



My Yoke Is Easy, and My Burden Is Light

By Derek Kiser on December 8, 2021

READING: Matthew 11

John the Baptist is an interesting character. I enjoy thinking about how we should be more like him in some ways. I am not saying we should copy the weird things he is known for. If you want to eat locusts and honey and wear camels' hair for clothes you can, but I think that would make you stand out for reasons other than the best. John the Baptist was the forerunner pointing others to Jesus. His job, and I believe ours as well, was to point others to Christ. The Holy Spirit will ultimately draw them to God through Jesus, but our job, like John's, is to share God's truth and point others to Jesus. This chapter talks a lot about John the Baptist, and it is worth spending time looking into more about him, but John is pointing us to the main attraction-- Jesus.

Towards the end of this chapter (vv. 28-30), Jesus delivers one of the most profound statements of the Bible. A little agricultural and religious context here is necessary. A yoke was the wooden harness that tied two oxen together and connected them to whatever they were pulling. In a religious sense, specifically in Judaism, the term *yoke* was sometimes used to describe a set of beliefs a rabbi held. If you were a rabbi's disciple, you would have to agree to follow his yoke or beliefs. Some of the beliefs in a rabbi's yoke were from scripture and others were made-up, man-made religion. As with all religions, it could be very burdensome to follow all the set of beliefs of a rabbi. So what is Jesus saying with these metaphors? Trying to be a good person is not only impossible but exhausting. Jesus was and is inviting us to come to Him, admitting we are sinners, admitting we are not good and cannot get to Heaven on our own. Jesus is asking us to give up religion and be His disciple to follow Him. Jesus said, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Our role is to trust in Christ and His finished work on the cross; to stop trying to be perfect and rest in His perfection.

PRAYER: God, help me rest in Jesus. Help me follow Jesus, not a list of man-made rules.

TOMORROW'S READING: Matthew 12

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