Going Home, part 1

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. We'll reward you.

Lord, we ask that you would take the reading of your word and bless it. Bring understanding to us. We pray, Lord, that you would help us to listen to your word as it is taught, that it would be received, that we would obey, that we would believe.
Lord, that we would be caring people, burden-bearing people. We pray you would use this time of fellowship around your word to instruct us and to encourage us.
We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. All right. Well, good evening. It is my privilege to be able to share with you tonight around the theme of focused on bearing one another's burdens.
If you're new to us or it's been just a little bit of time has passed, but this fall on Sunday evenings, we have taken time to walk through, our pastor did, through the Lord's Prayer and walked us through that.
[1:18] And, of course, just had published a book based on that sermon series. So I highly recommend that. It was a great series, just walking through line by line the Lord's Prayer.

But then we've looked as a staff walking through the focus and the focus that we have as a church on several different areas. So we've already looked at focused on worship.
We've looked at focused on the supremacy of God and then focused on the preaching of the word.
And tonight my responsibility is looking at focused on bearing one another's burdens.
It has been rightly said that the church is not a civic organization. It's not a country club. It's not a political activist organization.
The church is the body of Christ. And we as the body of Christ are a family. And it's important for us to remember that when we're looking at examining what it means to be focused as a church family on the right things.
[2:28] Or not just the right things, but the biblical things. That we would be faithful to Scripture in all things. And so what does it mean and what does it look like for a church to be focused on bearing one another's burdens?

And you can go ahead and open to Galatians chapter 6. Galatians chapter 6. That'll be our text for tonight. But before we get there, I just want to read for you.
It's such a broad subject, even throughout Scripture, when we talk about bearing one another's burdens.
Colossians 3.12 says, It says, This is how we endure and put up with one another when there is not an obvious sin.
This means putting up with one another's imperfections. Putting up with the strange values of one another. And putting up with one another's idiosyncrasies and habits.
[4:06] So a whole message could be constructed just on bearing with one another. But we'll not focus there tonight. But Romans 15.1 says, We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak.

And not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good to build him up. For Christ did not please himself as it is written, The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.
So another way that we bear in the church is bearing with the weaknesses of those who are without strength. Or we who are strong have that obligation in the body of Christ.
And then of course Romans chapter 12 tells us that we are to weep with those who weep. And we are to mourn with those who mourn. And we are to rejoice with those who rejoice.

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It's another carries with it still the same idea of being linked together. And it's a way in which we are involved in each other's lives.
[5:18] But then there is our text for tonight. Galatians chapter 6. Specifically we'll look at really verses 1 and 2.

But I want to focus just on really verses 1 and 2. But I'm going to read 6, 1 through 5 just to give us a little more context.
Reading from the ESV 6, 1. 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.
[6:33] For each will have to bear his own load. So the main point for tonight is we as a church are to be focused on bearing one another's burdens.

Bearing one another's burdens. That is the primary theme, and we see it right here in our text. But what I want to do in the spirit of a semester spent in hermeneutics is to just walk you through one way in which one can arrive at observation, interpretation, and then leads to application.
And one way to do that is to follow the steps of the five W's and the one H. So you know maybe the five W's being who, what, where, when, why, and then of course the one H being how.
So who, what, where, why, when, and then how. So let's just look at this text, and we'll just start, that's really the outline.
We'll look, number one, at who. Who is Paul speaking to here? And then we'll look at just a little bit of interpretation before, at the end, I've lumped all of the application together.
[7:57] So we'll just walk through the application or the implications there at the end. And so, who? Who is involved in this particular text?

Well, right here we see brothers. So he speaks first of all as those who are in the family of God. Brothers. Brothers and sisters.
We call each other that in the family of God because that's what we are. When we have been redeemed, when we've been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, then we find ourselves in the family of God.
And again, we're not a civic organization, we're not a political activist group, we're not a country club, but we are a family. And so as family, we are known to one another as brothers and sisters.
And so he's addressing believers, those who are in the family of God. But then he'd take note of another who here. And that is, if anyone, if anyone is caught in any transgression.
[9:08] So he's speaking to an obligation that one would have for or towards another. He's giving them an imperative.

He's speaking to them, really, to get involved in each other's lives. Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual.
That's another answer to who. The brothers that are to approach those who are caught in any transgression are to be spiritual.
And then they are to do something. Of course, we'll get there here in a moment. But just to pause here, when we look at who, and specifically looking at brothers and then you who are spiritual.
Is he speaking about some elite class in the family of God? Is he speaking about those who have some esoteric experience?
[10:11] Is he speaking about some group that has some special knowledge? No, our text, really, if we were to read the surrounding context of 6.1, would tell us who the spiritual are.

Look back with me in 5.16. 5.16 says, But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do.
But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now, the works of the flesh are evident. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.
I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

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[11:30] Note the contrast here. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.
So you see it right there throughout that entire text of the description of the spiritual brother. Of those who are spiritual.
They walk by the Spirit. They are led by the Spirit. They are those who the fruit of the Spirit is evident in their life.
[12:34] They live by the Spirit. All descriptions of the spiritual person. So brothers, you who are spiritual describes every believer.

In fact, one commentator said that it is not a mark of maturity, for he doesn't reference maturity here. What he references is, are you one of those who walks by the Spirit?
Are you one of those who lives by the Spirit? Are you one of those who are led by the Spirit? And the longer you are walking by the Spirit and led by the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit, it leads to greater maturity.
But he says, you who are spiritual. He doesn't say you who are mature. Simply you who are spiritual, speaking and looking back at those who live by the Spirit.
So, then there is also the anyone who is caught in any transgression. Well, that leads us to what?
[13:51] What is to take place after we determine who is involved? Who is involved is a spiritual person and then one who is caught in transgression.

So, it involves more than one party. And what he is going to tell them to do, again, you will not find in any civic organization or any political activist group or any country club, but you find it in the family of God.
You have an obligation. There is something that you are to do. You who are spiritual are to restore. Restore. Restore him.
Well, in the Greek, that word carries with it the idea to set a broken bone back in place. When used in a medical sense, the idea is that that which is broken needs to be aligned and it needs to be put back in place so healing can happen.
Or, it's also used in Scripture even to mend a fishing net. So, there's a tear there and you are going to mend the fishing net. So, you're going to restore it.
[15:06] As one man said, restoration cannot be accomplished without confrontation. Restoration cannot be accomplished without confrontation.

You see, this is exactly what Paul is saying. That one who is spiritual is to go to one who is caught in any transgression. It means you're to be involved in another person's life.
That's what it means then, not only to restore this person, but then also what he says here is to bear one another's burdens.
Again, in the original language, the idea here is a heavy load. It is an oppressive weight that is to be carried over a long distance.
Now, if you're an astute reader, and maybe you've already taken note of this, it appears there is a contradiction that takes place. Because he says here, in verse 2, bear one another's burdens.
[16:16] And then in verse 5, he says, for each will have to bear his own load. Well, which one is it, Paul? Which one are we to be about?

In here, again, knowledge of the original language will help you, or a good study Bible will help you, in that what Paul does here in the Greek for load, bear his own load, is a different word that he uses from verse 2, bearing one another's burdens.
The bearing one another's burdens, in verse 2, speaks to an oppressive weight. He's crushed under the weight of.
Whereas in verse 5, what carries with it is the idea of a soldier's knapsack, or a backpack. So it's something that can be carried over the long haul.
In fact, it is your responsibility to carry this. That's his point. Each one of us has a responsibility. So what happens is, one who is spiritual is to get involved in another person's life, and this other person has been caught in any transgression.

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[17:40] So it leads to a question of, when? When do I get involved in another person's life? Well, the answer is right there, because one has been caught in any transgression.

Some commentators believe that it could be that this person is caught red-handed. And we all could think back to the woman caught in the act of adultery, who's dragged out before Jesus in John chapter 8.
That carries with it the idea that this person was caught red-handed in a transgression. Another interpretation is simply that one has been ensnared or caught, that it's taken them by surprise, in that they give in to common sins.
And so all of us are guilty of giving in to sin, and giving in to the flesh. And this person may in fact give in to sin, and the spiritual one comes to restore him in a spirit of gentleness, and to bear the burden of the other.
So that is the when, because sin is sinister and sly, we are to be involved in each other's lives. It's all carried here in this text.
[19:04] Where? Where do we do this? Well, this is clearly within the confines of community, within the confines of the family of God. You see it back in verses 25 and 26.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. You see, the one another's point to the community, or the body of Christ.
And this is where it takes place, is that I would go, when one has been ensnared or caught in any transgression, within the confines of Christian community.
And then, of course, how? How are we to do this? Well, verses 1 through 3, we see it in a spirit of gentleness.
Not superiority, not self-righteousness, but in a spirit of gentleness. Not only in a spirit of gentleness, but also being on guard, keeping watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
[20:19] And then, we are to go in humility. Verse 3, 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. See, comparisons, and this idea of keeping the law.
It's all wrapped up in the entire book of Galatians. Preaching another gospel, that we have to keep the Mosaic law, plus Christ. And Paul is saying, no, it's salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, and Christ alone.
And why do we do this? So we fulfill the law of Christ. And so fulfill the law of Christ, verse 2 says. It's the only time we see this here, worded this way, in the New Testament, the law of Christ would point us back to John 13, 34, 35.
[21:32] By this, the world will know you are my disciples, that you love one another. The law of Christ. He says it even here in Galatians 5, verse 14, or even beginning back in 13, for you were called the 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. The law of Christ speaking to the law of love.
And so here, as we walk through these verses, we get a pretty good understanding here that we are to have, there are some implications that come from the text, or direct applications that we can point to in our lives that come right out of the text that ultimately lead to bearing one another's burdens.
Here's number one. We must walk in faithfulness and obedience, or, to use the language of this text, keeping in step with the Spirit so that we are useful in the family of God.
[23:05] Let me say that again. We must walk in faithfulness and obedience, or keeping in step with the Spirit, to be useful in the family of God. You see, what we're addressing here, what Paul is addressing here, is the spiritual one gets involved in the life of another.

It's what it means to bear one another's burdens. It's to get involved in another person's life. It's what it means to live in the family of God.
That we know each other. That we pray for one another. That we're kind to one another. That we forgive one another. That we bear one another's burdens.
That we confront one another. See, all of this is found throughout the New Testament. And we want to be those who are found as spiritual.

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And how are you spiritual? Well, you walk by the Spirit. It's 516 to 26. You walk by the Spirit. You're filled with the Spirit.
[24:15] You're led by the Spirit. And you live by the Spirit. So that you can be useful in another person's life. life.

Now, this takes us back to what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 7. Many times people use this text. In fact, turn with me there.
Matthew chapter 7. Many times people go to this passage of Scripture in order to basically tell you to stay out of their life.
Who are you to judge? Well, Jesus addresses this in Matthew 7 verse 1. Judge not that you be not judged.
For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged. And with the measure you use it, it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
[25:19] Or how can you say to your brother, let me take the speck out of your eye when there is a log in your own eye? You hypocrite.

First, take the log out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. See what happened there?
Jesus is saying, listen, you need to examine yourself, first, and don't be a hypocrite. You need to see the log that is in your own eye. Before you judge, before you cast judgment, then you need to examine yourself under the word of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, examining yourself, and then when you have addressed the sin in your life, when you have addressed the log in your own life, then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.
See, we want to be the spiritual so that we can restore one who is caught in any transgression and so that we can bear one another's burdens.
And the way that we're useful in this is if we walk in faithfulness and obedience, we're keeping in step with the Spirit.
[26:48] Number two, another implication or application is this, we need each other. I need you, and you need me, because sin is so sinister and deceiving.

We need each other. I need you, and you need me, because sin is so sinister and deceiving. You see, life in the community, life in the family of God, speaks to being involved in each other's lives. And part of being involved in each other's lives is not only confrontation that carries with it in a spirit of gentleness, in humility, being on guard, but I'm still going to seek to restore you, or to put you back in place within the family of God.
But I need you in my life as well. You see, because there can be times in my life when I need you to speak to me, and to address me, and to point out where sin may be evident in my life.
That's what it means to live in the body of Christ, is that we would need each other and be there for each other. Again, the very word picture of bearing one another's burdens is that you would come up underneath and help to bear some of the weight that is coming down on the other person.
[28:30] And as that weight is oppressive, that you come alongside and you just bear it so that it's more manageable for them. Well, speaking of sin, he is speaking here of restoring one, setting him back in place.

See, even Paul would address this in Corinth when he puts the man out of fellowship, and he tells the body of Christ to put the man out of fellowship, and then 2 Corinthians, he tells them to welcome him back in for such is that the punishment has been received, and so restore.
Why? Because the enemy is scheming. He seeks to discourage and dishearten those who have sinned.
But you see, the spiritual one comes along and says, if we confess our sins. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, 1 John 1.9.
The spiritual one comes along and says, listen, if you'll cry out, have mercy on me, O God. Blot out my transgression, wash me with hyssop, restore unto me the joy of my salvation, Psalm 51.
[29:54] He forgives. we need each other. I need you and you need me. And you see, something happens here if we have an attitude that is one of arrogance or self-importance.

If we think we can go at this alone by ourselves, we're individuals and we're independent. I love what one man said, self-importance leads to two failures.

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Number one, a refusal to bear one another's burdens. See, if you're so self-important, you don't get involved in the lives of other people because you're only focused on yourself.
Why would I get involved in other people's lives? It's all about me. But then the second is a refusal to let others bear your burdens.
The arrogant one says, I don't need anybody. And the reality is, you do. You need one who ultimately bore the burden of your sin, namely Jesus Christ.
[31:17] You can't save yourself only Christ could save you. You come impoverished. You come as a beggar saying, have mercy on me, oh God, I'm a sinner.

And we find out the longer we journey this Christian life, that just as we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, and Christ alone, we will not journey in this life alone.
He didn't call us to being alone. He called us to Himself and then to community so that we would confront one another, pray for one another, bear one another's burdens, all the one another's found throughout Scripture.
Number three, we must be willing to get involved in other people's lives. We must be willing to get involved in other people's lives.
I love the title of a book that came out not long ago, and it simply said, people are messy. So true.
[32:31] Sin leads to disorder and destruction and chaos. Sin ultimately messes people's lives up.

And sin will lead to messy people. And you who are spiritual aren't to walk on the other side of the road and simply say, I'm praying for you.
you go and you kneel down. And you begin to clean out the wounds.
You begin to bandage. You place them on the donkey. You take them to the inn.
You pay for the room in the inn. that's what it looks like to be involved in others' lives.
[33:37] Not a passing trite comment, but action that I'm willing to walk this road with you.

I'm willing to meet with you. I'm willing to pray with you. I'm willing to confront you. I'm willing to be patient with you. But we must be willing to get involved in people's lives and with that will come a mess.
But aren't you glad that our Savior chose to get involved in our lives? He didn't leave us on our own. In fact, He willingly left His rightful place and glory and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. He became one of us rebels, sinners, those that would even cry out, crucify, crucify, all because He would bear the burden of your sin and my sin.
And then He calls His people to do the same. We get involved in others' lives. That's what it means to bear one another's burdens.
[35:05] Now, number four, this is important. While we help bear the burden, we do not carry the entire burden by ourselves. While we help bear the burden, we do not carry the entire burden by ourselves.

that's very important because the text here does not say that you take on their entire burden. In fact, what He's going to say in verses four and five apply to them as well.
That you have a responsibility. Each one is going to bear his own load. And so, if one refuses to work, to illustrate it this way, we don't work a second or third job to support them because they refuse to work.
That's not what it means to bear another's burden. Bearing another's burden means, okay, I understand that it's difficult for you to even know how to apply for a job.
Well, how can I help you with that? How can I help you put together a resume? How can I help you prepare for an interview? But see, I'm not going to go work the job for you because you've got to bear your own load.
[36:18] See, one of the dangers of burden bearing is those who try to share the weight of the burden that's pressing down on another, if they're not careful, tend to take the whole thing on.

That's not what he's speaking of here. We help shoulder it, we come up under, but we don't take the whole thing. Why?
How do I know that? Well, verse five, for each one will have to bear his own load. And so, while we help bear the burden, we do not carry the entire burden by ourselves.
And then number five, we've already mentioned this, but it's so important to emphasize this as well. As we help bear the burdens of others, we should do so in humility, in gentleness, and watchfulness.

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As we help bear the burdens of others, we should do this in humility, in gentleness, and in watchfulness. It's all right there out of the text.
[37:41] In fact, if again, if you are very observant in reading, you'll note that one of the fruit of the Spirit is gentleness.

So a fruit of the Spirit and one who is spiritual and restoring another who is caught in any transgression is a very fruit of the Spirit. Again, I would point you back to our Savior.
and did He deal with you with a rod or in gentleness? Oh, we were confronted with our need for a Savior, but then the Savior was gentle and meek and mild.
Not accepting of sin. It's not what gentleness means, that we just wink at sin or we just overlook sin. No, we confront sin, but then we restore in a spirit of gentleness.
And our ultimate model is Jesus Christ Himself. Watch Him as you watch Him go through the Gospels and the way He dealt with people. He Himself was gentle.
[39:03] And of course, He was humble. You see, Jesus didn't say these words, if anyone thinks He is something when He is nothing, He deceives Himself.

That only applies to you and I, because Jesus is everything. But for you and I, we come with humility because we understand that we too needed one to bear our burdens.
We too are sinners. It has been said that those typically who are moved with the most compassion for those who were caught in sin are those who journeyed there themselves.
You see, when we've been dead in our trespasses and sin, when we've been enslaved to sin, when we've been caught in any transgression, and then we've been rescued by the Savior, and the Savior has used another in our life to bear the burden, then we too are used in other people's lives. grace, but always in the spirit of gentleness and always in humility, and then finally, always keeping watch or being on guard lest you too are tempted.
[40:23] we need to be aware of the danger of sin and sin in the family of God.

And when we get involved in other people's lives, it should be a call to us to keep going back to the Savior, keeping a watch on ourselves lest we're tempted, keep going back to the Savior, your dependency on the Savior, you keep going back and abiding in the vine, John 15, lest we too are tempted.
Martin Luther was giving advice to a pastor charged with setting a lapsed brother back on the right path. And Martin Luther said these words, run unto him, and reaching out your hand, God, raise him up again, comfort him with sweet words, and embrace him with motherly arms.
Run unto him. You reach out your hand, you raise him up, and then you comfort him with sweet words, the sweet words that come from Scripture.
and then you embrace him with motherly arms. As we close tonight, one of my absolute favorite passages of Scripture has become so near and dear to me, and I find myself as a broken record with folks that I meet with constantly going back to this passage, just over and over and over again.
[42:17] Hebrews 4 verses 14 to 16, since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens.

Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession, for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are.
See, we have one who walked the very roads that we walk and faced the very temptations that we face, yet without sin.
Oh, let those words sink in. Our great high priest, he was without sin. And then these words, let us then, with confidence, draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
You bear one another's burdens, you get involved in the lives of others, and it gets messy, you bring him to the Savior over and over and over again.
[43:44] You draw near to where? The throne of grace. Because it's all of grace. It's not by my works. It's the very thing that Paul is condemning in Galatians.

This is self-righteousness, this law-keeping. It's grace. Grace. Marvelous grace. grace. You draw near to that throne of grace, and then you do what?
You receive mercy, and you find grace to help in time of need. Amen? Let's pray.
Our Father, we thank you for your word, and the fact that we can bookend our days gathered with the people of God.

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I thank you, Father, that we join many of us together this morning. Many more in small groups meeting in Sunday school classrooms gathered around your word and prayer and practicing the one another's with others in the family.
[44:56] And then we gathered in this room as a larger body of believers. believers. And as has been said so many times when we sing the songs of the faith, we're able to look across the room and see a brother or sister with a testimony of your great faithfulness, your great grace, your great mercy, your steadfast love, your leadership.

and it bolsters our faith when we look and we see them singing these songs and we know their story. And the same is said of us for we ourselves were once alienated from you, separated from you, children of wrath, destined for punishment and judgment, punishment, but God in his great mercy has made us alive together in Christ Jesus and for that we say thank you for saving us oh Father.
And as you saved us you're sanctifying us and you're sanctifying us in the community of believers, the family of God. And so may we understand the weight and responsibility of being found in the family of God.
that we'd be involved in other people's lives, that we would bear one another's burdens. We need you Lord, we need your grace and we need your mercy.
We do just as the author of Hebrews said right now we with confidence draw near to the throne of grace. grace. That we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need.
[46:56] And so be with us now as we leave this place and we pray your protection upon us and ask that you'd use us this week wherever this week will take us.

That we be your ambassadors. We be ministers of reconciliation. That we would be witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ with everyone we encounter.
And if there should be any that are burdened beyond what they can bear, may we come up alongside of them and bear their burden with them.
We ask us all in Jesus name and all God's people said amen and amen. God bless you. You are dismissed. Have a great week. Thank you.

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