

Leaders: Have you replied to the September 2nd or 9th Leader Information meeting? Important info will be shared about the future of small groups at Harvest and you'll be able to get questions answered as well

LEARN

Read Galatians 6:1-5 together. What stands out from the text and what was encouraging/challenging from the sermon on Sunday?

What does verse 1 tell us about how Christians should approach one another regarding issues of sin in their life? ("Spiritual" in this context is mature and consistently in step with the Spirit, bearing his fruit. A spirit of gentleness can include being direct or "forward", but is not aggressive or condemning. Be mindful of your own sin proclivities and do not stand in judgment of another Christian as you seek to restore them.)

What is the difference between a burden and a load? Why is it important that we make this distinction according to the text?

(Burden – difficult and heavy life circumstances needing the help of others to get through. We're not meant to walk alone in these. May include consequences of sin or foolishness, but are also realities outside of our control like physical illness. Load – The "traveler's pack" God has given each of us to be capable to carry. It's our responsibility to faithfully walk in the life he has given us, depending on the strength he supplies.)

PRACTICE

How are Christians uniquely equipped by God to:

1. Restore a Christian caught in a transgression (sin)?
2. Bear one another's burdens?
3. Bear their own load?

(Leaders: spend time going through each of these 3 slowly. Below are some ideas/notes for each question:

1. This is for the "spiritual" – Spirit filled and walking by the Spirit, growing in maturity, depending on Word of God, evidencing fruit of Spirit. Leads us to be gentle – humble, not aggressive. And careful, aware of our sin and proclivities. We pursue in love with the persuasive Word of God to restore fellow Christians.
2. Go back to v. 13-14. It's through love and in love that we come alongside others in their hurts and weaknesses to bear heavy burdens. This isn't sin, but circumstances... it may be consequences of sin, but we have the Holy Spirit's help and greater strength than we sometimes think we do to make a burden lighter for others, even while we need others' help with our own burdens.
3. When we walk by the Spirit, bearing his fruit, we take personal responsibility for the "stuff" in our life. This is the God-ordained load he has given us to carry, like a traveler's own pack. We're able, in his strength, to carry this, then helped by others in our burdens while having the grace and strength to likewise help others in their burdens.)

In order for people to help bear your burdens, they need to know the burdens. What are some of the burdens being faced or dealt with in our group right now? Let's take all the time needed tonight to be made aware of them and then pray for one another.

(Leaders: There may be nothing more important that you can do on this particular night than take the time to listen to one another to be made aware of burdens. This is not sharing random prayer requests, but personal sharing of current challenges and burdens. Set the stage by being prepared to share transparently yourself. These could be emotional, physical, relational as well as mental burdens. This may only be the beginning of sharing one another's burdens, but it's a vital first step.)

CHANGE

Have you at times been indifferent to the burdens of other Christians? Why does that happen in your heart? After spending some time discussing this, come to the Lord together asking for a changed heart and renewed eagerness to “enter in” and bear one another’s burdens.