The Apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians, gives us two important and seemingly contrasting instructions:

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”
(Galatians 6:2, NIV)

> *“For each one should carry their own load.”*
> (Galatians 6:5, NIV)

At first glance, these verses might appear contradictory. However, upon closer examination, we see that they refer to two distinct aspects of Christian responsibility communal care and personal accountability.

1. Understanding the Difference: Burden vs. Load

The key lies in the original Greek words:

In Galatians 6:2, the word *“burden”* (Greek: barē) refers to heavy, overwhelming burdens those emotional, physical, or spiritual struggles that believers often can’t carry alone.

In Galatians 6:5, the word *“load”* (Greek: phortion) refers to a personal responsibility or duty like one’s own actions, moral accountability, and spiritual walk.

Interpretation:
While each believer is personally responsible for their own actions before God (Galatians 6:5; cf. Romans 14:12), the Christian community is called to assist one another in times of hardship (Galatians 6:2), fulfilling what Jesus called *“the law of love”*.

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2. What Is the Law of Christ?

Paul says in verse 2 that by bearing one another’s burdens, we fulfill the law of Christ. What is this law?

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”
(John 13:34)

The law of Christ is love sacrificial, active, and sincere love, modeled after Christ’s own life and ministry. It is the fulfillment of the moral law (cf. Romans 13:10), and it undergirds the entire New Covenant ethic.

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3. Love in Action: Not Just Words

The Apostle John challenges us not to settle for lip service in our faith:

“If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”
(1 John 3:17–18)

True Christian love is not passive. It is expressed in tangible ways through prayer, visitation, comfort, hospitality, financial help, and emotional support. Faith without works is dead (James 2:14–17).

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4. Spiritual Growth through Bearing Burdens

Many believers underestimate the spiritual growth and increased grace that come from helping others:

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over…”
(Luke 6:38)

When you make it a lifestyle to help others, God’s grace increases over your life (2 Corinthians 9:8). As you continue to pour out, God continues to refill. You become a conduit of blessing, much like Abraham, who was blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).

When you withhold help whether due to fear, bitterness, envy, or selfishness you block the flow of grace through your life.

“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”
(Proverbs 11:25)

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5. Even Christ Did Not Please Himself

Paul reminds us that self-sacrifice is the example Christ set:

“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves... For even Christ did not please himself...”
(Romans 15:1–3)

Helping others is not optional; it is a mark of maturity and a sign that Christ is truly being formed in us (Galatians 4:19). The strong have a divine obligation to support the weak—whether spiritually, emotionally, or materially.

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6. Carrying Burdens Includes Sharing the Gospel

One of the greatest ways to carry someone’s burden is to share the truth of the gospel and any spiritual insight God has given you. Don’t hoard revelation:

“Every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”
(Matthew 13:52)

God won’t give you more if you aren’t faithful with what He’s

already revealed. Refusing to share what God has given—out of fear that others might outshine you or not credit you only closes your spiritual pipeline. But generosity in teaching and encouragement opens doors for more insight, influence, and spiritual impact.

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7. Don’t Wait to Be Asked Act!

If you know someone is struggling don’t wait for them to come to you. If you know how to help, step in. Whether it’s job connections, financial advice, or spiritual counsel, use your gifts for the benefit of the body of Christ.

> *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”*
> (1 Peter 4:10, ESV)

Don’t hold back help because someone is more successful than you. Remember: God rewards faithfulness, not competition. He sees your heart and will reward what is done in secret (Matthew 6:4).

8. Love and Service Are the True Measure of Spiritual Maturity

Everything whether spiritual or practical must be rooted in the Law of Christ: Love.
To carry each other’s burdens is to fulfill this law, to live out Christ’s example, and to walk in the grace of God.

> *“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”* (John 15:12)

Amen.

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