

# 7

# Enriching Christian Community

## Bearing One Another's Burdens

*Your group's practical assignment from the previous study was to plan and implement an 'incorporating' initiative. How successful was it? What would you do differently next time?*

Being an active member of a Christian Community should mean that you are engaging in relationships at a deep level with a variety of people. Some will be people with whom you naturally get along; people who are easy to love and a delight to get to know. However, there will also be people in the Community of Jesus whom are more difficult. Perhaps they are just not your type. Maybe they 'rub you up the wrong way'. Or it may be that these people are very needy and so when you spend time with them, you feel drained and weighed down.

This study will help us develop a godly response to the challenge of bearing one another's burdens.

- 1. What is your 'natural' response to another Christian person whom you find annoying, disappointing or frustrating? As you respond in this way to this person, can you describe what is going on inside you (thoughts, emotions, reactions)?

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### Read Colossians 3:12-14

*Christian Churches can sometimes become a place for society's misfits and outcasts. How do you feel about this 'weakness' and the impact it has on your socialising at church?*

- 2. In the context of these verses, what do you think it means to 'bear with one another'? What might be involved?

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- 3. What character qualities does this passage call from us as we seek to bear with one another? How might you cultivate these qualities in your own life?

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- 4. What other helpful strategies might you adopt in dealing with a difficult person?

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**Read Galatians 6:1-5**

5. How do you think verse 2 fits with the verses either side of it? In the context of this passage, what do you think it means to 'bear one another's burdens'?

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6. What do you think it might mean to fulfil the 'law of Christ'? (see also Matthew 22:24-40 and John 13:34-35)

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*How does "bearing one another's burdens" differ from the Colossians passage to the Galatians passage?*

7. Specifically, what would be the 'burdens' that we are to carry for one another (verse 2)?

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8. Why do you think Paul calls us to 'watch' ourselves and to 'test our own actions' in this situation of carrying one another's burdens?

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*How might you resolve the apparent contradiction between verses 2 and 5?*

9. Whom do you know that is 'burdened' whom you might come alongside in the coming week in order to help carry their load? Determine now what course of action you will take in relation to this person and their need:

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Your response to Question 9 forms you 'Practical Assignment' for the week. Share your plans to get alongside someone and pray for each other in this endeavour in the coming week.