

# Taking Christ's Yoke

Text: Matthew 11:28-30

A yoke is a long piece, usually of wood, tied across the necks of two animals such as oxen, in order to make them walk close together and in step when they are pulling a plow or a wagon.

## I. A YOKE SPEAKS OF CONNECTION.

The yoke is a connection of two for labor purposes. We observe the call of Elisha in 1 Kings 19:19: "So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him." God's prophet, Elijah throws his mantle, the unmistakably identifying outer garment, onto the hard-working young Elisha. By this act, Elijah is inviting Elisha to be yoked together with him. In the farming community, the farmer would yoke the mature ox, used to the hard labor of being under a yoke, to a young ox for the purpose of mentoring and training. The older ox would bear the greater burden until the young ox would learn. Then the trained younger ox would later take the role of the senior ox and become a mentor. It appears Jeremiah had this principle in mind when he said in Lamentations 3:27, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."

Paul used this metaphor to illustrate the effectiveness of the work of the Lord when fellow-workers are joined together. Philippians 4:3: "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."

When the tribes of Israel came together they found strength in battle. Judges 20:11: "So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man."

Helen Keller: "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."

Henry Ford: "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

Ken Blanchard: "None of us is as smart as all of us."

Booker T. Washington: "If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else."

Michael Jordan: "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships."

Ecclesiastes 4:9: "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour."

## II. A YOKE SPEAKS OF BONDAGE.

Jeremiah 28:12-14; Lamentations 1:14; Deuteronomy 28:48;  
Deuteronomy 22:10; II Corinthians 6:14.

Sin can trap a person and place them in bondage when one succumbs repeatedly to temptations. In Judges 16:21 we see the sad evidence of this truth: "But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

- (1) Sin blinds
- (2) Sin binds
- (3) Sin grinds

David prayed in Psalm 19:13: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." David is saying that a person presumes he may get away with sin (sin blinds). Sin takes dominion over a man (sin binds). If a person obeys, he will be free (free from the grind) of the great transgression. And ultimately if one does not repent, they shall experience James 1:15: "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

### III. A YOKE MAY BE BROKEN.

Leviticus 26:13; Jeremiah 5:5; Isaiah 58:6, 9; Mark 9:23-29.

I John 4:4: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Ephesians 3:20: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

### IV. CHRIST'S YOKE GIVES FREEDOM.

Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

John 8:32, 36: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free...If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

To find this freedom in Christ we must:

- A. Come: "Come unto me...."
- B. Surrender: "...all ye that labour and are heavy laden...."
- C. Receive: "and I will give you rest...."
- D. Partner: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me...."
- E. Become: "...for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."
- F. Believe: "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

### CONCLUSION:

There is a story of a man who was walking laboriously along the rocky, rather difficult roadside, carrying a fifty-pound bag of potatoes. A neighboring farmer saw him and pulled his wagon alongside of him and said, "Would you like to have a ride?" The man with the potatoes, with a sigh of relief, mounted the

seat next to the farmer. The farmer said to the traveler, "Why don't you set your potatoes down; it's a long ride home. The new passenger replied, "It's quite enough that you have to carry me; I'm not going to ask you to carry my potatoes as well." You've already made the application, haven't you?

When Christ saved you, He saved all of you. He carried the load of our sins on His own body on the cross as I Peter 2:24 says: "Who His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." And our Lord has forgiven everyone who truly believes. Hebrews 10:17: "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

-Pastor Pope-