

Today, we come together in prayer and fasting. Every great move of God in the Bible and throughout history begins with Extraordinary Prayer and Fasting. Jesus invites us to abide in him. He is life in abundance.

This week's scriptures: Galatians 6:2, Matthew 11:28-30, Revelation 21:1-5

Day 1: Carry Each Other's Burdens

Read:

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. -Galatians 6:2

Reflect:

I don't know if you've noticed, but a lot is going on right now. A lot of heavy things. Heavy things around the world, and I'm sure heavy things in your own life and the lives of those around you. We each have our burdens to carry. Some are lighter than others, and some are heavier.

Galatians 6:2 says to carry each other's burdens, and by doing that, we are obeying Jesus. Hopefully, you are blessed to have brothers and sisters in your life who can help carry those burdens alongside you. I have found myself recently asking God exactly what it looks like to help healthily carry someone else's burden. Sometimes, I think, "Sure. I can help carry that friend's burden. It doesn't look too heavy." Other times, I think, "God, there is no way that I can help carry that person's burden. It's just too heavy."

Pray:

One very important way we can help carry someone else's burden is through prayer. Take time now to jot down a few people in your life that you know are carrying a burden. Lift them up in prayer and intercede on their behalf. Ask our God, the most high, to reveal himself to them and show up in their lives.

Day 2: Light as a Feather

Read:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

-Matthew 11:28-30

Reflect:

About a month ago, I was sitting on our back deck with Jesus. I looked up and saw what I thought was a butterfly on top of our pergola. For quite some time, it never moved, so I crawled up there to see what it was. It was actually a feather. "Cool, I thought." And I left it there.

The next day, I was back on the deck reflecting on many friends who were going through many very heavy things: loss of loved ones, babies in the NICU, court dates, and the list went on. I was asking God, "How do I carry these burdens for my friends? There are so many of them, and they are so heavy! How do I carry these burdens in a healthy way that does not overwhelm me?". At that very moment, I looked up and noticed that the feather was still there. Twenty-four hours later, in the Kansas wind, that feather had not moved. Then I heard Him speak. He said, "Yes, carry people's stories and hold them with care, but they're not supposed to be heavy. They're supposed to be light, like this feather. The words of their story are written on each barb." I knew this was significant, so I crawled up and got the feather. At the time, I was unsure of the meaning of the word "barb," so I looked it up. A barb is an individual strand of feather material (keratin) extending from the quill. As I examined the feather, I estimated that there were hundreds of barbs just on that one feather. This taught me two things: 1) carrying one another's burdens is supposed to be light, not heavy, and 2) our Heavenly Father thinks stories are very important.

Pray:

When we are burdened, we can come to Him, and He will give us rest. He wants us to learn from Him about how to carry these burdens for others. And our own burdens, for that matter. He wants to carry the heavy part, and He gives us the light part, like a feather. Talk to your Heavenly Father now about heavy burdens that you are carrying for yourself or perhaps ones that you are helping carry for others. Ask Him to teach you how to carry the light part and give Him the heavy part.

Day 3: All Things New

Read:

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

-Revelation 21:1-5

Reflect:

Our God is counting and will continue to count our tears

as he wipes them from our eyes. He sees every one, and he catches them in his bottle (Ps. 56:8). Our burdens and our stories are important to Him. There isn't one that He doesn't hear or understand.

Thanks be to God that He is making all things new. Yes, eventually, this world will be new, and heaven will be new, but He says that even now He is making things new!

Pray:

As you revisit the burdens that you offered up on your behalf or someone else's behalf in the previous section, close your eyes and picture Him wiping away the tears. As you read Revelation 21:1-5, thank Him for what he is doing now in your life and praise Him for what He is going to do when He returns.