

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 11:25-30**.
- B. Tomorrow is Labor Day, as we in this country stop to honor the working man by giving him special recognition and a day off.
- C. Borrowing from that theme, I want to talk about the great invitation of X, for all who labor and are heavy laden. Jesus wants you to live, not unnecessarily labor.

I. JESUS HAD A GREAT YOKE TO BEAR.

- A. Not only does Jesus tell us that we are to take His yoke upon us but we must realize that Jesus had a yoke to bear of His own.
- B. Think of the great weight of responsibility that Jesus had while on the earth. He had the salvation of all men and women who had lived and would live, upon Him.
- C. No wonder that Jesus was distressed about the baptism He would have to undergo for the salvation all men (Lk. 12:50).
"But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!"
- D. And even with that tremendous responsibility, Jesus said that He is meek (gentle) and, lowly of heart (mind). These two qualities are brought out by the apostle Paul in Phil. 2:8 when he stated that Jesus was humble and obedient.
And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- E. To be meek is to be gentle (strength under control) and to be humble is to be lowly in heart. These two qualities are needed to handle a difficult yoke!
- F. Jesus doesn't want you to labor, He wants you to live!

II. OUR YOKE OF BONDAGE.

- A. Jesus wants us to take His yoke. We have other yokes that we could be under and Jesus wants us to discard them in favor of His.
- B. Some yokes we find ourselves under:
 - 1. The yoke of the law (of Moses, or any other), see Gal. 4:3; Col. 2:14.
(Gal 4:3) So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.
(Col 2:14) having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.
 - 2. The yoke of the traditions of men/creeds, dogmas, confessions (Mt. 23:13, 15; 15:9).
(Mt 23:13) "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."
(Mt 23:15) "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."
(Mt 15:9) "'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"
 - 3. The yoke of sin and transgression (Rom. 6:16, 20).
Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?... 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.
 - 4. The yoke of fear, worry, depression, guilt, and death (Heb. 2:15).
and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.
- C. The yoke of men (sin) is heavier to carry than the yoke of X (Col. 2:20-23).
If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" 22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)-- in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? 23

These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

- D. Jesus said that His yoke is easy. His is the very best yoke (a set of rules and regulations) that one can be under. It gives freedom, while keeping watch on us to do right (Gal. 5:1).
It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.
- E. Jesus doesn't want you to labor, He wants you to live!

III. JESUS SAID, "MY YOKE IS EASY."

- A. Jesus is asking us to take His yoke and for us to wear it.
- B. Knowing the truth does make us free, but this freedom is not anarchy to do what we wish.
- C. We must follow the teachings of Jesus, this is His yoke:
 - 1. We must do the will of the Father (Mt. 7:21).
"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."
 - 2. If we love X we will keep His commandments (Jn. 14:15).
"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."
 - 3. We are to be doers of the word not hearers only (Jas. 1:21).
Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
- D. His burden is light; which means that His commandments are not burdensome (1Jn. 5:3).
For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.
- E. When we compare yokes, it should become abundantly clear that we will want to discard the yokes of the world and put on the yoke of X.
- F. Jesus doesn't want you to labor, He wants you to live!

IV. "...AND LEARN OF ME."

- A. It is only reasonable that we should learn of X. Jesus:
 - 1. Walked on the water, changed water to wine, healed the lame, sick, blind and withered.
 - 2. Raised the dead, died for all sinners, and then was raised to die nevermore.
- B. To be like Paul in **Phil. 3:10-11**.
that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; **11** in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.
To know of:
 - 1. Him (how he served His Father, dealt with others, and with Himself).
 - 2. The power of His resurrection (to realize the great victory).
 - 3. The fellowship of His sufferings (to understand the purpose and maturity in it).
 - 4. How to be conformed to His death (total self-sacrifice).
...as to obtain the resurrection of the dead.
- C. I would rather carry the yoke of X than the yoke of Law, sin and death, worry and fear.
- D. Jesus doesn't want you to labor, He wants you to live!

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Seems redundant to offer the invitation, when I have been doing it for the entire lesson.
- B. The promise is that we shall find rest for our souls. Rest from the worries and cares of life that transcends into the spiritual realm with mercy and forgiveness.
- C. Are you laboring with life? Is life a labor and not a joy? Come to Jesus and find rest.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; for erring-Xians.