

# MY YOKE IS EASY



*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands  
Serve the Lord with gladness!  
Come into his presence with singing!  
Psalm 100:1-2*

This is not only an exhortation .... it is a prophecy. The day is coming when all lands will be making a joyful noise unto the Lord and serving Him with gladness. But in the Kingdom these things should be happening now. While Jesus makes clear that the life of following Him is going to cost us everything we've got, He never presents the life of following Him as anything less than unspeakable joy.

*I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy.  
Yes, your joy will overflow! John 15:11*

The Kingdom of God into which Jesus has now called us is

- a wedding feast,
- a great banquet,
- a fruitful field,
- a mighty harvest,
- treasure hidden in a field which a man found and covered up  
then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Yet, how often in our lives and ministries...

We have made the Kingdom into something almost totally joyless.

When we catch ourselves walking around ...with our jaw clenched half the time.

When we find that beneath our missionary smiles we're seething with "righteous indignation" at everything and everybody.

When the dominant atmosphere of our daily life is gloom.

When we find that we can hardly look at anything ...without being instantly critical.

When even our sleep is troubled with anxiety.

- We can be sure that our vision of  
Jesus and of His Kingdom is warped.

***“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me,  
for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you will find rest for your souls.  
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”***

***Matthew 11:28-30***

He promises we will find rest in Him...

that His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

So, if we have no rest, and if our walk with Him is such

a chore... a heaviness... a weariness... a depressing gloom-yielding thing,

Something is wrong!

***He said, “God’s Kingdom is as if a man should cast seed on the earth, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he doesn’t know how. For the earth bears fruit: first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”***

***Mark 4:26-29***

The man in this parable does only two things –

-- he scatters the seed,

-- he harvests the grain.

He does not make the seed grow. He doesn't even know how it grows. It grows by itself. First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

If the man understands this, *his labor is a joy*. But...

If the man presumes to take upon himself the matter of making the seed grow, he will make himself a spiritual wreck.

And if he produces any results by his efforts...

they will be demonic.

--All our frustration

--All our joylessness,

--All the spiritual monstrosities we produce out of our feverish efforts come from the presumptuous sin of tampering with the seed which is meant to sprout and grow (we know-not how), by God's grace.

***Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.***

***Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.***

***Psalms 127:1***

We call it "Christian work", but...

- our thinking,

- our attitudes,

- our way of doing things,

- our slovenly neglected prayer life

... gives every evidence that we have pushed God out of the center of this Christian thing we're doing

**and put ourselves there.**

We may think we're under the yoke with Christ but we're under a strange yoke of our own

**... no wonder it's so heavy.**

Some of us are continuously depressed because we're limping under a cast iron yoke called, "I don't know how I'll ever make it." "The world is filled with so many devils. There are so many temptations and I'm so undisciplined."

We think we're being humble when we talk like that. But underneath our humility is the presumptuous sin, thinking our survival depends entirely on us

... our will power... our cleverness.

Where is your vision of the Shepherd who promised to keep you in His hand?

And some of us are such wet blankets because we're staggering under the concrete yoke called, "I'm the only one left."

***"They've forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars...slain the prophets with the sword, and I alone am left."***

..."Where would God be if He didn't have me?..."

- That's a heavy yoke.

- That's enough to make anyone gloomy.

What a burden to be the only true disciple left!

And beneath your teeth-gritting total commitment is the presumptuous sin of thinking that...

**... it all depends on you.**

***Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!  
The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.***

***He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit. The Lord sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground. Sing to the Lord with grateful praise, make music to our God on the harp.***

***Psalm 147:1-7***

God's Kingdom is God's Kingdom,

- He rules it;
- He takes initiative.
- He builds up Jerusalem.
- He revives His church.
- He purifies His people.
- He gathers the outcasts of Israel.
- He heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds,

**.... for He alone is Lord.**

***"Be still, and know that I am God.  
I will be exalted among the nations.  
I will be exalted in the earth."***

God's Kingdom is in our midst, by His mercy.

And that Kingdom, like a stone cut out of a mountain without hands which grows until it fills the whole earth, is now at work, growing, fulfilling its purpose, with us or without us.

If we don't cooperate God raises up a people who will.

There is no way we or any man or any devil can keep it from coming.

Our part is not to make the Kingdom come.

The Kingdom is coming with us or without us.

*For the earth bears fruit: first the blade, then the ear,  
then the full grain in the ear*

The gospel will be preached in China. The word will spread across India like a fire. Africa will be saturated with the word of God's mercy. And even America, with all its cheap gospels, will hear a clarion call to repentance. All this and much more is in the offing.

Our part is simply to fit into this glorious thing which God is even now doing

-- exactly where He wants to fit us.

We are given the high privilege of being part of all this if we will lay aside our heavy, somber, gloomy, self important yoke (where we're in charge)

... and get under the yoke of Christ which is so much easier, (because He's in charge, and not we)

1. His yoke is easy because under that yoke ...

**Jesus gives us eyes to see the Kingdom of God.**

*Nobody sees the Kingdom of God until Jesus opens his eyes:*

*Turning to the disciples, he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which you see, and didn't see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and didn't hear them."*

*Luke 10:23-24*

The same Lord who opened the eyes of the blind and who opened the eyes of the apostles so that they could behold the glory of God's Kingdom is now doing this miracle in us. If we will but look away from ourselves and our vanities and pursue His face, He will give us light.

And in that light, we will see the finger of God moving on this earth as many a prophet and king longed to see it. And we will realize how petty and narrow and limited we were. We aren't the only ones!, Ours isn't the only fellowship. We begin to see the hand of Jesus at work in places we never dreamed...and we tremble with awe.

*"My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.  
Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."*

*Job 42:5-6*

2. His yoke is easy because under that yoke...

**Jesus makes himself the door by which we enter the peace of God...**

*Not only once, but daily, continuously, until this body of death falls away and we are there for good.*

*So, Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not heed them. I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture..."*

*John 10:7-9*

By Jesus we go in before the presence of the Father ---

- to behold His beauty,
- to drink in His peace,
- to be quickened with His life,
- to enter His rest.

Many professing Christians know all the doctrines about Jesus ....  
yet they haven't come to know Jesus as the *door to the presence of God*

**.. because they hold Him at a distance.**

This is why He says, "**Come.**"

He's saying it now.

*"Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden..."*  
*"If anyone thirst let him come to me and drink..."*  
*"Come....Draw near.....Get close to me."*

If Jesus seems distant it's not His fault, it's yours He has made it possible to draw near---  
even if you have to walk on water you can draw near to Him if you will.

But Jesus is not only the *door in*, He is also the *door out* by which we go forth from the blazing presence of God to take His mercy to the world.

3. His yoke is easy because under that yoke...

**Jesus gives us a place of meaningful service in His Kingdom.**

- Go into the vineyard and whatever is right I will give you.
- Don't be afraid from now on you will be catching men.
- As the Father has sent me, so send I you.
- You did not choose me, but I chose you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit.

What a joy to go out there, free from the presumptuous sin of thinking it all depends on us

... knowing that the Lord himself is in charge

... and that as we abide in Him and His words abide in us ... miracles, absolute miracles, will flow from our lives

-wherever the Lord puts us to work.

Now we can labor in the harvest,

- free from the disease of prideful ambition... It's all His
- free from the paralyzing fear of failure

... It cannot fail!

- no matter how many failures you've known in the past,  
...in this you cannot fail.

4. Finally, His yoke is easy because under that yoke...

**Jesus clothes us with the Kingdom garment of praise.**

- Beauty for ashes.
- The oil of joy for mourning.
- The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

The spirit of heaviness is always, at its core, a presumptuous spirit.

But now we exchange it for the garment of praise.

And as we do we discover that true praise of God... is more than an emotional release.

True praise is the very atmosphere of heaven.

*"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth"*

*Psalm 34:1*

*"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise:  
be thankful unto him, and bless his name,"*

*Psalm 100:4*

*And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."*

*Mark 4:26-29*

Thank God that we don't have to make the seed grow.

We don't even have to know how it grows.

All we have to do is...

- get under His yoke,
- sow the seed,
- reap the harvest.

The rest is all His.

*His yoke is easy and his burden is light.*

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