

Whenever a discussion ensues concerning God and burdens, the most often text quoted is “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

But just as assuredly as Paul wrote that text, he also penned “For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself” (2 Corinthians 1:8).

There, the apostle confesses that he was under so much pressure it was “beyond” his strength to bear it. God did place more on Paul than he was able to bear. How does this possibly reconcile with 1 Corinthians 10:13? In this way...

2 Corinthians 1:8 clearly teaches God placed more on Paul than he could bear.

God does do this.

If you or I could bear everything in life this would also include God’s wrath.

But we cannot.

Jesus interposed his own blood because we could not bear up under God’s just anger. So in reality, it is Christ in us, who bears our burdens. This is why Peter encouraged his readers to “cast all their cares” on Jesus (1 Peter 5:7). It’s why Jesus reminded us that we find rest in Him (Matthew 11:29).

If you could bear your own burdens there would have been no reason for Jesus to die on the cross.

If any person could bear his or her own burdens there would be no reason to be saved.

In that scenario the Christian life could be lived by an unbeliever.

But the Christian life is supernatural.

Actually, only God can live it.

That’s why Jesus died for you and then placed His Spirit within you.

When life is more than you can bear (2 Corinthians 1:8), the “escape” of 1 Corinthians 10:13 is Jesus.

He is our burden bearer according to Psalm 68:19 which reads “Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation.”

Jesus is a daily Savior!

Finally, consider the scenario which prompted Paul to ask God to remove a burden from him; one he could no longer be up under such that he prayed three times for God to rid him of it. God’s response to Paul’s request is 2 Corinthians 12:9 which reads ““My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

There it is: the great escape of God’s power for our weakness.
Only God’s grace is sufficient for what ails us as humans.
Only God’s grace is sufficient for the burdens of life.

What was Paul’s response to the Lord’s revelation? He said “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” In our weaknesses, our inability to bear up under life, God’s grace is glorified such that our needs are met and unbelievers see God’s grace as sufficient for them too.

In other words, our weaknesses or inability to bear up under life, are designed by God to turn both us and the lost to Christ. Otherwise, the sinner who “grins and bears it” gets the idea he can also survive God’s judgment.

God does put more on us than we are able to bear, for His glory, our good and the best of those who don’t yet know him.