



the CARRY the WEIGHT



Thank you for being a voice for the voiceless and for demonstrating your passion to liberate those trapped in generational poverty by launching a Carry the Weight campaign. **Every \$100 you raise means that another family's legacy can change forever! Plus, every dollar you raise will be matched from September 21st to October 31st!**

Here are a few general guidelines to get you started, followed by some prayers and reflections as you actually "Carry the Weight."

In preparation:

- **Pick an activity** to do alone or with friends when you will carry the weight. It could be while you're working, working out, walking, shopping, or even standing. To get the most out of the following prayers/reflections, pick something you can do while being prayerful, or let the people who are participating with you know that you would like to reflect on the following prompts while carrying the weight together.
- **Pick the amount of weight** you'll carry. It could be as light as a newborn baby or as heavy as a 5-gallon container of water! Whatever weight you choose, remember that this represents the weight of poverty, which is such a heavy burden for so many trapped by it. It might be good to stretch yourself physically to really feel the heaviness of such a burden, but certainly don't hurt yourself!
- Once you have your activity, your weight, and anyone who will be participating with you, **pick a date and time** to carry the weight. Carry the Weight officially runs September 21st to October 31st, so even if you do it before then, don't share it with friends and family until that timeframe. And **remember to take pictures or video to share!**
- Finally, **read through the following reflections/prayers ahead of time** so you're ready to enter into your activity prayerfully, allowing God to meet you in this sweet space.

We pray that Carry the Weight is not just a great advocacy tool but also a time of personal connection with God, whose heart extends to all people in all kinds of pain around the world. **May you meet Jesus as you carry the weight and help ease the burdens of those trapped in poverty!**



Before the main event:

As you begin your journey of carrying the weight for someone in Africa, think about what feels heaviest in your life. Are you facing a difficult relationship? A deep loss? Is work or school in a particularly challenging season? Or is your body facing some challenges these days? Take a few minutes to feel the weight of that burden as you begin to carry the physical weight you've chosen on this journey.

As you're doing your task (walking, working, standing, etc.), pray:

- for the heaviness that is in your own life. Pray something like: "God, please help shoulder this burden with me. This situation feels so heavy that it's hard to carry alone. I'm grateful to know that I'm not alone. Thank You for being with me in this. Help me to feel You holding me up even in this."
- for the weight of the poverty so many in Africa carry. Pray something like: "Lord, my heart is heavy knowing that so many are weighed down by poverty and don't know that freedom is available. I feel the weight of their situations today, God. I feel how difficult life is when lived under this weight, and I lament that they are so desperate that they do unspeakable things. Use my carrying this weight to bring even some small relief to those looking for hope and praying for a different future."



Halfway through your journey/task:

About halfway through your time, think about what it would feel like to have someone shoulder the weight of your burdens with you. Is there anything you've already been doing that makes your burden seem lighter? Talking with a friend? Distracting yourself through food or media? Praying? Inviting an accountability partner to encourage you? Sharing with your small group?

What can you picture might help lighten your load in the future—as a permanent relief not just a temporary change? Imagine that relief coming right now. As you carry the weight for someone trapped in poverty, picture someone else helping to carry your burden. What would it feel like to not be so weighed down? What can you now accomplish with your life because your burden has been lightened?

As you continue with your task, pray:

- for wisdom to know what changes you can make to feel lighter about your current burden. Pray something like: "God, I am wanting to see real change in this area of my life. I may have been seeking temporary reprieve in things that can never satisfy me. I choose to give those up now as I seek Your face, Jesus. Give me wisdom to know the pathway toward true relief, even if all I can do is surrender this to You every day, Lord. I acknowledge that I am not carrying this alone. Thank You for Your presence with me even here."
- for wisdom to know how to help those in Africa who are weighed down by poverty. Pray something like: "God, I feel how heavy poverty is for so many who feel stuck in it. Is there something more I can do to help? I know that You want to carry their burden with them—do You want to use me to help too? Give me clear insight on how I can pray for them or however You might lead me to help. I want to make a difference for Your Kingdom, even through carrying this weight now. Open my eyes to what You're inviting me to do from this day forward."

At the end of your time/journey:

At the end of your journey, take some time to reflect on these scriptures that speak to how we should treat “one another.” “One another” is used so many times in the New Testament; this is such a small portion of them. But contemplate how each scripture applies to your current situation and how you’re inviting God to meet you in this experience, as well as how you might make a difference for someone trapped in poverty.

- “Pray for one another” (James 5:16).
- “Encourage one another and build up each other” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- “Bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2).
- “Through love, serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).
- “Stimulate one another to love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24).

What progression do you notice in these “one another” statements? How can you move from simply praying for someone in need to encouraging them and bearing their burdens, then to serving them and even stimulating them to love and good deeds? Pray something like: “Father God, You are a Father to all of us. Thank You that You have provided other people to pray for and encourage me. Show me how I can better love those You care about. I will pray for them as You lead, God. I want to encourage them and bear their burdens, but I don’t fully know how. I would love to serve them and help encourage them toward love and good deeds—can You give me wisdom as to how to best do this? Show me what next steps I can take as I help fight poverty for those trapped by it.”

Take this contemplative posture with you, knowing that—even though you can now set down your burden—countless others cannot drop the weight of poverty so easily. And yet we all have our own burdens to bear. Know that we are praying for you to feel your load—whatever it might be—lightened. If you would like to share any specific prayer requests, please email togetherinprayer@empoweringlives.org and we will reach out soon to pray with you.

We pray you have felt God’s comforting presence as you carried the weight!

