

# Pass the Baton

## Bible Study Guide

Scripture: Galatians 6:1-10

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September 28, 2025

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## Opening Prayer & Welcome

*Begin with prayer asking God to help us move from individual moments with Him to collective ministry that impacts our community. Pray that we would have hearts ready to restore the fallen, bear one another's burdens, and persevere in doing good—passing the baton of grace to those who need it most.*

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## Introduction: The Relay Race of Faith

**Key Definition:** Passing the baton means transitioning from an individual experience with Jesus to a collective expression of God's love, where we purposefully restore the fallen, intentionally bear burdens, live out sowing and reaping, and persevere in ministry.

**Scripture Foundation:** "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in a trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ." - Galatians 6:1-2

## The Relay Race Analogy

Think about a 4x4 relay race: Each runner has a specific leg to run, and success isn't based on individual performance alone—it's based on everyone holding up their end and successfully passing the baton. The team can't move forward until the baton is passed. Notice that the receiving runner never moves backward—they start moving forward as their teammate approaches, ready to receive and keep the momentum going.

**The Spiritual Application:** When God saved you from sin, He expects you now to pass the baton. When God has restored your life and given you new life, He expects you to pass the baton. God has given you blessing after blessing, restoration after restoration, chance after chance, grace upon grace. God then expects all of us to pass the baton. It's not enough to just sit there and say, "I'm blessed and highly favored." Why don't you

get somebody else to receive some of that same blessing and favor you received from the Lord?

### Questions:

1. Who in your life successfully passed the baton of faith to you? How did they do it?
  2. What baton has God placed in your hand that you need to pass to someone else?
  3. Why is it significant that relay runners move forward to receive the baton rather than standing still or moving backward?
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## The Big Idea

**Moments with Jesus should launch us into ministry for Jesus, which creates movements for Jesus. We pass the baton by purposefully restoring the fallen, intentionally bearing burdens, living out the principle of sowing and reaping, and persevering in doing good to all people.**

*The shift from moments to ministry happens when we respond to God's grace by extending that same grace to others through restoration, burden-bearing, and perseverance.*

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## Reality #1: Purposeful Ministry Restores the Fallen

### Key Scripture: Galatians 6:1

*"Brethren, even if anyone is caught in a trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted."*

### Main Points:

- Paul challenges Christians who were leaving the faith to return to purposeful ministry
- "Caught in a trespass" can mean overtaken suddenly or caught red-handed in sin
- Spiritual people have the responsibility to restore, not to scrutinize or condemn
- "Restore" (katartizo) means to repair, to set a broken bone, to put back in order
- We must examine ourselves first so we don't fall into the same temptation

### Key Teaching:

"When he talks about any man that is caught in the Greek, it could be looked at two ways. It can be looked at as a person who has been overtaken in a sin, caught up, swept up, unaware, and before they realize it, they are knee deep in sin. Or it could be a

person who everybody knows has committed sin... No matter how you look at it, what's at the thrust of verse one is that the spiritual people, their responsibility is to restore."

"Our responsibility is not to ostracize. It's not to categorize, is not to isolate people, it's to insulate people and bring them back into fellowship with Christ Jesus."

### **The Spiritual Mind Requirement:**

Being "spiritual" means your mind is guided by the Holy Spirit—your life is influenced by Him. Looking back at Galatians 5:25-26: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another."

### **The Gentle Spirit Approach:**

Gentleness is not weakness—it's strength under control. It's being mild, even-tempered, balanced between strength and character. It's easy to get frustrated with fellow Christians, to lose patience, to provoke them further from God. But restoration requires approaching with Christ-like gentleness.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. When you see a brother or sister caught in sin, what's your first inclination—to judge or to restore?
2. What does it mean to restore someone "in the spirit of gentleness"?
3. Why must we look at ourselves first before attempting to restore someone else?
4. How can we avoid the trap of pretending to help while really just wanting to get in someone's business?

### **Truth Bomb:**

"When you understand how patient Jesus was with you... you aren't so prone to look at people with your nose tooted up."

### **Application:**

Identify someone who has fallen or is struggling spiritually. Instead of gossiping or judging, pray about how God might use you to gently restore them. Remember how delicate Christ was when He handled you.

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## **Reality #2: Intentional Ministry Bears the Burden**

**Key Scripture: Galatians 6:2-5**

*"Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. For each one will bear his own load."*

### **Main Points:**

- "Bear" (bastazo) means to carry with endurance, to shoulder the weight of another
- "Burdens" (baros) means heavy loads that crush without help
- Bearing burdens is intentional—you purposefully help shoulder what would crush your brother or sister
- Self-examination keeps us from becoming conceited and comparing ourselves to others
- Each person has their own load (phortion) to carry, but we help with crushing burdens (baros)

### **Key Teaching:**

"Bearing another person's burden takes intentionality... When I see my brother hurting, when I see my sister hurting, when I see my comrade in arms going through what he's going through, man, I'm not going to just wave my hand and say, 'If you need me, call me or I'll be praying for you.' No, man. What I'm going to do is I'm going to get in the trenches with you. I'm going to pray with you. I'm going to call you. I'm going to be your workout partner. We going to have devotionals."

"When you hurt, I hurt. You follow what I'm saying? Burden. Bear one another's burdens... something that crushes without help."

### **The Danger of Comparison:**

Don't compare yourself to other Christians. What you see on the surface might not be the full picture. Comparing ourselves to others keeps us from growing and robs us of peace. We can only examine our own work before God.

"If God would have pulled the cover back on all of our lives, I don't think none of us would want to sit next to each other."

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What's the difference between bearing someone's burden and just saying "I'll pray for you"?
2. How can we intentionally get in the trenches with people who are struggling?
3. Why is comparing ourselves to others dangerous to our spiritual growth and peace?
4. What burden are you carrying that you need help with? Who can help you bear it?

## Truth Bomb:

"I got my own set of issues. I wish I could help you, but I got my own set of issues... That ain't what Paul said. Paul said, 'Consider that. I know you have a load to bear. You have a weight to bear. But also your responsibility as a spiritual child of God is to get in the trenches and help your fellow saints bear their burden.'"

## Application:

Don't just identify someone who's struggling—actively reach out this week. Call them, meet with them, pray with them, walk through it with them. Get in the trenches.

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## Reality #3: Intentional Ministry Lives Out Sowing and Reaping

### Key Scripture: Galatians 6:6-8

*"The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."*

### Main Points:

- "Share" (koinoneo) means to have fellowship with, participate with, and bless those who teach you
- God cannot be cheated or mocked—the law of sowing and reaping is inviolable
- Whatever seeds we plant will produce a harvest: thorns produce thorns, weeds produce weeds
- Sowing to the flesh produces corruption; sowing to the Spirit produces eternal life
- Stewardship includes time, talent, and treasure—not just money

### Key Teaching:

"When you go to a person and your motives are right and your mind is spiritual, what Paul is actually saying is you will reap the very seeds you put in. When you start talking about people and the struggles they have and you start pointing your Pharisee finger at folk or you won't even lift a helping hand to help a person in need, He says just know God won't be cheated. He can't be mocked. Whatever the seeds you plant... if you plant thorns, guess what's going to grow in your life? Thorns."

### The Blessing Principle:

It's not uncommon—in fact it's biblical—to bless those who teach and feed you spiritually. Romans 15:27 and Philippians 4:15 both speak to this principle. But beyond financial giving, sowing spiritually means sowing our gifts, talents, time, and service for God's glory.

### **The Harvest Timeline:**

We sow intentionally with expectation of harvest. The grand harvest is eternal life, which is why we must sow to the Spirit rather than the flesh. The harvest comes "in due season" (kairos)—God's appointed, ordained time. It's not random but divinely scheduled.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What spiritual seeds are you currently sowing in your life and ministry?
2. How does the principle of sowing and reaping extend beyond financial giving?
3. What does it mean to "sow to the flesh" versus "sow to the Spirit"?
4. How can we maintain patience when we don't see immediate results from our spiritual sowing?

### **Truth Bomb:**

"Stewardship ain't just about money. Stewardship has to deal with your time. What are you doing with your time? Stewardship has to deal with your talent or your gift. What are you doing with what God blessed you to have?"

### **Application:**

Evaluate your stewardship this week: How are you investing your time, talent, and treasure? Are you sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit? Make one specific change to sow more intentionally to spiritual matters.

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## **Reality #4: Impactful Ministry Perseveres in Doing Good**

### **Key Scripture: Galatians 6:9-10**

*"Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."*

### **Main Points:**

- "Lose heart" (ekkakeo) means to faint, give in, or slacken effort due to weariness
- Life gets weary—sometimes it's hard to keep doing good when it's not reciprocated
- Ministry should be inclusive—do good to ALL people, not just those we like
- Special responsibility exists toward fellow believers ("household of faith")
- The harvest will come "in due time"—God's divinely scheduled moment

## **Key Teaching:**

"You ever did good to some people and it wasn't reciprocated? You ever loved on some folk and they didn't love you back? You ever been kind to some people and they weren't kind back? And sometimes it wearies your soul that you don't want to do anything kind for other folk."

"When we look at how racist the world has become, you get weary in doing right. You get weary and you get tired of trying to be the Christian person and they just walk over your kindness."

## **The Weariness of Ministry:**

Sometimes life weighs us down. Sometimes we get tired and don't want to serve. Sometimes it's hard to get out of bed on Sunday mornings. Sometimes we put on fake smiles to hide our struggles. But Paul says: don't faint, don't give up, don't grow weary in doing good.

## **The Harvest Promise:**

God promises that in His appointed time (kairos), the harvest will come. The harvest is not random but divinely scheduled. We may not see immediate results, but faithfulness will be rewarded.

## **Inclusive Ministry:**

If you only do good to people you like, you'll only share the gospel with people you like. Impactful ministry is inclusive ministry—doing good to ALL people, actively working what is beneficial and life-giving.

## **Discussion Questions:**

1. When have you grown weary in doing good? What kept you going or what made you quit?
2. How do you handle situations where your kindness isn't reciprocated?
3. Why is it important to do good to ALL people, not just fellow believers or people we naturally like?
4. What does "in due time" teach us about patience and trust in God's timing?

## Truth Bomb:

"Paul said don't become weary. Don't faint. Don't lose heart. Why? Because the very seeds you plant, they're going to reap a harvest. And you got to know that one of the ultimate harvests is that you have eternal life."

## Application:

Identify one person or group you've avoided ministering to because they're difficult or different from you. Make a plan this week to intentionally do good to them, trusting God for the harvest in His time.

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# Practical Application: Passing the Baton Today

## The Relay Race of Faith

Remember the illustration: Fred passes the baton of salvation to Rod. Rod takes that baton and meets Michael Phelps, who needs restoring—he's fallen, he's down on his luck, everywhere he turns there's failure. Rod gives Michael the baton of restoration. Michael gets up from his fallen condition, then finds Taran who's depressed, sinking low, hurting, not seeing a way out. Mike passes the baton of burden-bearing to Taran, walks with him, prays with him, cries with him, feels what he feels.

All because Fred passed the baton to Rod. Rod passed it to Mike. Mike passed it to Taran. And together, they all get through to the finish line. **When one wins, we all win.**

## The Ultimate Baton-Passer

"I know somebody who picked up the baton for me. There was someone who picked up a cross and he took it to Golgotha's hill. He bore my sins on his shoulder. He bore your sins on his shoulder and he went to the cross. And even though they spit on him, even though they ridiculed him, he still had the wherewithal to say, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'"

## Four Batons to Pass:

### 1. The Baton of Restoration:

- Gently restore those caught in sin
- Don't scrutinize or condemn—repair and rebuild
- Examine yourself first
- Remember how patient Jesus was with you

### 2. The Baton of Burden-Bearing:

- Get in the trenches with struggling believers
- Don't just say "I'll pray for you"—actually walk with them
- Bear crushing burdens together
- Avoid comparing yourself to others

### 3. The Baton of Spiritual Sowing:

- Sow to the Spirit, not the flesh
- Invest time, talent, and treasure for God's glory
- Trust God for the harvest in due season
- Remember: what you sow, you will reap

### 4. The Baton of Perseverance:

- Don't grow weary in doing good
- Do good to ALL people, especially fellow believers
- Keep serving even when it's not reciprocated
- Trust that the harvest will come in God's appointed time

## Ministry Opportunities at Liberty City:

- **Restoration Ministry:** Who needs gentle restoration in your circle of influence?
- **Burden-Bearing Groups:** Start or join a small group focused on mutual support
- **Community Service:** Take ministry beyond the building into neighborhoods
- **Encouragement Ministry:** Regularly reach out to those who are weary or struggling

## Self-Examination Questions:

1. **Have I received the baton of salvation?**
  - Have I responded to Jesus with faith, repentance, and baptism?
  - Am I living in the freedom Christ provides?
2. **Am I passing the baton to others?**
  - Who has God placed in my path that needs restoration?
  - Whose burden can I help bear this week?
  - What spiritual seeds am I sowing?
3. **Am I persevering in ministry?**
  - Have I grown weary in doing good?
  - Am I doing good only to people I like, or to ALL people?
  - Do I trust God's timing for the harvest?
4. **What's my next leg of the race?**
  - What specific ministry has God called me to?
  - Who am I training to receive the baton from me?
  - How can I help our church move from moments to ministry to movements?

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## The Three-Part Shift

## From MOMENTS to MINISTRY to MOVEMENTS:

### MOMENTS with Jesus:

- Your salvation experience
- Personal encounters with God
- Individual transformation

### MINISTRY for Jesus:

- Restoring the fallen
- Bearing one another's burdens
- Sowing spiritual seeds
- Persevering in doing good

### MOVEMENTS for Jesus:

- Community transformation
  - Multiple small groups throughout the city
  - Collective impact that reaches beyond our walls
  - Kingdom advancement through shared ministry
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## Group Prayer & Commitment

### Prayer Focus Areas:

1. **Restoration:** Pray for wisdom and gentleness to restore fallen brothers and sisters
2. **Burden-Bearing:** Ask God to show you whose burden you should help carry
3. **Faithful Sowing:** Request grace to sow to the Spirit consistently, even when you don't see immediate results
4. **Perseverance:** Pray for strength not to grow weary in doing good to all people

### Commitment Challenge:

*This week, identify one specific person who needs you to pass them the baton. Will you pass the baton of restoration to someone caught in sin? The baton of burden-bearing to someone who's struggling? The baton of encouragement to someone who's weary? Make a concrete plan to reach out and pass the baton.*

**Reflection:** "When one wins, we all win."

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## For Further Study

## Additional Scriptures:

- Galatians 1:6-9 (Those abandoning the true gospel)
- Galatians 5:1, 13-26 (Freedom in Christ; flesh vs. Spirit)
- James 5:19-20 (Restoring a wandering brother)
- Romans 15:1-3 (Bearing with the weak)
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (Sowing generously)
- Hebrews 10:24-25 (Spurring one another on)

## Cross-Reference with Last Week:

- Last week: Isaiah's call from moments with God to ministry for God
- This week: How we pass that ministry from person to person, creating movements
- Next week: Continue exploring how our congregation can multiply ministry throughout our community

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## Closing Prayer

*Father, thank You for passing the baton of salvation to us through Jesus Christ. Thank You for those who restored us when we were fallen, who bore our burdens when they were too heavy, who sowed spiritual seeds in our lives, and who persevered in doing good to us even when we didn't deserve it. Help us now to pass that same baton to others. Give us spiritual minds to restore the fallen with gentleness. Give us intentional hearts to bear crushing burdens for our brothers and sisters. Help us sow to the Spirit rather than the flesh, trusting You for the harvest in due season. And strengthen us not to grow weary in doing good to all people. May we move from moments with You to ministry for You to movements that transform our community. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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**Remember:** It's not enough to be blessed and highly favored. Pass the baton. Get somebody else to receive the same blessing and favor you received from the Lord. When one wins, we all win together.

**For those ready to receive the baton:** If you need to come to Jesus in faith, repent of your sins, and be immersed in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, we invite you to come forward. If you're a child of God who needs prayer or restoration, we're here to bear your burden with you. Don't carry it alone—let us get in the trenches with you.