

Series: Starting Strong
Message: What are you Carrying?

February 24, 2013

We all CARRY BAGGAGE as we journey through life.

Matthew 11:28-12:37

Our life is not BURDEN FREE.

Matthew 11:28-30; John 16:33

We tend to CARRY BURDENS we're not supposed to.

1 Samuel 17; Luke 10:38-42; 1 Peter 5:7; Hebrews 12:1-3

We were made to SHARE EACH OTHER'S BURDENS.

Exodus 18:13-26; Galatians 6:1-3

Food for Thought - Questions for Life Groups

Review these questions in preparation for participating in a Life Group. All the questions may not be covered in their entirety. Prayer and connecting with each other are vital parts of spiritual growth.

Think of the things you're carrying today. Imagine those things you carry in a big suitcase / backpack / satchel / purse... Now open it all up and think about them and list them below in one of these categories:

Burdens I am supposed to lay down –

Burdens I am supposed to carry –

Burdens I see in others that I need to help them carry –

It's easy to be overwhelmed with the load we carry around day after day, year after year. Lugging around the burdens of life can be exhausting. It can be guilt, discontent, grief, worries, relationships, loneliness, fear... etc.

Which of the burdens you're supposed to lay down trouble you the most? Why?

Have you ever left unhealthy burdens behind? How did you lay them down? How did it feel?

What keeps you from setting down burdens you're not supposed to carry?

Read Matthew 11:28-30.

To whom are these words addressed? Does it include you?

What promise does Jesus give to those responding to his grand invitation? How do you respond when you read this?

Read 1 Peter 5:7.

What does this verse instruct us to do?

What reason does Peter give for why we should obey this command?

What benefit can we expect to receive when we obey?

As you travel through the week take some time every morning to open up your bags and talk to God about what you're carrying around with you. He will help you discern the burdens you need to bear, those you don't and He'll help you see whose you need to share.

Suggested Reading: *Traveling Light* by Max Lucado. I love how this book takes the 23rd Psalm to walk through major burdens we carry in our lives and helps us examine them. Then helps us release those burdens to God that we were never meant to bear.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word. (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here's how it will happen:

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal, as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms, such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

SERVE

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve and make a difference in God's Kingdom.