

# What to Do With Life's Burdens

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**Bible Text:** Galatians 6:2,5; Psalm 55:22

**Preached on:** Friday, January 1, 1971

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I want to speak this morning about a subject which I have entitled, "What to Do With Life's Burdens." I have three texts of Scripture. The first two you will find in Galatians chapter six and verse two.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

The same chapter, Galatians six and verse five.

"For every man shall bear his own burden."<sup>2</sup>

And then in that great psalm which we read, Psalm 55 and verse 22:

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."<sup>3</sup>

First of all, Galatians 6:5:

"For every man shall bear his own burden."<sup>4</sup>

That is the burden shouldered, taking it up, carrying it, discharging the burden of service.

I want to talk, first of all, then, upon the burden shouldered. Then in Galatians six and verse two we read:

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."<sup>5</sup>

That is the burden shared, the sharing of the burden, mutual burden bearing whereby as believers we share the problems and the difficulties and the life's problems and burdens of others.

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<sup>1</sup> Galatians 6:2.

<sup>2</sup> Galatians 6:5.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 55:22

<sup>4</sup> Galatians 6:5.

<sup>5</sup> Galatians 6:2.

And then when we come to verse 22 of Psalm 55:

“Cast thy burden upon the LORD.”<sup>6</sup>

There we have the burden shed, the shedding of the burden, the complete rolling of the burden, casting it upon the Lord.

So we are going to talk simply about the burden shouldered and the burden shared and the burden shed.

Look at this first Scripture, Galatians six and verse five, “For every man shall bear his own burden,”<sup>7</sup> the burden shouldered.

Life is very much an isolated thing. We enter this world alone. We fight many of life’s greatest battles alone. In the end we pass unaccompanied, humanly speaking out of time into eternity. And in a very real sense each individual is isolated and separated to himself.

This is true also in regard to the work and to the service which is ours. The Bible says, “To every man his work.”<sup>8</sup> It doesn’t say to every man a work or it doesn’t say to every man some work. It says, “To every man his work.”<sup>9</sup> And there is a particular service, a particular duty that you and I personally as individuals must perform. There is no shirking from it. We have got to face it. And in this sense every man must bear his own burden. We have to shoulder this burden.

The particular duties that are yours, no one else can do. The particular duties that are mine, no one else can perform. There are circumstances in Christian service which we personally have got to carry for ourselves. That is what Paul says when he says, “For every man shall bear his own burden.”<sup>10</sup>

So we have got to faithfully shoulder the burden of service.

There are many people who would like to roll their own responsibility on to others. There are many people who would like other people to carry the burden that they must carry. There are many people who would like to find some way of escape from facing up to the imperative duties which are theirs as believers in Christ and as members of the Church of Jesus Christ. But as a Christian and as a Church member, you have to shoulder your burden. You have to carry your own particular role. You have to face up to your own particular duties. And failure to do this will not only bring a spiritual blight upon yourself, but will bring a spiritual blight upon the Church and congregation in which you are associated.

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<sup>6</sup> Psalm 55:22.

<sup>7</sup> Galatians 6:5.

<sup>8</sup> Mark 13:34.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Galatians 6:5.

Now let us turn to Galatians 6:2. Here we have a different truth. Here we have the burden shared.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”<sup>11</sup>

If you look at the previous verse you will find what the apostle is getting at, a case of backsliding in the Church.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.<sup>12</sup>

Some time ago in the session room of this church there was a gathering of our own church session and a gathering of the office bearers of one of our churches. A dear man in that church had been overtaken in a fault.

I remember as we knelt to pray. There was a very difficult atmosphere. Anybody that has ever tried to handle cases of discipline will appreciate what I am saying. And at the end of that prayer meeting that dear man overcame by repentance, shed some bitter tears and the following Lord’s Day in the Church to which he belonged he stood up. He requested the preacher for a moment to speak and he put right publicly what had been wrong and the minster rang me up and he said, “Ian, we had a great meeting this morning. The Spirit of God breathed upon the congregation as that man put everything right.”

We didn’t meet in that room to condemn that man. We met in that room to restore him in the Spirit of meekness considering ourselves that we also could be tempted.

You know, among fundamentalist believers there is a very harsh spirit when a brother is overtaken in a fault and this ought not to be. And some people think it is their duty to gossip about another man’s failures, to give it the largest amount of publicity possible and it is their duty to tread such a one into the ground. This is not the teaching of the Word of God. There is a bearing of one another’s burdens in the case of discipline in the Church. We need to stand in that man’s shoes. We need to look at the temptation that overcame him as he looked at it. We need to put ourselves into similar circumstances and instead of adjudicating in a self righteous arrogant manner, we should have the spirit of meekness considering ourselves lest we also be tempted.

There are burdened souls in every congregation. They do not require your criticism, my brother. They require your help. They do not require an arrogant indictment of self righteousness. They need your hand to help them carry the load.

I read a story the other day of a little girl and her mother was an invalid. And every day it was this little girl’s duty to go across the roadway to a shop and bring over a pail of milk

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<sup>11</sup> Galatians 6:2.

<sup>12</sup> Galatians 6:1-2.

for the household in which she lived. And this day she got across the road and got the pail of milk and she came running back and she tripped and she fell and all the milk spilled out on the roadway. And when she picked herself up there was a big man standing there and he let a great laugh and he said, “My, won’t you be severely beaten when you get home to your mother.”

The little girl looked at him and she smiled. She said, “No, sir. My mother always gives me a second chance. My mother always gives me a second chance.”

Let me tell you, friend, there is more than a second chance with God. God doesn’t treat his people harshly. Do you remember Peter was told to forgive and over and over again. And hallelujah, Jesus forgives us over and over and over again.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens.”<sup>13</sup>

We need to go out after those that are burdened—and there are many of them. In this congregation today there are those that have burdens that are tugging at their heart strings that no one else knows anything about.

My dear burdened Christian, I would like to help you with the promise of God and with the comfort of the Scriptures. I would like to go to you, my brother and sister in Christ and say, “Let me share your problem. Let me hear of your sorrows. Let me talk to you about the promises of God.”

This week a member of this congregation came to see me in my study, a woman with a great burden. She sat down. She burst into tears and she started to tell me of the hard, bitter fight of the last six weeks that she had had because of a problem in her life.

It was my great joy to comfort her from the Scriptures, to not only comfort her from the Scriptures, but then to help her with this problem, a problem that had become to her a veritable mountain. But when faced in the sympathy of Christianity, was easily solved.

You would have seen that dear believer going from my office. She came in burdened, tears in her eyes, sorrow upon her soul. She went away light hearted, the burden was lifted. She had shared it with a fellow believer and things were different now.

She said to me as she left the office, she said, “I feel so changed now. I came in worn out and done out. But you have given me hope. You have given me strength to go out and fight again the battle of life.”

This is the duty, friend, of the people of God. Let this church be a church where believers share one another’s burdens. Let us be a people who help to carry someone else’s load. Let us be a people who will bear sympathetically the burdens and the problems of others.

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<sup>13</sup> Galatians 6:2.

You know, the greatest thing in the world is a word of encouragement. You husbands know that. When your wife encourages you, you go out stronger than ever. And you wives know that when your husband encourages you. You are a different woman.

You know, there are some people in God's house and in God's church and they are just like pails of cold water. They throw cold water over everything that people would attempt to do. They deal in and peddle discouragement.

You know, encouragement is the greatest thing in the world. I was reading the other day the account of a fire in a hotel and everybody had been saved and the firemen thought that they had done their work completely and then there appeared on the top floor a pale faced, trembling woman. And she looked through the window surrounded by the smoke and the flames and again the ladders were put up and the fireman braved the heat and the smoke and he got to the window and he put his arms through the window and seized this woman and brought her out. And then it seemed as if overcome with the flames he was going to stumble and both of them were going to fall to the ground.

And do you know what the fire chief said? He said to his men, "Let's give him a great hearty cheer." And all the firemen stood around the end of the ladder and they cheered. And up yonder among the smoke and the flames that cheer brought encouragement to that man and he steadied himself and he came down the ladder safely and he rescued the woman and rescued himself.

To encourage someone who is fighting a hard battle is our task. Some brother who in the loneliness of the task is almost going to stumble and God knows there are some Christians about Belfast that at that time would just kick you, but what are we to do? We have to speak that word of encouragement, that word of cheer, that word of help, the very word that is needed.

There is a member of this church, a man, a hard man when he was in his sin. You know how he got saved. He got saved because a member of this church traveling on a bus one day spoke a word of encouragement to that man and he said to her, he said, "What church do you go to?"

She said, "I go to Mr. Paisley's church."

And that was all he said. And the following Lord's Day he came and he got saved and he said to me, "You know, that member of yours, she spoke a word of encouragement when I was right down in a dark valley. And I said, 'If that is the sort of members that church has, there must be something in it.'"

And he came and found this Savior and today he is rejoicing in the power of the blood of the Lamb.

Would you help to share somebody's burden this week? Would you go out and try to find someone who is downcast and depressed and disappointed and overcome? Would

you go and take an end of that heavy load and help to carry it for them. Please, God, if they are a believer you will give them fresh hope and if they are not saved, your very action could bring them to Jesus Christ.

So let us turn to this last great verse, Psalm 55 and verse 22. We have looked at the burden shouldered and the burden shared. Now we have the burden shed.

“Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee.”<sup>14</sup>

You know, this is a great psalm. If you look with me at it you will find what the psalmist wanted to do when he was in trouble and there are things you shouldn't do when you are in trouble. But the psalmist was a man of like passions as we are. And what did he do? Look at it, verse two. He complained. He complained.

How many of us when we are in trouble we are filled with self pity and we say, “Poor me. Nobody else ever suffered the way I suffer. Nobody else had trouble like me. Nobody else was mistreated the way I have been mistreated.”

And he complained.

A Christian should not be a complainer because we have to cast our burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain us.

How many complainers have we? Is that what you do, grumble the whole week through, complain and mourn in your complaint?

You know, there are some Christians and when I see them in the street I beat a hasty retreat for I have enough problems of my own than to hear their complaints. And I would be happy to share their burdens, but they are not burdens at all. They are complaining against their circumstances.

Paul said, “I have learned,” and you have to learn, “in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”<sup>15</sup>

My, cast your burden upon the Lord. He complained.

And here is another thing he did. He lost hope. Look at verse five. He was overwhelmed.

Many a Christian allows problems, difficulties, burdens to overwhelm them. And when you look at them instead of seeing their selves, you only see their burden. Their burden becomes bigger than their own self. They are overwhelmed.

Is there some Christian allowing a burden to overwhelm? The answer is: Cast your burdens upon the Lord.

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<sup>14</sup> Psalm 55:22.

<sup>15</sup> Philippians 4:11.

But that is not at all, verse six. Some Christians want to run away.

“Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.”<sup>16</sup>

I was at a wedding the other day and a man told a story. He said this man and his wife when they had a bit of a row they always prayed and he said this day both of them had a terrible row. And Mary said, “We had better get down to pray.”

So they got down to pray and this foolish woman quoted this text. She said, “Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.”<sup>17</sup>

And her husband said, “Lord, feather her and let her go.”

Yes.

My friend, let me tell you. You can't run away. The answer to running away is, “Cast your burden upon the Lord.”<sup>18</sup>

He complained. Many times we have grumbled when we shouldn't have. And many times we have been overwhelmed when we shouldn't have.

How many times have we said, “Oh, that I could run away. Oh, for the wings of a dove that I might fly away and be at rest”?

Oh, my friend, there is a whole lot of us and we have been guilty of this sin, haven't we?

You know what the Lord says?

“Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”<sup>19</sup>

There are two things God does: sustenance and sufferance, two good words. He sustains and he suffers. You cast your burden upon the Lord what will he do? He will sustain you. He will give you strength to carry the Load. It is good, says the book, to bear the burden in your youth.

“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Psalm 55:6.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 55:22.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Isaiah 40:31.

So don't be a complainer. And don't be overwhelmed. And don't say, "I want to fly away and run away."

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee."<sup>21</sup>

There was a dear man. When he had one darling little girl, just five years of age. And very suddenly his dear wife and partner was struck down by death. He was a believer. And after the simple funeral service his friends said to him, "You know, you should leave your home. Come and stay with us."

And he said, "No. I have got to go back and get the victory with the circumstances all around me in my home."

So that night he returned with his little one to his home. The little girl was heartbroken. He undressed her and put her nightdress on and laid her in her little cot that her mother had always done, but her little heart was broken and she sobbed and she cried for many an hour.

The father, too, retired for the night and he put out his hand and he put it through the cot rails and he held the little one's hand. And in a short time the little one stopped crying. And then again she started to cry and she said, "Daddy, the night is very dark and I feel very lonely."

And the father said, "My pet, don't feel lonely. Come in beside me."

And he took her into his own bed. He held her to his own bosom and very soon she was asleep.

And as she lay sleeping on his bosom, God spoke to this dear man and he said, "For you, the night is dark. And there is a great sob in your heart, but you can come into the father's bosom and there in the warmth and comfort, loneliness will give place to fellowship and healing will give place to the sorrow you have experienced."

And that man lifted his eyes to God and he said, "Thank you, Lord, for teaching me the lesson," and he cast his burden upon the Lord and the Lord sustained him.

My mother used to sing an old hymn.

If your body suffer pain,  
And your health you can't regain,  
And your almost sinking in despair.  
Just remember in his Word,  
How he feeds the little bird,  
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.

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<sup>21</sup> Psalm 55:22.

Leave it there, leave it there.  
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.

Friend, just cast your burden today at the Savior's feet. And if you are not a Christian, bring the burden of your sin to Jesus and he will cleanse and forgive you and send you away with every burden lifted and salvation, the portion of your heart.