes in walls, we put holes in walls. And you know what? And then we realize, man, why are all my friendships like falling apart? Or why don't I have any close people in my life? And you know, why is my family all sort of like doing their thing and I'm over here? Like, why is that happening? It's cuz every time there's a problem we take a sledgehammer and we destroy the sheet rock.

Gentleness guys. Okay, what else? When you're serving, bearing people's burdens, do it discreetly if you can, let's start discreetly and, and private as you're helping someone walk through something. Unless it involves the police, unless it involves something at a great, to a greater degree where someone else is in eminent danger. Let's start and keep this discreet. Don't go -- we can't go blabbing everyone else's business. We wanna help them in private. We wanna provide an environment for them that they can actually recover from that which they're walking through. When we immediately sort of sound the alarm if it doesn't require that, it creates an environment of, of chaos and they can't recover from that and it might draw them closer to the thing that holds them captive.

When you do, when you are, again, another thing when you're bearing people's burdens is when you decide to walk with them, walk in their shoes, know the ins and outs, ask questions, ask how you can be helpful, what are the things in your life that are struggling you, like, what is a trigger for you in some of those ways? Like how can I provide an environment of care and comfort for you as we walk through this? Like what do you need? And begin to understand it and then begin to carry the spiritual burden with 'em as well, right? Pray with them, pray for them.

One of the best things someone ever did for me was they offered to fast with me. I was leaving my last ministry in San Francisco and I had a pastor, I called and he started, started talking to him and I just started blah, blah, blah, you know, whatever I did. And I was going off on him and he goes, Hey man, I can't tell you what to do in this next season, but I can offer to fast with you. Will you fast for a day? And I'll fast with you. Let's see if God tells us something. It's beautiful. Listening to God and meditation for them, right? Listening -- and here's, here's a big one for many of us, I think listen and only offer advice after they communicate they're open to receiving it.

Again, sometimes our advice can come as a curse, not a blessing. Especially if we don't ask permission. Guys, we love advice and oftentimes conversations sort of, and I will say this, devolve into here's my advice and here's my advice and here's my advice and here's my advice. And it's just this endless pile of advice for somebody who's sitting in a group of three people going, what do I do with any of this? I never, I didn't even ask any of you.

Sometimes people just needed an environment to cry, to be sad, be upset, and to just tell you how they're feeling. And just to like have people get eyes on them so they like are experiencing that. I can solve a ton of your, uh, if this is you, I can solve a ton, uh, of your um, your relational struggles with one question. Like if you just ask this one question, people will find you instantly less annoying, I promise. Okay? And it's this -- are you open to feedback? Just ask permission. You'll find that even if someone didn't want your advice and they gave you the okay that they're more likely to hear from you because they know they gave you permission. But almost instantly people are rolling their eyes in their brain listening to you go wah wah wah at them and they're just not interested. Okay? That's how it works.

There's one last insight here on burden bearing from verse three, I want you guys to see, and it's in that again in verse three. It says this -- For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Okay. It can be a selfish flinch for us to think, start to think less of people when we start hearing their junk. We can get really judgmental of them, and we can smirk in our sort of sideways energy and think, well if they just did this, then maybe they wouldn't be in that problem. And we start talking outta the sideways, sideways energy at 'em and people are feeling that, and all of a sudden there's a little bit of slander, a little bit of gossip.

Another selfish flinch is to be, um, so consumed with how well or how poorly that your -- how poorly or how well your life is going that you miss people all together. You don't even see 'em when they're struggling and they're asking to bear burdens. I, again, I overheard this conversation recently, me and a couple other people, and someone said, hey listen, I really wanted to confront you about something yesterday. I walked in and I wasn't in a good mood and you just didn't see me at all. You walked right past me and I, and I felt wounded by that. Is that fair to say? Sure. The other person said, Hey, yeah, I, I don't even know, I didn't even realize seeing you there. Actually, my, my grandmother passed yesterday, uh, right before I came in and I, I totally slipped my mind and I'm really busted up by it. She, she helped raise me. And the person said, well hey, if you could just see me in the future, that would be great. I would just love it if you could just acknowledge me when I'm having a bad day.

You see how if you can become so self-consumed in your own junk that when someone else is longing to be connected to somebody, you just totally miss them cuz you're in your own world. And we walk around in these little like spheres around Bellevue and Redmond and Kirkland just bumping into each other at the Whole Foods, not even seeing anybody. And it's a total mess. It's not the way of Christ and it's not the way to fulfill the law at all. We need to see other people guys, if our eyes are too busy looking down at our feet cuz we're sad or looking in the mirror cuz we're proud, and not around, we'll never see anybody else when they're struggling.

If you think too highly of yourself, you'll be too self-important to notice the needs of others, okay? Rather than burden yourself trying to fulfill the law yourself or live a good moral life or to be better than other people. It's more helpful to lift the burden off of other people with deep fellowship. This is God's call for us. But let's keep going cuz there's more here.

Um, there's another insight buried in this passage. Look at verse four. But let each one test his own work and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.

Okay, hold on a second. It looks at face value. It looks like Paul is now contradicting himself, doesn't it? Because he just told me to bear one another's burdens. But then he just told me that I need to carry my own load. Like what? What gives? He's actually expanding on his previous statement, not contradicting it. You see there is a difference to Paul and he uses two different words here in the Greek language, um, between a burden and a load, there's a difference, right?

So a burden to him is the sin or hardship that you're experiencing that you can't carry yourself. And a load is basic. Your basic responsibilities as a person before God to manage one's own self well and to steward. Like Paul says, watch your doctrine and your life closely. That's your responsibility, that's your load, that's no one else's responsibility to do for you, right? That's both.

So this will help us sort of understand and build upon our first point, which is this. If we want to start caring for other people, bear one another's burdens, but do your own work too. Do your own work too.

You and I, when you get caught up at looking horizontally, we're seeing other people's burdens and we're starting to see other people and we're start talking about them and that, that then most of our lives can be sort of spent thinking about how other people are spending their energy, their issues, their families, their struggles. And we never really do our own work. And as a result we can't even even define ourselves apart from somebody else.

That's a big challenge. If we don't work on ourselves, we're gonna experience a lot of challenges. And you know what? In America we don't work on ourselves all that much. I will give you all credit cuz here we are at church trying to work on ourselves by the power of the Spirit. Awesome. But as we go back into the world, it's going to be a huge challenge for us. We don't do this often.

Now I wanna say there is a difference between working in your life and working on it, okay? Working in your life. We do, we go to school, maybe you get more education, you get a job, you find a spouse, you raise your children, you go fishing, you eat dinner. That's you working in your life, working on it is more meta. Step out two, you know, two steps and look at your life, working on it is doing things like studying spiritual formation practices to get closer with Jesus. Praying, fasting, meditating. Might be going to counseling, working on your marriage, working on your family in front of a professional. It might be looking at your past trauma and working it out with a therapist or a biblical counselor. It might be getting with a pastor to care for specific struggles and things that you've got going -- addictions, things that are owning you, right? It's leaning into other people, bearing your burdens with you.

But we are so afraid of doing that as a culture. And I'll just tell you, if you can't see it, maybe you'll see it in this next passage. When you do not do your own work, you can be four different things, okay? When you do not do your own work, you can do these four things. The first is you can be incredibly emotionally fragile, emotionally fragile. This is where everything gets to you. Everything gets to you. You feel thin skinned. It's hard for you to stay in conversations where you disagree with a person. You run from problems, you're very detached or you or you lash out in anger. You have a brittle spirit. It's emotionally fragile.

Second thing is you become spiritually empty when you don't do your own work. There's no life of prayer to draw on, no time with Jesus to go back on, no knowledge of the word to draw on when things get hard. You're just kind of in no man's land trying to figure this out with podcasts and YouTube videos thinking that you, you gotta get it solved.

Spiritually empty, dry, not knowing where the covering is when you need him. And in the culture we live in today, if you don't know where the shelter and the covering is, you might be in grave danger very soon. You need a spiritual power and protection to stand as a, if you're a Christian here, a Christian in public sphere. And we need to know where the covering is, but unfortunately if we don't do our work, we're spiritually empty.

Third thing is so we can become emotionally fragile, spiritually empty and we become shame dealing. This is where we deal out shame. You don't know how to handle your junk, you haven't

dealt with it, you haven't been with somebody to help you work through it. So you become an expert at giving out your shame and guilt to other people through gaslighting and blame shifting. This is where it becomes, it's always somebody else's fault, right? It's when I succeed, it's mine. And when I fail, someone else did this to me. It might be mom, it might be your boss, it might be your spouse, but it's not you. It's probably you a little bit. But let's be honest, it's mostly them.

Shame dealing. It's like we're sitting at the blackjack table, but instead of dealing out cards, we're just going shame for you, guilt for you, you made me do this, couldn't you have understood what that, that I went through that when I was younger, and you went and said that. Like how, how could you expect me to do that? You knew I wasn't raised like, and it's just, just dealing around... Going that's somebody else's responsibility. It's mom and dad's, it's the spouse, it's the boss, it's the coach, it's somebody, but it's not yours.

Emotionally fragile, spiritually empty, shame dealing. And last one, environmentally unstable. This is where you can't find any stability regardless of the environment. You don't have an inner ballast. You again, you don't have this spiritual life to draw from. You're, you're constantly moved by the anxieties of the day and you can very, very quickly in any conversation, political, ideological, gender, uh, sex, uh, theology, doesn't matter what it is, you very quickly become the most anxious, stressed out, depressed person in any room you're in. Or you become the most medicating person in any room, or the quickest to run because there's no inner ballast, there's nothing in there from the Lord that keeps you center to be able to handle the anxieties of the day.

Paul is really saying in this passage, you look at everyone else's life either in judgment cuz you're trying to fill the law. Or in jest, cuz who cares? It's not a big deal. But you haven't done any work on yourself. You're not carrying your load. And not only does that wreck your emotional health and your relationship with other people, but you're gonna have to stand in front of Jesus and give an account. And what might that conversation be like? Bear one another's burdens, but do your own work. Okay?

You know, the way to peace in this life is to, is sort of in the fulfill the law of Christ is to bear each other's burdens and do your own work. But I do have to say in America we almost always do the opposite. So instead of bearing each other's burdens and doing our work, we want to sort of uh, we want other people to do our work for us. And then when things get hard personally we carry our burdens not giving them to anybody and like it totally, it totally ransacks your entire life doing this.

So we expect other people to do our work. And the way we do this is so instead of processing our shame and guilt with Jesus and laying it at the foot of the cross or talking to a pastor, talking to a counselor, talking to community, trying to get some of this stuff solved, we sort of toss the shame that we have on the lap of other people as we interact with 'em. So we often call this being triggered and every little thing is a trigger. This is where something from our past comes up and when we hear or see something and we vomit all over all the people around us and tell them where they were wrong and why they hurt us and how they should have known. But that comment might be hurtful because when I was nine such and such happened, how come they couldn't understand that?

Should we be mindful of other people's stories? Absolutely. That's part of bearing burdens. That's coming from someone who's had a really, really crazy story. We absolutely should seek empathy and care for those things. We absolutely should seek to know other people's stories of course. But it's not our responsibility to bear someone's story and shoulder the guilt and shame that they have as well. That's their shame and guilt. They are supposed to process with God. The whole book of Galatians is about two ideas, slavery and freedom. And you could be a slave even though Jesus has sort of unlocked the cell. And you can sit in there and hang out on that big cement bed with all of the stuff in the trauma that's happened to you and not go free. You being triggered by everything or us being triggered by everything is not freedom in Christ. That's slavery. There's so much we're supposed to lay at the feet of Jesus that we haven't, this is what we're talking about here. So should we be mindful of other people's stories? Of course. But it's not our responsibility to shoulder their story and shoulder the guilt and shame that they're supposed to give to Jesus.

You know, people walk around free in that jail cell, the door's open. Let's say you believe in the resurrection of Jesus and you believe he is your Lord. And Jesus goes and you're like okay, this is great and you're still sitting there and you're going, no, no, no. Like okay you died for this but you don't understand, like I gotta wear this. Like this is what, this is what happened to me. And you start like patting on your back and all of a sudden it's not just Jesus that dies for it. You believe you have to pay for the penalty for that sin as well. And not only other people need to pay for it every now and then somebody else needs to pay for it too if they don't understand it. And so it's not one person's bloodshed on the cross, you want three. Jesus is gonna die for it, sure, but I also need to pay the penalty. And you know what, so does she sometimes. And that's triple jeopardy, and Jesus didn't die for that.

We don't want you to walk around all triggered. We want you to give this to Jesus so that when it sort of quote unquote trigger comes out, you actually have some composure to handle life's stress and a non-anxious presence to navigate life with with dignity. That's what we want for you.

A mentor once told me, do your own work because it's the only work you can do. And what he was saying was, you know, as we're working on our spiritual health and emotional health, it's our responsibility before God to do those things. And as much as we want to, we cannot do someone else's work for them. We can sympathize, we can bear burdens, we can hold their sins with them, we can pray with them, but we cannot make them spiritually healthy. We cannot make them emotionally healthy as bad as we want. And some of some of you man, some of you guys, you love that person so much. But lemme just tell you that's love addiction and that's your codependency and you can't be their savior. You're supposed to be their friend and point them somewhere else. And some of you guys are like dragging them along towards their salvation and you can't, that's Jesus' job, okay? We cannot lead them there. That's their work. And it's also not our responsibility to shoulder their guilt and shame that they might give off in their lack of emotional processing either.

But what's the other side of this? Not only do we not work on our, do our own work, but then we, we also struggle. When we do struggle. We don't allow anyone else to share in the burden

that we personally have. So not only do we not do our work, we also don't share when we are struggling. Total the opposite of what Paul's talking about.

Lemme just say what a lonely place to be. Isn't that lonely? Is that sad? Do you know that there are people walking around out there that are doing things they know they're not supposed to or have had things done to them and it's killing them inside and they're not telling anybody about it and it's eating them from the inside out. Do you know that's true? Of course you know it's true because it's many of us in here, isn't it? Many of us are walking that walk and at some point that's going to come to blows, and it's gonna make a huge mess. And Jesus does not want us to, he wants us to find people that can help these issues. Bring to light, the Bible says, that which is in the darkness, whether it's sin or whether it's grief. It's better not to be alone and let someone else grab the other end of the very heavy couch that you have in your house. One of the best things you can do if you heard nothing else in this sermon, just hear me. This is one of the best things you can do is to be seen and to be seen with safe people. You need people.

Okay, there's one more insight here guys, let's find it in verse seven. "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we don't give up. So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

He's talking there about serve those in your church family and that are Christians as well. Paul here wants us to know that what you put in your life's relationship and your faith, you are going to get out of your life relationship and faith. Is that a surprise to you? Well, of course not. We all sort of understand it. And this is how it connects with our understanding of caring for others. Bear one another's burdens, but do your own work too because you will reap ultimately what you sow. You will reap what you sow. And many of us, again cognitively get this, you're gonna get in what you put in.

But here's how it plays out. If you sow apathy into your relationships and bearing and bearing burdens isn't something you do often for people, well guess what? You're gonna reap broken people around you and you're gonna reap fractured relationships. And you may even lack deep friendships if you sow those things. If you sow distraction and blame shifting or procrastination into doing your own work, well guess what? You're going to reap a brittle spirit. One that's triggered consistently, one that deals out a lot of shame to other people and one that is unable to help life's or hold up against life's challenges when they do come.

Dang. And most importantly, if you sow selfish, sinful seed in general into the world living without God, whether you're a Christian or not living without God, the obvious question would be, do you think that you should somehow, if that's what you sow, reap a beautiful eternity where you and your loved ones are sort of reunited to Jesus forever? How does that make sense? You sow non transcendence into the world. You sow apathy, you sow rejection, you sow selfishness and pride and consumerism and American ideologies or whatever Western ideologies into the world. You just sow those political ideologies and at the end you think all of a sudden you're gonna reap this beautiful, transcendent, selfless eternity with God. Paul says in

verse seven, God is not mocked. Remember the biases we looked at in verse four? Commit those to your heart. This is us in our sin. Broken and separated. Okay?

No one sows godlessness is gonna reap God. Or in other words, you can't sow eggplant seeds and expect pomegranates. Okay? You're stuck with nasty eggplants and that's your fault. Okay? Disgusting by the way. Amen. Can I get an amen on that one? Amen. And so be it, Lord. Yeah, that's right. <laugh> They're nasty and they make eggplant Parmesan, like shame on you. You vegans, it's disgusting and you use fake cheese on it. It's terrible. How am I gonna get you back into this sermon? It's impossible.

I will say this. If you, if you do sow pomegranate seeds, you'll get pomegranates, right? If you do sow good seed, even at first it's hard, you're gonna harvest life-giving relationships, beautiful things are gonna happen. You're gonna receive deep satisfaction that you live in sync with who God's created you to be if you do these things.

If you bear burdens, it's gonna reap families being restored and marriages being rebuilt and legacies changed and cities changed because guess what? When you bear burdens, things become better. And when you, and when you might even see your friends and your families and your cities also become burden bearers as a result as well, that's powerful. And then we can better see who should actually get the credit for all of the growth in the first place. It's not how well you bear burdens because that's where a lot of us went. Like, I gotta bear better burdens. Hold on. It's not about that. It's about Jesus. He is the one that waters, he provides the nutrient and the soil. He provides the sunlight. It's him. He's the one that told you to sow. Sow the the law of Christ. And the law's got his name. It's him, he did it. The law of the Christ is to love your neighbor as yourself, carrying the weight of their hardships so that they finally might feel relief. And that's what the law of Christ is.

Why is it like that? Because that's what Jesus did for us. First hundreds of years before Jesus even walked the earth, Isaiah said this, listen to this burden bearing language. Surely he took up our pain. He bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was on him. And by his wounds we are healed.

We were sinners, we rebelled against God, we went our own way and we convinced ourselves we didn't. And in so doing, we sow division and brokenness and slander and bitterness and jealousy and selfishness and pride into the world. We didn't want God, but God wanted us. The Father sends Jesus into the world. He lived a life without sin. God, he was murdered, executed by the Roman Guard at the, at the recommendation of the people he came to save. He died that death. And he came out of the grave three days later saying, my death, that death can count for your death, the one that you earned. And you could be counted as righteous before my Father. You would no longer have to be a slave to your sin by what you've done or what other people have done to you, but you can go free. And that jail cell you've been hanging out in because you like the metal toilet and the cement bed. Well, you can actually leave now with peace and joy in this life and with an expectant eternal life that's coming. You then and only then are you free to bear the burdens of other people. You bear burdens because Jesus first beared ours. Amen.

And we look upon him with joy and excitement to say, I want you to know something about this guy that freed me, that found me when I was at my lowest. You don't understand. I was lost, I was gone. I had nobody. And he showed up to me and he taught me his ways. And you know what? I was skeptical, but when I looked hard and I looked deep, I combed this thing and I asked other people and I talked and I found out, man, it's true.

And I don't want you to have to walk in that anymore either. I want you to know him. Jesus wasn't self-important. He was self-giving. Jesus wasn't self-focused. He was self-forgetful. I'm so glad Jesus wasn't too busy to bear my burdens. I'm so glad Jesus didn't write me off cause I was too far gone. And I'm so glad Jesus took the boulder off of my shoulders and carried it, not with me, but by himself.

I wonder what the world might be like if we all sought to do that for other people. Probably be a little bit better place. I wonder what those who have walked away from the church or those who are here now, my friends that you're listening in, that are never Christians, what might you do or say or feel of people that said they loved Jesus, actually did what he did? Maybe we can try that. And so it is. Let's pray.

Father God, I pray for my friends. It's a, it's a tall task trying to be a selfish person convincing other selfish people that we need to be more selfless. But there's a power of the Holy Spirit that's here that exists outside of us, that's not dependent on me or them or anybody else that you can demonstrate and reveal where we are selfish and place our faith in you. Might we live out the law of your Son, the law of Christ that says, if we wanna fulfill all of this, it's not through any of our hard work. You know what it is? It's fulfilled in loving our neighbor as ourself. Might we live that call out with joy and peace, but only first if we've had our burdens removed. We love you. We praise you. In his name. Amen.