



### Two Minute Re-Cap (<https://youtu.be/tDuCgXDa27w>)

In Week 2 of “Me & You,” we’ve begun letting the New Testament teach us what it looks like to love each other like Jesus loves us. As we progress through the series, each “one another” text will help us unpack this concept so that we can apply it to our relationships. This week’s text is Galatians 6:2: “Carry each other’s burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ,” and we’re focusing on how to love people when they mess up.

A common cliché in many Christian circles is that we should, “hate the sin and love the sinner.” The challenge here is that it’s very easy to privilege hating sin above loving sinners. However, Paul says when someone falls into “transgression” our response ought to be to help carry their burden. What’s more, he says that by carrying the burden of the one who struggles, you fulfill “the law of Christ,” which is Jesus’ command to love your neighbor as yourself (cf. James 2:11). This is neither “going soft on sin” nor “taking the easy way out.” Rather, it is following in the footsteps of Jesus, who took his clearest (and most effective) stand against sin by dying on the cross.

It’s also important to remember that this command is given as Paul continues a conversation that began at the end of Galatians 5. His admonition to carry each other’s burdens is actually given as an antidote to the arrogance and competitiveness he warns about here. Walking by the Spirit involves being humble enough to look out for your loved one when they sin, rather than “blessing their heart!” and using their failure as an opportunity to make you look or feel better.

## Getting Started

As you get started, take a few minutes to pray with and for each other. Each group can decide how to best do this, but as you prepare to pray this week, here are a few items to discuss:

- 1) Once again, you can either divide into smaller groups or have a “popcorn” prayer, moving around the room as one group. Encourage everyone to pray, including kids.
- 2) Today, focus your prayers on Christ-likeness. Adults, you will want to help the children in your group understand and pray for this concept. This is a central value we want to emphasize in our groups.

## OUR GOALS

1. To explore what it means to “bear one another’s burdens” in times of temptation and sinfulness.
2. To understand how bearing one another’s burdens fulfills the “law of Christ,” and how that law shapes what it means to “bear one another burdens.”
3. To understand the difference between what we often mean by statements like “hate the sin and love the sinner” and how “sinners” hear those statements.
4. To understand how bearing one another’s burdens helps us “walk in the Spirit.”

# Discussion for the Week

1. Watch the clip from Les Miserables. Compare the attitude of the priest and the woman in this scene. What do you think about the priest's action? How does this relate to Paul's command to "bear one another's burdens"? (Link: <http://ow.ly/2JFk303ZyWy>)
2. Put yourself in the perspective of one who is on the other side of the "Love the sinner, hate the sin" equation. How might Christians in your life treat you in ways that unintentionally hurt you? To whatever extent we can, how might we show our love more clearly in our relationships like this one?
3. Consider the following scenario from Kara Powell's Sticky Faith parent's curriculum:

A father tells a story about when his son comes home over Christmas from the Christian university, where he is a senior studying to be a foreign missionary. Over dinner, he and his fiancée break the difficult news that she has become pregnant. The young couple understands the seriousness of their decision and are penitent. The father struggles with how to respond to his son's actions and later admits he handled the situation poorly. At one point in this process, a close friend of the father's pulls him aside and says, "I've been watching you, and you're more upset about how your son's actions make you look than you are with how they affect him and his fiancée. I want you to know we love you all, and nothing your son can ever do will make us love you less. Please be confident in that so you can walk with your son through this time."

In times of conflict, Randy Harris suggests we put our fears "on the table" rather than allowing them to work "under the table." This father was allowing his fear of what others thought of him to keep him from bearing his son's burden. In a similar way, what might hinder us from bearing the burdens of those we love? How can we identify those things? How can we push back against those things?

4. In what way does bearing the burdens of those we love act to humble us? How has this worked in your life?

## Prayer for the Week by Eugene Bersier (1831-1889)

O God, you know our hearts, and you see our temptations and struggles. Have pity on us, deliver us from the sins which make war on our souls. You are all-powerful, and we are weak and erring. Faithful God, our trust is in you. Deliver us from the bondage of evil, and grant that we may hereafter be your devoted servants, serving you in the freedom of holy love; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.