

CALL TO DUTY

VOL. 1, ISSUE 8



THIS ISSUE'S THEME:
**Bear One Another's Burdens and Thus Fulfill
the Law of Christ.**
Galatians 6:2



The theme for this issue of Call to Duty is taken from Galatians 6:2, Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (NKJV). This theme resonates with military members and veterans because of the various creeds we uphold. For instance, the U.S. Army Soldier's Creed says, "I will never leave a fallen comrade." In the Ranger Creed, Army Rangers vow to never leave a fallen comrade. The Airman's creed states, "I will never leave an airman behind." The idea is to never leave a fellow service member in the hands of an enemy.



This idea is reflected in Galatians. Verse 1 of Galatians 6 instructs us to restore one who has been overtaken by any trespass (sin) gently. We know that unrepentant sin results in death (Romans 6:23) and falling away. Doing nothing for a brother in sin would leave him in the hands of our enemy, Satan. Verse 2 then commands us to bear one another's burdens. It is in this way we can ensure that we never leave a Christian brother or sister behind who sins.



So how do we restore a brother or sister gently? With mercy and gentleness. Recall that Jesus admonished the pharisees by quoting Hosea 6:6 when he said, "But go and learn what *this* means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice'" (Matt 9:13). This occurred when Jesus was eating at Matthew's house, surrounded by tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees were outraged that Jesus would surround himself with sinners. They condemned sinners but would not lift a finger to help them. Jesus, however, had sympathy for them and wanted to lift their burden of sin. In Matthew 11:28-29 Jesus said, "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. This is the attitude we ought to take when restoring someone overtaken in trespass. Mercy and gentleness are the keys to restoring one in a Christlike manner.



So what is meant by fulfilling the law of Christ? Some key scriptures help answer that question. Matthew 22:37-40 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the* second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

Matt 5:7 Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

The law of Christ is one of love and mercy. Therefore, bearing one another's burdens in mercy and gentleness fulfills this law.

~Tony



MILITARY OUTREACH & ENCOURAGEMENT

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

"Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6.1-2, NKJV).

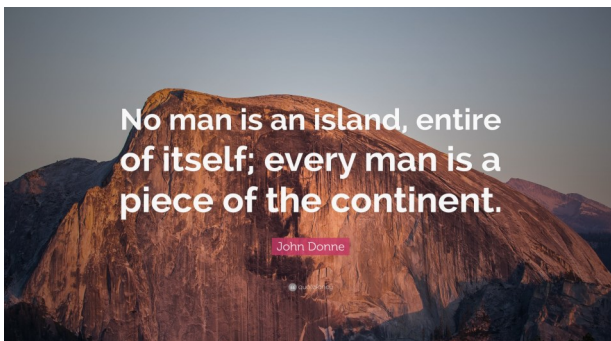
The English poet John Donne (1572-1631) coined the term, "No man is an island." In his poem by the same name, Donne reflects:

No man is an island,
Entire of itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.

If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less,
As well as if a promontory were:
As well as if a manor of thy friend's
Or of thine own were.

Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee.

(<https://allpoetry.com/No-man-is-an-island>)



Donne hit the proverbial nail on the head in saying that we need one another. Being a member of the U.S. military (and members of the Lord's church) means that we work and function together (teamwork) as we cannot make it alone. The military, and God's church, is not a place for loners or Rambos roaming about, stitching up their own battle wounds without local anesthesia but rather a place of esprit de corps—all for one and one for all—and healing. The saying, "a chain is as strong as its weakest link" refers to "the most vulnerable or unreliable part of a system, whether a person in a group or an item in a structure." The biblical teaching of "bearing one another's burdens" (Gal 6.2) indicates a weak link in the chain (e.g., the church).



Within the context of Paul's divine instruction (v.1), he describes a potential situation whereby a Christian experiences a weak, dark moment and is "taken by surprise," falling or lapsing into sinful conduct. This can be any sort of transgression/fault/sin in which the guilty person needs spiritual assistance to help them back up and moving forward on their spiritual journey. Sometimes, a particular transgression is seemingly "minor" (no sin is minor to God; it took only one sin—my sin—to put Jesus on the cross) and the child of God repents of their sin and confesses it to the Father who promises to forgive and purify us (1 Jn 1.9).

However, there are times when our sins or transgressions simply overwhelm us and we require the gentle, humble help of a compassionate Christian, who, in brotherly love, is willing "put in order; restore to its former condition." The term that Paul uses, "bear one another's burdens" (v.2), means "get up under, to take up, carry, endure, and remove" the load that is weighing them down. "Instead of standing aloof in selfish isolation spiritual fellowship implies 'fellow-feeling and fellow-helping'" (Johnson).

In closing, I would like to direct your attention to our Spiritual Warrior book series, "Spiritual Battle Rattle: God's Armor," and "Spiritually Wounded Warriors: An Army of One Another." In the latter book, we discuss various spiritual battle injuries ranging from WIA, KIA, and MIA to spiritual suicide to spiritual battle scars. Christians serving in the U.S. military (and all Christians) must depend on their spiritual battle buddies and the Great Physician to heal them physically, emotionally, and spiritually in order to celebrate Spiritual V-J Day—Victory in Jesus at the end of the war. (These books are available at a discount directly from the publisher, InLine Publishers, LLC. InLinePublishers@writeme.com). May God bless you as you walk with Jesus and one another.

Johnson, R. *The Living Word Commentary. The Letter of Paul to The Galatians*. ACU Press, Abilene Christian University. Abilene, TX. 1984, pp.164-166

Ed Linebaugh
U.S. Army, Retired
Founding Editor Call to Duty



House to House
Heart to Heart

THE DEBORAH RICE

MILITARY

OUTREACH

FUND

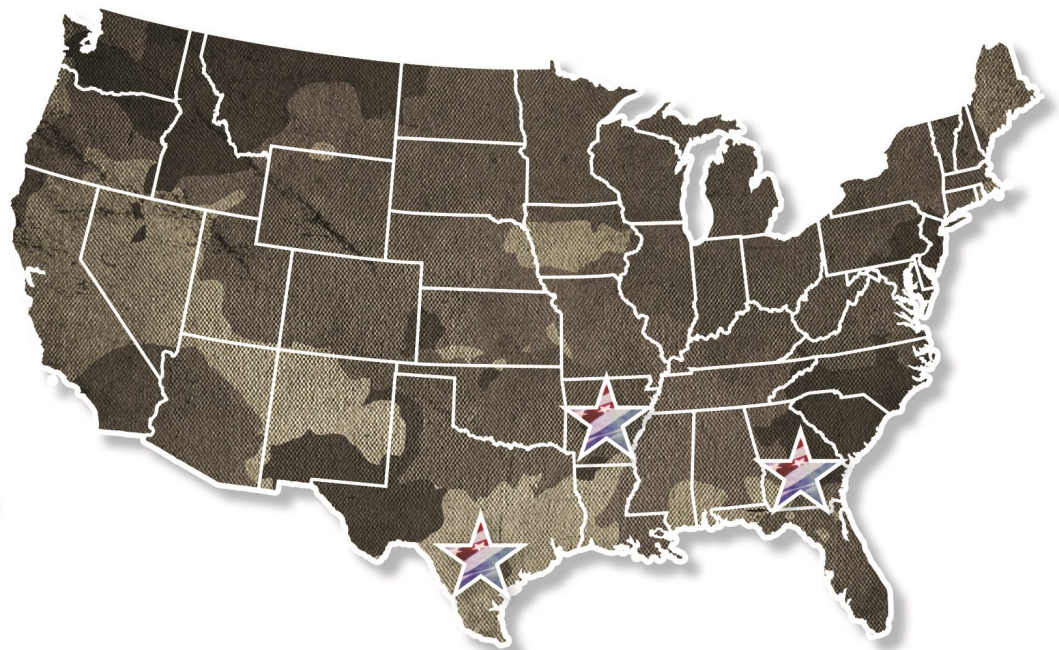
Deborah Rice, lovingly known as Ms. Deb, worked with House to House and Polishing the Pulpit for over 15 years. Her son is in the Army, and she was very patriotic. She loved America, and every year we celebrated Veterans Day and Memorial Day with her. In October 2021 she suffered a brain aneurysm. She fought for her life until February 4, 2022. To honor her, we have set up a donation fund to send out HTH to military bases in her honor. For every dollar given, at least three copies will be sent out around a military base, to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).

You can donate here: housetohouse.com/mrs-deb-memorial-fund/.

As donations come in, we will send more HTH copies to additional bases across the continental United States (CONUS for military folks). As we send to new bases, we will add stars representing those areas.

“My parents we converted while serving in the USAF. Because of someone’s diligence to spreading the gospel, my family are thankfully Christians. My parents both work for the church and I now work at House to House spreading the gospel.”
—Ahren Steis

We are honored to have known Ms. Deb, and we are better for it.



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Bearing Burdens and Bringing a Stone

I love word pictures. You know, stories or illustrations that both captures the attention of the mind and stirs the emotions of the heart while revealing a point or principle. Exodus 17: 8-13 is a historical account that serves that purpose well. A quick synopsis: Amalekites were attacking Israelites. Moses tells Joshua, "Get some men together and go fight them." Tomorrow, I will stand on top of the hill, with the staff of God in my hands. As long as Moses held his up his hands, the Israelites were winning, the moment his hands fell, the Amalekites started to win. Aaron and Hur noticed what was happening and they came and held Moses' hands up 'til sunset and so Joshua and his men won.

Moses was giving it all he had, but it wasn't enough. Ever tried to keep your hands raised the entire day? But almost out of nowhere came two guys.

To be a burden bearer, you first have to be a burden "carer." Someone willing to see the weight on others and care enough about that person to want to do something about it. Aaron and Hur recognized that about Moses—he was getting tired and they took action. Second, look at what they did; they came alongside him, brought a stone for Moses to sit on and then they each took positions on either side and held up his hands. Finally, they stayed until the work was done. Burden carers hang in there until they are not needed anymore, they stand by you until the objective is achieved. I mean, who leaves in the middle of the fight? Those guys were vested in the outcome. This fight was their fight as well.



It's a point that we often miss when reading this verse (Gal 6:2): Bear **one another's** burdens . . . in other words, this is a two-way street. They were helping Moses, because Moses (and Joshua) was fighting for them as well.

You and I are in this fight together -- and there will be times when your burden will become my burden and vice versa. Ecclesiastes 4:9 and 10 comes to mind: Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.

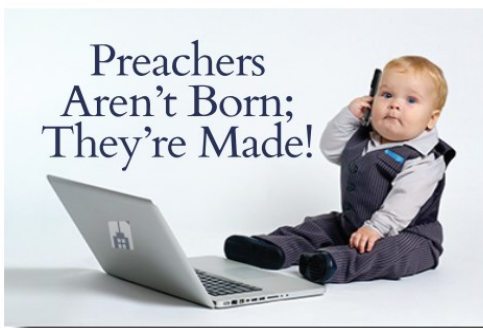
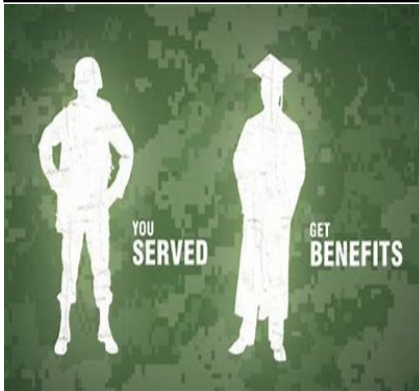


Maybe you've tried to go it alone against some struggle in your life, thinking, I can do this, but time and time again you fall. You tell yourself you'll do better next time or even that there won't be a "next time" for this struggle—I'm going to be done with this once and for all. But, the once and for all doesn't materialize. Maybe it's time you need a burden carer; someone to come alongside, bring a stone for you to sit on and help lift the struggle. ~ Darren Crowden



Darren Crowden retired from the U.S Air Force and works for the Defense Logistics Agency at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. He has a Masters Degree in Mental Health Counseling from Amridge University, and uses his education and vast experience to minister within, and outside, the church. Darren has previously served as an elder of the Lord's church in Pennsylvania for many years. He and his wife, Jennifer, are active members of the Chase Park Church of Christ in Huntsville, Alabama. You can reach Darren at cnerrad@yahoo.com

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“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”

Romans 10:14



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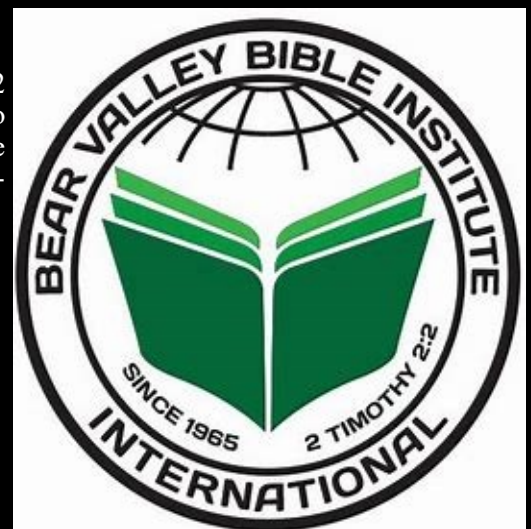
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**Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.
(Gal. 6.2...NASU)**

Back in late 1970 from October to December during the Vietnam War era, I was sent TDY (Temporary Duty) to Europe as part of a United Nations (UN) Task Force. This UN Task Force was established to help ready and transport a wide variety of military items from their bases of storage to their bases of usage. One of the seemingly greatest commands given the UN Task Force at the time was for every soldier to always be ready to help out any and all other soldier(s) in times of overload or excessive burdens (in the performance of their duties). This is burden-bearing in physical and temporary military terms to me. As I often helped other soldiers bear their burdens, they often helped me bear mine. Those faithful and obedient Christian soldiers who serve in God's spiritual and eternal military are required by their commander (Jesus Christ) to do the very same.

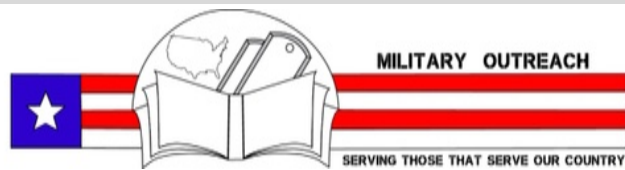
The divinely instituted practice of God and humanity bearing one another's burdens has its founding in the time of the Old Testament. Back then, perhaps the best demonstration comes from the example of God, Amos, and physical Israel. Amos is acknowledged as a Judean, born in Tekoa, and a shepherd by trade. Likewise, while neither a prophet nor son of a prophet, God finally called him into service as one to prophecy to the nation of Israel (Amos 7.14-15). Hence, Amos' name references one who is a "burden bearer." So, as unrepentant Israel's sins became burdensome to God like a wagon weighted down full of sheaves or grain (Amos 2.13), He equally commissioned Amos to bear the burden of carrying His message of repentance and/or judgment to the nation. As Biblical history reveals, Israel refused to repent and was destroyed because of it.

However, out of her death would arise a new and living spiritual kingdom of Israel (Amos 9.11-15) that happened to be the New Testament church of Christ (Rom. 9.6-8; 16.16; Gal. 6.11-18). Out of that spiritual kingdom established via the blood sacrifice of Christ on the cross arise many benefits to all those belonging to it. From the New Testament Scripture title (shown above), it is thus important all Christians are to fulfill (accomplish) the law (standard and/or conduct) of Christ in the same way by constantly help bearing the combined physical/spiritual burdens of one another, and even of

non-Christians (Gal. 6.1-10). As the referenced Scripture indicates, bearing one another's burdens can have eternal life-saving and/or soul-saving outcomes or condemnations attached to them. So, Christ and His Christians are burden-bearing and sharing volunteer warriors of His cross who help God fight the great burden of and on-going war against Satan, sin, and death. ~ Tom Wright



Tom Wright served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War Era. Following his military discharge, Tom graduated college and worked in Design Engineering for over two decades. In his middle forties, he left secular work and entered fulltime ministry. He holds degrees of Bachelor of Theology, Master of Biblical Studies, and Doctor of Ministry. Tom has spent about the past twenty-five years serving God as an evangelist, preacher, and teacher. He and his wife Carla live in the Colorado Springs area and worship with the Calhan church of Christ.



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AS YOU WERE...

"... three words spoken quickly by non-commissioned and commissioned officers who choose to drop rank and get to business, is meant to put troops 'at ease.'"



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CALL OF DUTY SPIRITUAL WARFARE



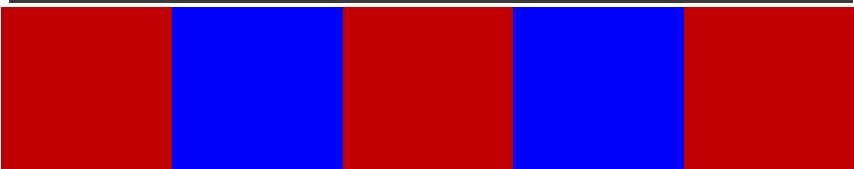
Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground...

Ephesians 6:13

Pray
Through
Stressful
Difficulties
(James 1:2-8)



**HAND-TO-HAND
COMBAT**



BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

In a book from the 1800's entitled "The Parables of Jesus", a small girl was carrying a big baby boy when someone asked whether he was too much for her. Her reply was, "He ain't heavy, he's my brother!" How appropriate.



It is no coincidence that the admonition to bear one another's burdens comes near the end of the Galatian letter. Paul was dealing with false teachers who were teaching that salvation was by keeping the

old law and circumcision. He told them to serve one another through love (5:13). It was not through the requirements of the Law of Moses, but it was the liberty (freedom) found in Christ that they should do so. We should love our neighbor as ourselves (v.14) because love fulfills the Law of Christ.

Paul contrasts our fleshly works with the fruit of the Spirit. I like to think that since it is the words and not the punctuation in scripture that are inspired, the fruit of the Spirit is love, and everything that follows is just clarifying and further defining the love that the Spirit provides (5:22-23). That's just my way of thinking, but either way, it is plain; we must practice qualities that often aren't natural. The context makes it clear that we are in a battle like none of us have ever seen. As chapter five pounds home, we are at war with the flesh.

So if a brother is overtaken in some sin, we who are spiritual (6:1) have a responsibility to restore that brother with one of the descriptors of spiritual fruit: gentleness. And to be gentle toward a brother who has a burden of sin, we *must* have love. Being "overtaken" seems to imply some temptation that pounces and not something we flirted with. It could be a sudden burst of provoked anger, and then we say or do something that is highly regretful and sinful. We are to bear that burden with him, but we can't if we don't possess the fruit (love, etc.) given to us by the Spirit. It's interesting, verse 5 at first seems contradictory, but the difference is a

burden versus a load. A load is normal in life, but a burden is above our capacity to handle alone. We need help. Burdens that none of us could bear alone were lifted at calvary by Jesus.

So the complete picture seems to be that when a brother is overwhelmed by some sin, we who are spiritual should stand in the gap with him. If we don't have the fruit of the Spirit, we won't be equipped to do so. Jesus died so we might have eternal life, an abundant life (John 10:10). Let's heed the call to help our brother bear the burdens he cannot bear alone.



Conrad Slate enlisted in the Army Reserve while in college and later transferred to the Air National Guard. He went to Officer Training School and completed 31 years of service retiring as a colonel. He served a variety of positions starting as a Military Policeman. He served in the Security Police, in Public Affairs, in NBC warfare training, and a variety of staff positions, retiring as Deputy Chief of Staff for Support Services. He is a member of the Karns Church of Christ in Knoxville, TN where he is active in jail ministry.

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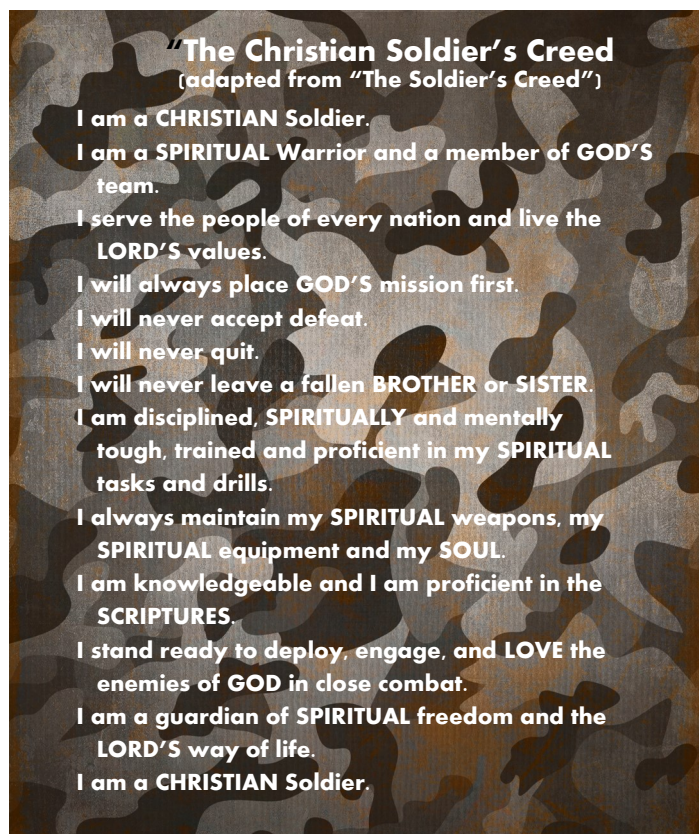
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- ◆ To support the spiritual growth of the members of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for Biblical knowledge, worship, fellowship, service and evangelism.
- ◆ Fulfill Jesus Christ's call to the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

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BELIEVE in Jesus as Savior of world: John 3:16; 14:6; 14:23

REPENT of your sins: Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; Revelation 2:5, 16, 21,22; 3:3, 19

CONFESS Jesus before others: Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:8-11

BE IMMERSSED into Christ for forgiveness of your sins: Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-47; 22:16; Romans 6:3-11; 1 Peter 3:18-22

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CALL TO DUTY
(BASE 2 BASE, HEART 2 HEART)

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