**BEARING BURDENS**

Using some notes from Steven Shepherd (Sermon Central)

**GIVEN SURREY – FEBRUARY 27, 2022**

**Do we as followers of Christ have any responsibility to helping others in their struggles, in bearing their burdens?**

* Do we need to take time out of schedules, or make time to help others in their time of need?
* What does the phrase mean to bear one another’s burdens?

After all don’t we have enough burdens of out own and you are telling me we need to carry the burdens of others?

Let’s read what Paul tells us in the book of Galatians

**GAL 6:1-5 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.**

**2Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**

**3If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.**

**4Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else,**

**5for each one should carry their own load. (NIV)**

* Life is full of problems and they do come up

**ILLUSTRATION:** *An airline company was disturbed over a high percentage of accidents so they decided to eliminate human errors by building a completely computerized plane. "Ladies and gentlemen," came a voice over the PA during the initial flight, "It may interest you to know that you are traveling in the world’s first completely automated and computerized plane. Now just back and relax because nothing can go wrong....go wrong....go wrong....go wrong....."*

**ONE THING IS CERTAIN IN LIFE – THINGS DO GO WRONG AND WILL GO WRONG.**

* We don’t have to live very long in this world to discover that.
* And for some people, things seem to go wrong most of the time.

**FOR SOME WE HAVE HEARD THE EXPRESSION LIFE SUCKS.**

* There view is whatever can go wrong – WILL GO WRONG
* BAD THINGS CAN HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE!
* Bad things happen to Christian people.
* Paul writes in

**ROM 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.**

* Paul talked about the sufferings of this present time, they are part of life.
* Many times we have to suffer in this life, health, loss of loved ones, loss of job, financial crisis,
* We may have to suffer physically, emotionally or mentally, or financially

**ILLUSTRATION:** *A college boy said to his mother one day, "I decided that I want to be a political science major and that I want to clean up the mess in the world." "That’s very nice," said his mother, "YOU CAN GO UPSTAIRS AND START WITH YOUR ROOM."*

* For some people, a part of their suffering deals with their children.
* It may be children who have walked away from their faith
* It may be children who don’t care about their parents.
* It may be children that have gotten into the wrong peer group and gotten involved with drugs, alcohol, or crime.

**ILLUSTRATION:** *A schoolteacher sent this note home to all parents on the first day of school: "If you promise not to believe everything your child says happens at school, I’ll promise not to believe everything he says happens at home."*

* Sometimes young people catch it both at home and at school.
* Kids are people too!
* THEY GET BURDENED TOO!

AND ISN’T THAT TRUE FOR MOST OF US? Our suffering often comes because we make bad choices in life.

**ILLUSTRATION:** *For example, a friend of mine who I knew growing up. One evening he was at the bar with his friend. Another man at the bar who was drunk starting pick on his friend who was a little fellow. He told the drunk man to stop picking on his friend and the drunk man then started picking on my friend. My friend punched the man in order to get him to stop. The man fell back on the flood hit his head and died. Suddenly he was guilty of man slaughter. Just as a result of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. What a mess.*

**ILLUSTRATION: REMEMBER THE STORY OF JOB**? *Satan appeared before God and asked God if he could put Job to the test and God allowed him that to happen. And God allows Satan to put sometimes put us to the test also!*

*Satan likes to cause us trouble in life just because of who we are! Because we are Christians! He likes to try and trip us up anyway he can.*

* We also sometimes suffer in life because of others.
* We’ve all heard stories about those stories about some drunk driving down the street and hits some person and kills them.
* Marriage crumble from being married to an alcoholic spouse.
* THAT’S SUFFERING BECAUSE OF SOMEONE ELSE’S SIN!
* What does it mean to carry burdens – or to suffer under the load of a burden.

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**Brethren, everybody suffers in some form or another in this life or for some reason or another!**

* Life is rough!
* We may experience rotten or broken marriages,
* problem or prodigal children,
* painful and abusive parents,
* bad working conditions,
* financial hardships,
* poor or failing health,
* boredom,
* depression,
* loneliness,
* loss of loved ones...... and the list goes on and on.

**The point is:**

* What can do about our suffering? or
* How can we endure our suffering? Or
* WE NEED HELP! Where can we get it?

**TODAY I WANT TO SHARE THREE DIFFERENT AREAS OF HELP WHEN LIFE THROWS BURDENS AT US!**

1. HELP FROM WITHIN
2. HELP FROM WITHOUT
3. HELP FROM ABOVE

**POINT 1: HELP FROM WITHIN**

**GAL 6:5** "For each one should carry his own load."

* KJV "For every man shall bear his own burden."
* The idea of Gal. 6:1-5 is that of bearing one another’s burdens, but Paul is also saying there are some burdens that we have to bear ourselves.

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**ILLUSTRATION:** *A man in a supermarket was pushing a shopping cart which contained, besides groceries, a screaming baby boy. As the man proceeded down the aisles, he kept saying, "Keep calm, George. Don’t get excited, George. Don’t yell, George."*

*A lady watched with great admiration and finally spoke up and said, "You are certainly to be commended for your patience in trying to quiet little George." "Lady," he said, "I’M GEORGE!"*

**

**Raising kids can be a real burden at times and IT IS A BURDEN THAT BASICALLY WE HAVE TO BEAR BY OURSELVES.**

* Our parents can’t do it for us.
* They may give us adivce, they may babysit occasionally, but overall, raising our children is a burden that we have to bear ourselves!

**The same thing is true of many things in lfie:**

* Our work.
* We may get some help for our work, but overall, it is a burden that we personally have to bear!
* Some help in life must come from our own brains or perhaps our own intestinal fortitude!

ILLUSTRATION: *Over the years, the Nike shoe company has produced some great commercials. One that I particularly liked appeared over 10 years ago and of course, it involved a runner and it was a commercial for their running shoes.*

*English runner, Priscilla Welch was 42 years-old and had just won the New York City Marathon which was a pretty big accomplishment for a 42-year-old. In the commerical, Priscilla was shown running up a hill on some city sidewalk. While running, she says, "A few years ago I would have had trouble walking up this hill. I smoked. I drank. I was fat and I hadn’t done a lick of exercise in my life. So I started jogging. WHO SAYS YOU CAN’T RUN AWAY FROM YOUR PROBLEMS?"*

*And at the end of the commercial a sign appears on the screen with those famous words, "JUST DO IT!"*

**Brethren, there are times when we just have to suck it up and just do it!**

* We can’t lean on anybody else!
* We have to roll up our sleeves and go to work!

**ILLUSTRATION:** *Lou Gehrig never heard of the Nike Shoe Company, but he just did it! He played 15 years at first base for the New York Yankees. He played 2130 consecutive games! He has been called the "the iron man of baseball" for a good reason. After he retired they X-rayed both of his hands and found that every finger had been broken at least one time, YET HE NEVER MISSED A GAME! He played even though he was hurt! He didn’t make any excuses! He bore his own burdens!*

A person riding a bicycle

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**ILLUSTRATION:** A number of years ago, 27-year-old Lance Armstrong did something nearly impossible. Yes the man made some poor choices in his life, he also achieved a lot. He won the cycling world’s most famous event, the 3-week, 2700 mile Tour de France race. THAT’S 2700 MILES ON A BICYCLE!

**But what makes his win even more impressive is the fact that he did it after a three-year bout with cancer!**

* In 1996 he was diagnosed with testicular cancer.
* By the fall, he was not racing his bike, he was trying to survive his cancer which had spread to his abdomen, lungs and brain!
* He had two operations, including brain surgery.
* He endured 12-weeks of chemotherapy.

**WITH SUCH A BURDEN WHO COULD BELIEVE HE WOULD EVER COMPETE AGAIN?**

* Well, he did.
* Lance Armstrong believed in something, either in himself or someone else.
* So he rode 30 to 50 miles every day between chemotherapy treatments.
* He did everything he could to regain his health and his strength - with the idea of becoming a winning cyclist again.
* AND DID HE EVER SUCCEED!

Nike shoe company has run a series of ads making the point that Lance Armstrong is the "first dead man" to win the Tour de France!

Brethren, Lance Armstrong bore his own burden!

**Honestly, there are times when we act like a bunch of wimps.**

* We have a stuffy nose, a little headache, we didn’t sleep well last night and we want to stay home from work.

**ILLUSTRATION:** *One man said, "I like people who crawl in sick rather than those who call in sick."*

**ILLUSTRATION:** *Fanny Crosby, blind from birth, wrote over a thousand hymns. SHE DIDN’T GIVE IN TO HER CONDITION OR CIRCUMSTANCES! She just did it!*

* Sometimes we have to ignore the pain, the hurt, the negative feelings and bear our own burdens!
* Notice the words David in:

**PS 139:14 14I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**

* I happen to believe that we are a lot stronger than we think we are.
* WE ARE THE WONDERFUL CREATION OF GOD!
* We can do more than we think we can!
* We can endure more than we think we can!
* We can bear our own burdens!

So regarding bearing our burdens – we can do it with HELP FROM WITHIN.

**POINT 2 – HELP FROM WITHOUT**

**GAL 6:2 "Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." (KJV)**

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**Brethren, Christians should be in the business of helping one another, bearing one another’s burdens.**

* BUT SOME CHRISTIANS ARE MORE CRITICAL THAN THEY ARE CARING!
* They are more of a hindrance than a help!

**GAL 6:1** **Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently…**

**We Christians are supposed to be in the restoring business:**

* the healing business,
* the putting-back-together business,
* the bearing-burdens business!

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**Everybody makes mistakes in life.**

* Some appear to be more serious than others,
* BUT THE POINT IS: When a fellow Christians makes a mistake, is found in a sin, etc. how do we respond to them or how do we feel about them?

**When someone does something wrong, all some people do is gossip about it.**

* They don’t try to cure the cancer, just spread the disease!
* Legalistic Christians are not interested in helping or healing hurting people, only hammering them!

**HUMOR ILLUSTRATION:** *Mildred the church gossip and self-appointed monitor of the church’s morals, kept sticking her nose into other peoples business. Several members did not approve of her extra-curricular activities, but feared her enough to maintain their silence.*

*She made a mistake, however when she accused Frank, a new member, of being an alcoholic after she saw his old pickup parked in front of the town’s only bar one afternoon. She emphatically told Frank (and several others) that everyone seeing it there would know what he was doing!*

*Frank a man of few words, stare at her for a moment and just turned and walked away. He didn’t explain, defend or deny. He said nothing.*

*Later that evening, Frank quietly parked his pickup in front of Mildred’s house… and left it there all night. You gotta love Frank!*

* As believers it is too easy for us to talk or gossip about the possible flaws we see in other people.
* We often form wrong conclusions and make wrong judgments.
* When we do that we sin.
* None of us have the right to criticize others, condemn others or judge others!

**JS 4:11-12** **11Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor? (NIV)**

* Instead of judging one another or criticizing one another, or gossiping about one another we SHOULD BE IN THE BLESSING BUSINESS!
* The restoring business!
* The healing business!
* The forgiving business!
* The burden-bearing business!

**MATT 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**

**GAL 6:2 2Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**

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* Other translations put it that we are to bear one another’s burdens.
* Help others with the loads they are carrying

**I THES 5:14 14And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.**

* Notice the words we are admonished to encourage the fainthearted, help the weak and be patient with everyone
* All of us will struggle at times that when we need the help of others (fellow believers)

**ILLUSTRATION:**   *In the US Lee Shapiro is a retired judge. His colleagues call "the hugging judge" as opposed to "the hanging judge."*

*Judge Shapiro has a bumper sticker on his car which reads, "DON’T BUG ME! HUG ME!" Some years he created what he called his HUGGER KIT. On the outside it reads, "A heart for a hug." It contains 30 little red embroideredhearts with stickum on the back. Judge Shapiro will take out his HUGGER KIT and go around offering people a little red heart for a hug.*

*One time he was challenged to give away some hearts for hugs on the streets of San Francisco. First, he stopped a woman walking down the street and said, "Hi, I’m Lee Shapiro, the hugging judge. I’m giving out these hearts in exchange for a hug." "Sure," she replied and gave him a big hug.*

*Next, he saw a meter maid and offered her a heart for a hug. And again, he got another hug.*

*A TV commentator said, "Look, here comes a bus. San Francisco bus drivers are the toughest, crabbiest, meanest people in the whole town. Let’s see if you get him to hug you."*

*As the bus pulled to the curb, Judge Shaprio said, "Hi, I’m Lee Shapiro, the hugging judge. Yours has to be one of the most stressful jobs in the world. I’m offering hugs to people today to lighten the load a little. Would you like one?"*

*The big 6’ 2", 230-lb. bus driver stepped out of his bus and said, "SURE, WHY NOT?"*

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**It has been said that everyone needs 4 hugs a day just for survival.**

* Anything less and you won’t survive (and a lot of people aren’t surviving).
* We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance.
* AND WE NEED 12 HUGS A DAY FOR GROWTH.

**So let’s all stand and start growing! Don’t stop until you give or get 12 hugs!**

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**Brethren, it is said that hugging is healthy.**

* It improves the immune system,
* it makes us more patient
* it reduces stress and anxiety
* release dopamine source of good feelings and motivation
* helps us endure pain and stressful situation
* releases oxytocin which fills us with happiness
* conveys many emotions without us saying a word
* balances the nervous system
* provides a strong display of love and support IT ALSO
* it induces sleep (Oh no! I’m not through with my sermon yet),
* it’s invigorating,
* it’s rejuvenating, and
* it has no unpleasant side effects.

**More than that, when hugging is given from a heart of love, it heals hurts and bears burdens!**

* And that’s exactly what we’re supposed to do.
* BE A HUGGER!
* BE A HEALER!
* BE A BURDEN-BEARER!

So we have talked about burden bearing getting help from within and secondly help from without.

**THIRD POINT – GETTING HELP FROM ABOVE**

**PS 55:22 Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.**

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* We are asked to cast our cares and burdens on the Lord and he will sustain us.
* Are we letting Him do that or are we trying to carry the burdens we have all by our selves.

**Matt 11:28 28“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**

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* Jesus said “Come to me, all who are weary, tired and burdened and he will give us rest.
* Are we taking Jesus at his word, HE SAYS COME TO ME WITH YOUR BURDENS AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST
* He doesn’t say I might give you rest.

**I PET 5:7 7Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.**

* Jesus said we are to cast all our cares on Him because He cares for us.

**HEB 4:16 16Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

* Generally, there comes a time in nearly every person’s life that they find they must look up to the Lord for help with their burdens!
  + A person may not be able to help themselves and
  + other human help may be good, BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH!
  + That is when we must turn to the Lord and ask for mercy and grace for our burdens.

**ILLUSTRATION:** *Abraham Lincoln once said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go." HAVE YOU BEEN THERE? AND HAVE YOU DONE THAT? Got down on your knees before the Lord?*

**The problem with many of us is that we only turn to God in emergencies.**

* We think they don’t need God at other times. T
* WE TREAT GOD LIKE HE IS SOME SORT OF "SPARE TIRE" TO BE USED ONLY IN TIMES OF TROUBLE.

**ILLUSTRATION:** *At one time three men in the church became regular customers at a certain restaurant in town called the “Southern BBQ”. Those three men went to that restaurant every day and often at least twice a day. And when they walked in they got waited on quickly! Why? BECAUSE THEY WERE REGULAR, FAITHFUL CUSTOMERS!*

**Could it be the same with the Lord?**

* Could it be that if we’re a regular, faithful customer that He’ll be quicker to hear our prayers than those who just come out of desperation?

**ILLUSTRATION:** *It’s like the little girl who said, "I go to church every Sunday so that when I am old and they carry me out in a coffin, the Lord won’t ask, ’WHO IS IT?’"*

**I PET 3:12 12For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”**

* Do we come regularly to the Father in prayer, does He know us are His ears attentive to our prayer?

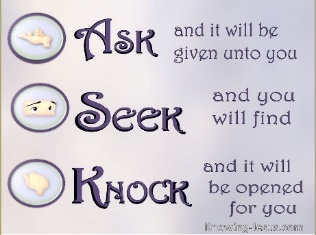
**ILLUSTRATION:** *A boy and his dad were hiking together on a familiar path. As they made a sharp turn in a narrow section of the path they came across a big rock blocking their path. The little boy asked his father, "Do you think I can move it?" His dad said, "Why, of course, if you use all your strength. I’m sure you can move it."*

*The little boy chose an angle of attack on the big rock and began pushing with everything he had. He grunted and growned. Summoning all the strength he had, he pushed and pushed but to no avail. Finally, in desperation he said, "You were wrong, Dad, I just can’t do it."*

*His dad looked him in the eyes, smiled and said, "NO, SON, YOU HAVEN’T USED ALL YOUR STRENGTH YET. I’M RIGHT HERE AND YOU HAVEN’T ASKED ME TO HELP YOU!"*

**MATT 7:7-11** **7“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.**

**8For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.**

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**9“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?**

**10Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?**

**11If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!**

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* Brethren, in the midst of all our heartaches and burdens, our Father in heaven is saying to us,
* "I’m right here.
* Have you tried asking, and you tried seeking or have you knocked at my door for help.
* All you have to do is ask me to help you with your burden."

James 4 tells us – we have not, we don’t get God’s help BECAUSE WE ASK NOT, or we ask for the wrong things or reasons.

**PS 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.**

**IN CONCLUSION:**

**ILLUSTRATION:** *On lady who attended a Bible Study meeting said she was always blessed by the words in the Bible, "AND IT CAME TO PASS."*

*She said, "When I have upset by troubles in my life I go to the Bible and it doesn’t take long before I read and come across the words ’IT CAME TO PASS.’ And I say, ’BLESS THE LORD, IT DIDN’T COME TO STAY, IT CAME TO PASS!’"*

**Brethren, our burdens in life did not come to stay with us and they will not stay with us, forever on and on.**

* THEY HAVE COME, BUT THEY WILL PASS!
* Remember our three points from today
  + (1) With the strength God gives us,
  + (2) with the strength of our Christian brothers and sisters, and most importantly,
  + (3) WITH THE LORD’S HELP, OUR TROUBLES WILL PASS AWAY!

Let’s give our lives to God. If you don’t need Him now, remember we will need him someday! WHY NOT MAKE IT NOW?

Ps AND YES DON’T FORGET TO BRING YOUR BURDENS AND GIVE THEM TO HIM.

**CLOSING PRAYER**