

Call to Obedience #494
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
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His Yoke Is Easy, His Burden Is Light

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In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus tells us that His yoke is easy and His burden is light, but in Genesis, we learn that man must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Now then, which one is it? Is our burden light or is it heavy? Well, that depends on whether we are living inside or outside of the garden of His presence.

In Genesis, we find man being driven out of the garden of God's presence; in Matthew, we see Jesus offering Himself as a new garden of His presence. When we are yoked with Him, we dwell in His garden. Of course, being yoked with Him does not mean we are free from all burdens. We still have to pull; we still have to lean into the harness, but Jesus is on the other side of the yoke, pulling with His power, and so we never get stuck. We need never despair, because we can always cast *...all your care upon Him...* (1 Peter 5:7). When we are yoked with Him, the light never goes out (though it may be dim at times); there is always manna from heaven and water from the rock (though there may be some fasting). This all tells us that Jesus not only came to save us from sin, but He also came to be our companion as we walk this cursed ground with thorns and thistles all around us. This makes it possible for us to live triumphantly and positively under all kinds of pressures, circumstances, mental and physical abuse, and disappointments. So then when Jesus ascended to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in His followers and said to them: "Now come along and let us do this walk together." Oh, what a gift: *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light* (Matt. 11:28-30).

Please notice that the first word here is "come." He will not go to us—we must come to Him. Jesus did not meet the prodigal son in the pigs' pen. The son had to come to the father's house. Jesus has already come very close to all of us by coming to earth and leaving His love as a blood sacrifice

at the cross. We must now come to Him and that means that we must be willing to begin a new life, to give up our lordship and get under His sovereign Lordship, to give up many of our friends and make new friends, to forget about our plans and to enter into His plans, to cast our burdens on Him and get under His burdens. He says: “Come.” We are heavy laden—what are we waiting for?

The word “come” implies movement: moving away from something and toward another. It implies engagement, fortitude and pressing through difficulties. We must resist those voices which try to stop us and discourage us from coming to Him to be yoked with Him. There are forces and people who do not want us to leave where we are. There is also the devil who will do all he can to prevent us from walking with Jesus. Jesus was a realist and not a dreamer. He said: *...the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force* (Matt. 11:12); *In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world* (John 16:33). “Come” also requires us to keep our focus on the One who bids us to come. Once we lose our focus, we lose our way. Always keep in mind who He is, how much He loves us, and the price He paid for us to get life in all its fullness. This new life in its fullness will be granted to us, once we are in the yoke with Him, no matter what. Who can give us a full life but Jesus? We must get into His yoke.

Again, God did not only give us His Son for deliverance from the power of sin, but He also gave us His Son to deliver us from the burden of heavy yokes. These yokes cause us to have excessive stress, discouragement, disappointment, emotional problems, financial problems, social problems and eventually serious health problems. He changes these problems which may become manifest in our lives and grants us deliverance from the emptiness in our soul and from aimlessly going from one thing to another without getting there, not even knowing what we are seeking and where “there” is. In the Old Testament, we see that life on earth became stuck in the negative and this tragedy was confirmed by several great men of God. Job was one of these great men of God and he described it using these words: *Yet man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward* (Job 5:7). Also Solomon, who had everything he wanted in the world, sums up life in this manner: *Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under the sun* (Eccl. 2:20).

Notice the difference between your burdens and His burdens. Jesus says, “You need to give Me your burdens and cares in exchange for getting under My burden and My yoke. Mine is easier than yours and My burdens are nearly ripe for breakthroughs, yours are not.” And this act of trading our burdens for His burdens is a continual process—it is a day-by-day thing. Every day, it seems that someone is trying to put some of their burdens on you, or you yourself may take up a burden for this or for that which is not necessary for you to carry. My friend, Jesus wants you to get into the things that He is concerned about and you may call them “kingdom things.” Jesus is not calling upon you to be a drop-off station for other people’s prayer business. Rather, you can be a transfer station for some of them. But, whatever you do, be sure you stay engaged in “kingdom things.” Be a helper to others and yet, try not to become an escape route for their prayerlessness. Try to encourage others to establish their own relationship with Jesus. That is the greatest gift you can give them.

Jesus wants you to be so engaged in His things that it will consume all your powers to do the Master’s will. When Jesus was twelve years old, He asked His mother: *...Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?* (Luke 2:49). For example, people may want you to pray about their child’s salvation or a financial crisis. Ask yourself: “Is this the Father’s business for me?” Certainly it could be, but Jesus may want you to pray for someone else’s son or for the persecuted Christians in China instead of that. Who are you working for? Who should dictate what you should pray for? Whose ambassador are you? Are you taking upon yourself man-made yokes which are not the yokes of Jesus and are therefore unbearably heavy? His burden is light. You see, many church people are under heavy burdens and they are either burned out or headed towards becoming burned out. All of them have the same invitation as you: *Come to Me*.

Now, I am changing from a negative to a positive frame of mind. Jesus can bring us to happiness in all things because He said: *...In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world* (John 16:33). This cheerfulness is not linked to circumstances, but it is linked to us being yoked with Him. Paul also inspires us with: *Rejoice always, ...in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you* (1 Thes. 5:16-18). Now, we cannot be thankful *for* the evil things in the world, but yet, we can be thankful *in* them. In the worst storms or the greatest

losses, we can rejoice because of who we are in Him because He purchased us with His own blood and He promised to never leave us nor forsake us. He is always beside us, with us and in us in this wonderful yoke relationship. Yes, there is suffering, there is pain in childbirth and the world is filled with much that is evil. No, Jesus does not give us wings to fly over troubles—that comes later. But for now, if we are harnessed with Him in His yoke, He is beside us helping us through all the difficulties. He will always feed us with manna from heaven and water from the rock. Always.

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

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