

religion is very uncomfortable and hopeless.

- 3) The devil's yoke of self-righteousness is also miserable. It offers no forgiveness, cleansing or hope for the countless sins hidden in the heart.
- 4) The devil's yoke of humanism is a painful yoke. The devil has deceived billions into chasing success, fame, pleasure, entertainment, riches or a personal dream and rejecting God. They think they are free, yet they are wearing a painful yoke and serving a cruel master. They may say, "She'll be right mate", but after chasing their dreams, they will die and stand empty-handed, guilty and condemned before their Creator whom they rejected.

#### b. Christ assures us that His burden is light.

- 1) Jesus never claimed that the Christian life was easy. In fact, we read in Luke 9:23, "**And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.**" It is a burden to deny self instead of doing as we please. It is a burden to take up our cross daily and endure opposition for our faithfulness to Christ. Even following Christ is a burden because he is going upstream against the current in our world.
- 2) **However**, the load that Christ has us pull is lightweight compared with the heavy burden of sin, selfishness, guilt and hopelessness of serving the devil.
- 3) Forgiveness alone greatly lightens one's load.
- 4) There is no question about it, Christ's yoke is comfortable, and His burden is light, compared with serving the devil.

**Conclusion:** In our text, Jesus gave us an invitation, an instruction and an explanation. (Read again). Have you answered His call and taken His yoke? If not, will you do it today? [**Explain the Gospel**].

For those of you who have taken His yoke, I challenge you to learn from Him how to pull your load submissively and cheerfully.

I urge you to use these verses to challenge your unsaved family and friends to come to Christ and find rest for their souls.

**Song:** Come to the Saviour - 254

# Christ's Yoke

30 October 2022 AM – Matthew 11:28-30 – Salvation – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Today, farmers use tractors to pull wagons, ploughs, cultivators, and other farm implements. Manufacturers rate the power of a tractor in horsepower. When I was a boy, our small farm tractor had 25 hp. Its pulling power was about the same as 25 horses.

In Bible days, oxen and asses (donkeys) pulled the farm tools of the farmers. They were the "tractor". To attach the animal to the wagon or plough, the farmer used a strong rope or chain that hooked to a wooden collar called a yoke. The yoke fastened around the animal's neck. While a yoke can be made for a single animal, a yoke usually went across the necks of two oxen or two asses, fastening them together, enabling them to share the load being pulled.

Some yokes fit comfortably, while others were painful for the beast to wear. Some farmers were harsh and cruel to their oxen and asses, overloading them and beating them to get them to pull. Other farmers were kind and gentle, being careful not to overwork their beasts nor to harm them. Farmers did use an ox goad, which was a long, pointed stick to poke the stubborn beast in the bum when he refused to pull.

While these facts were common knowledge to people in Jesus' day, they may be foreign to us today. Therefore, we must comprehend them before we can accurately understand Jesus' message in our text this morning. Read Matthew 11:28-30.

In this text, Jesus compares each listener to an ox or ass wearing an uncomfortable yoke, pulling a heavy load and working for a harsh farmer. He portrays Himself as a kind farmer, with a pleasant yoke, who treats his beasts well.

**Transition:** As we examine these verses, I want each of us to note Christ's invitation, instruction and explanation to us.

## 1. Christ gives us an invitation (v.28).

### a. Christ invited listeners to come to Him.

- 1) Jesus was speaking to the multitudes <sup>(v.7)</sup> who had witnessed His mighty works yet had not believed in Him. Read Mt 11:20-24. Show on map.



- 2) Many were religious people, striving wearily to earn salvation. Others were self-righteous people who thought they were good, yet were deceiving themselves. A few may have been godless people, living for the pleasures of this world. They each had three things in common; they each wore a painful yoke, pulled a heavy load and worked for a harsh farmer.
- 3) Jesus urged all of them to come to Him for rest.

**b. Christ appealed to those needing rest.**

- 1) These folk needed spiritual rest. They were wearing themselves out trying to please God, themselves or their peers.
- 2) They were **labouring**, growing weary, tired and exhausted with the toil, burdens, and grief they endured.
- 3) They were **heavy laden**, loaded with huge burdens.
- 4) Many people today are just like those in Jesus' audience. They are working for a harsh farmer, the devil. They are growing weary, pulling their overloaded burden. Devoted religious people work hard in hopes to earn merit with Jehovah God. Self-righteous people live with the guilt of knowing that they are not nearly as good as they put on. Godless people chase success, pleasure, and prestige, while their sins and guilt increase and get heavier day by day.
- 5) All who labour and are heavy laden in this way need the rest that Christ offers.

**2. Christ follows with instruction (v.29).**

**a. He instructs us to take His yoke upon us.**

- 1) Joseph, Jesus' earthly stepfather, taught Him carpentry. "Carpenters at that time would have created mainly farm tools (like carts, plows, winnowing forks, and yokes) and things that were part of houses (doors, frames, posts, and beams). They also would have made furniture and kitchen utensils. But carpenters could not go to a lumberyard and buy smooth, pre-cut lumber. They would have had to cut down trees and use tools to chop, chip, and smooth the wood. They would have used axes, hammers, saws,

planes, and chisels." <https://apologeticspress.org/carpentry-in-the-bible-4797/>

- 2) **We all serve someone.** Whose yoke are you wearing? As we study the Bible, we learn that there are only two masters in this life, God and the devil. If you have not yet taken Christ's yoke, you are still wearing the devil's yoke. You are pulling his heavy load. You are working for him, even if you are religious.
- 3) Christ instructs us to take up and wear His yoke. **His yoke is forgiveness and eternal life received by repenting of our sin and trusting Christ to save us.** Though the Christian life is not a carefree life of ease, it is far better than wearing the devil's yoke. It is a life of service to God, not to earn His merit, but to glorify Him for His mercy and grace in rescuing us from eternal judgment.

**b. Christ instructs us to learn of Him.**

- 1) No ox or ass is born with a desire to wear a yoke and pull a load. While learning, he may kick, buck, rebel or go the wrong direction.
- 2) After years of wearing the devil's yoke, Christ's yoke, the Christian life, takes time to learn experientially. Jesus, as a kind farmer, will teach us. He is meek and lowly in heart. In other words, He is gentle and humble in spirit.
- 3) When we take Christ's yoke and learn from Him, He promises that we will find rest for our souls. That rest is the fulfilment for which every human longs. Sadly, many refuse to believe that Christ can give that rest.

**3. Christ ends with an explanation (v.30).**

**a. He tells us that His yoke is easy.**

- 1) The word "**easy**" does **not** mean simple. It means that Christ's yoke has nothing harsh or irritating about it.  
Zodhiates The idea is that **it fits well and is comfortable**.
- 2) There is nothing comfortable about the devil's yoke of religion. Its demands chafe and weary the soul. Its duties are mechanical and unpleasant. Its rules holds one in fear. Its rituals do not remove or ease guilt. Its hope of forgiveness and acceptance with God is always future. Its uncertain eternity is distressing. The devil's yoke of