



Life Principles Notes™

How to Release Your Burdens

Part 3: Bearing the Greatest Burden

Summary:

What is the heaviest burden you've ever carried? Most of us would have to stop and think about that for a few moments. Perhaps you missed the greatest opportunity of your life because of a bad decision. Maybe a loved one left you in some way, and you can't move on because you were so dependent upon them. It could be that you had great wealth, but you gambled it all away. It may even be that God called you to preach the gospel—to serve Him in some way—but you said

no to Him. No matter what the burden is, you haven't been truly happy ever since that time.

There are many kinds of weighty troubles that people bear; but there's one burden that's heavier than all the rest. And, it is the most profound, heart-breaking, and destructive burden of them all.

Key Passage: [Hebrews 9:24–28](#)

Supporting Scripture: *John 3:16, 36; 14:6; Ephesians 2:1–3; 1 Peter 2:24; Revelation 20:6, 14–15.*

Scriptural Principles:

1 The greatest burden of all.

What is the greatest burden of all? It's our sin. All of us have sinned; therefore, all of us must face the consequences of our transgressions. Although we may not realize it, our sins are wearing us out and discouraging us—they are draining the life from us. When we continue to live with such heaviness of soul and spirit, it destroys our body, devastates our soul, and fragments our thinking. However, those are the least of the consequences when we consider that everyone must give an account of his or her life to God. There are also eternal penalties for our iniquities.

2 The first consequence of living without Christ: Bondage.

What are the specific consequences of sin? The first consequence is that we live in bondage. Ask most people trapped in sin and they will deny the fact that they're enslaved by their addiction. They usually insist that they can stop the habit anytime they want to. That's why rehabilitation places are so full of people who had to hit rock bottom before they could confess that something wasn't right in their life. Our sin enslaves us no matter what it is—even if it doesn't include addictions. Therefore, one of the consequences of sin is bondage.

3 The second consequence of living without Christ: Separation.

Second, sin separates us from God. Understand, once we've accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior, we're never divided from God again. However, lost people continue to live apart from God as long as they reject Christ. God hates every form of sin because He sees what it does to us. When a person chooses to live a godless life, he actually chooses death over life from a spiritual standpoint. However, once a person is saved by the grace of God, he is transformed and his spirit comes alive. If a person is not spiritually minded, that might not seem to be a big issue; however, as a believer, you'll want to do God's will and live a godly life.

4 The third consequence of living without Christ: God's Wrath.

The third consequence of sin is that you experience the unfettered wrath of God. Of course, many people don't think that God's judgment will ever be poured out upon them. However, in John 3:36, Jesus explains, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." God's wrath—His hatred toward things that are ungodly—is going to be poured out, and if people don't rid themselves of sin, they will reap God's wrath. The threat of God's judgment should lead people to repentance because it is only through Christ that sin can be eliminated from one's life.

5 The fourth consequence of living without Christ: Eternal Death.

The last consequence of sin is the most devastating because it is eternal death. Revelation 20:14–15 warns, "Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." Hell is the penalty for rejecting Christ; it is eternal separation from God—the author of life—and people choose it for themselves by not accepting His grace. When the wicked stand before God in judgment, He's not going to weigh the good and the bad they've done. Rather, at the Great White Throne Judgment, God will choose the degree of punishment for every person who has willfully denied Him.

6 What can be done about it?

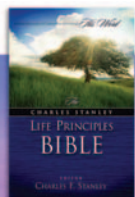
How can we avoid sin's bondage, separation from God, God's wrath, and eternal death? We find our answer in the Word of God. Hebrews 9:27–28 instructs, "Inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him." We avoid the consequences of sin by accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior. Because of God's love for mankind, He sent His Son as the sinless sacrifice for our sin. When we turn to Him in prayer, Jesus lifts this burden of our transgressions off of us and takes them on Himself—eliminating the effects of sin.

7 Christ is our sin-bearer.

How can Jesus Christ bear our iniquity? He can do so because He is our sin-bearer—the one whom God chose to assume full responsibility for our transgressions and condemnation. Christ offers His life as a substitute payment for our iniquities; therefore freeing us from all the eternal penalties of our sinfulness. While there may be other consequences to our sins, Jesus repairs what sin has destroyed—our fellowship with God. That's how awesome the crucifixion is. God the Father laid all of our sin, all of our guilt, all of our judgment on Christ and made it possible for us to live free of it. Therefore, each of us must ask: If Jesus Christ doesn't bear my sin, how can I possibly deal with it? The reality is that we can't. Our only choice is to embrace Christ as our sin-bearing Savior.

Conclusion:

On the cross, Christ took our place. The everlasting suffering that sin intended for us was placed upon Him—and He triumphed over it. No longer do we have to worry about spiritual bondage, separation from God, God's wrath, or eternal death. We have been



Benefit from the truths that have shaped Dr. Stanley's life and ministry with the *Life Principles Bible*. Visit the *Bookstore* at www.intouch.org.

set free. He took our greatest burden—the burden of sin—and gave us the victory.

Now, our responsibility is to tell others about Him. We can't make them believe, but we can make sure they know all that Christ has done for them. There are only two choices—Jesus or eternal death. And when we lead others to make the right choice, we lead them to the One who's paid the ultimate price for their sin. 🙏

Contact us:
1-800-789-1473

Customer Care
7:30 a.m.–7:00 p.m. | M-F EDT