

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”(Matt 11: 29-30)

A yoke is symbol of slavery or bondage.



Like it or not, we are yoked one way or another!

“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves **slaves** to obey, you are that one’s **slaves** whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?
(Rom 6: 16)



“Take *MY* yoke...” How?

“For those who live according to the flesh **set their minds** on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” (Romans 8: 5-6)

What do we read?

What do we watch?

What do we listen to?

What do we think about?

What do we talk about?



Spelling out the choice - Eph 5: 3-10

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks... For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.



We can only wear one yoke (1 Cor 6:14-17)

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

*I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.*

Therefore

*"Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you."*



One or the other. In or out.



Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart

We can learn from Him **because of** His character

We can learn to **adopt** His character, because...

“For thus says the High and Lofty One
Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
"I dwell in the high and holy place,
With him who has a contrite and humble spirit,
To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” (Isaiah 57:15)

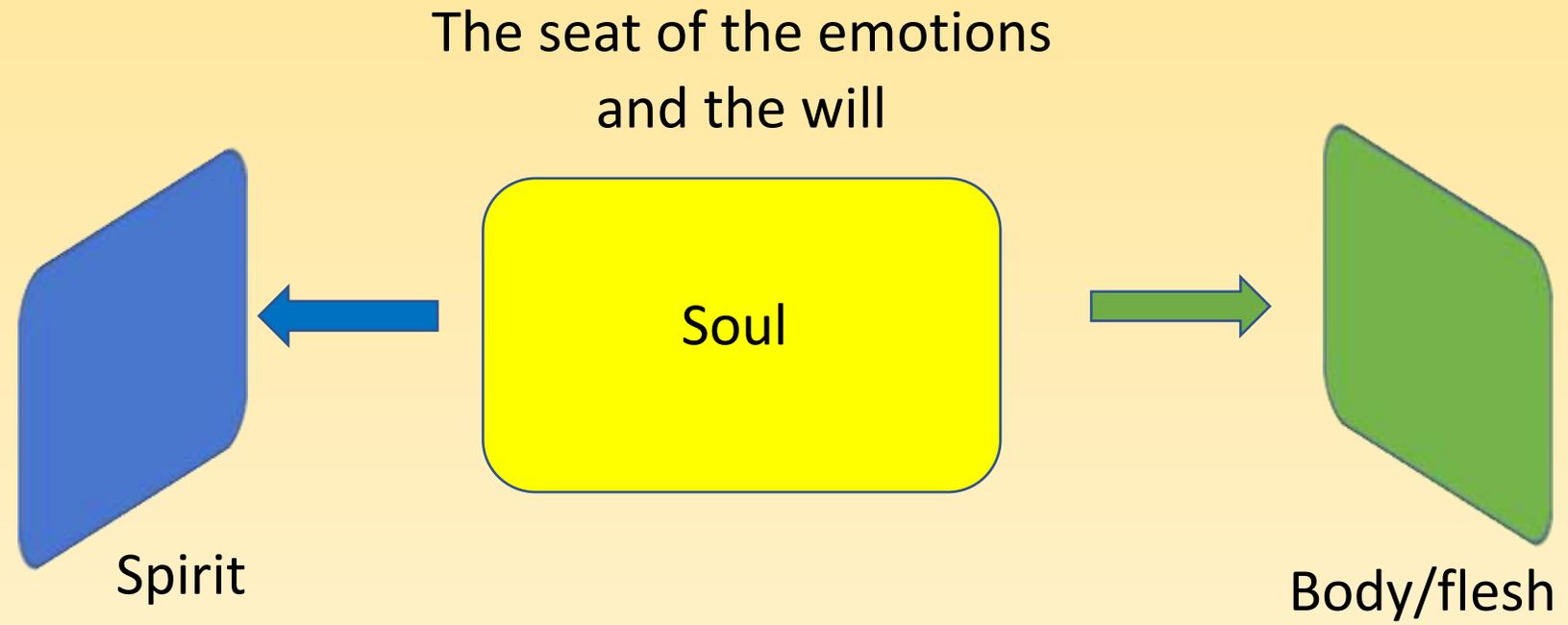


Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart

“He made known His ways to Moses,
His acts to the children of Israel.” Ps 103:7



Rest for your soul



My yoke is easy

The yoke of Jesus doesn't chafe or rub.

If we "walk after the Spirit" our emotions are at peace and our will is satisfied.



Not a lack of hardship, but peace and joy in the hardship:

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned,
Nor shall the flame scorch you.” (Is. 43:2)



My burden is light

We are not weighed down by a heavy burden of religious do's and don'ts

What might seem heavy and burdensome to the flesh is light and airy (Greek *elaphros* = light, quick, agile) to the Spirit

- Acts of Love
- A giving lifestyle
- Works of faith



Under His yoke

We walk in his

Presence

Protection

Purpose

Provision



In His *presence* is fullness of Joy

Joyful worship comes out of knowing the presence of God,
not having happy feelings.

“Bless the LORD, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits” Ps 103:2

(Zorba's Dance)



His Protection: He is our strong tower

Our souls are fragile. Under His yoke we find protection *and are able to walk in His ways*

“not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

For

“He who would love life
And see good days,
Let him refrain his tongue from evil,
And his lips from speaking deceit.
Let him turn away from evil and do good;
Let him seek peace and pursue it” (1 Peter 3:9-11)



Protected from the alternative...

“For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be *discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.*” 2 Cor 12:20



A pair of Corinthians wearing the wrong yoke.



Purpose

To build His church and see God's Kingdom come

“He shall build the temple of the LORD; Yes He shall build the temple of the LORD” (Zech 6: 12-13)

“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John 3:8)

While we remain yoked to Jesus we will see everything we do from a Kingdom perspective, because that's what we're yoked to Him for.



To walk in His purpose we need His direction.
And sometimes it's not the direction we're going in...

The Hebrew word for "teach" is *lamad*, from using a goad to direct oxen.

If you start going the wrong way, or if He wants you to change course, you'll get a prod:

"Your ears shall hear a word **behind you**, saying,
"This is the way, walk in it,"
Whenever you turn to the right hand
Or whenever you turn to the left." (Isaiah 30:21)



A day in the life... (after a bad night in the life...)

I had come to a halt preparing this; struggling with the presentation.

My brother phoned with a problem. "That's all I need..."

Got a prod from the "goat", accepted the prod and told John I would drop in.

Everything changed from that moment...

Came back upstairs, looked at slides and everything clicked into place.

John's "problem" was sorted in about two minutes.

Called in at work just as Anne was having a conversation that needed prayer cover.

Walked down High Street just as a guy was telling the JW's about the person of the Holy Spirit: "Yes, I know Him well!"

Had a prophetic word to encourage the Christian guy as we walked along the High Street afterwards.



Provision – *we are yoked to the Provider Himself.*

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt 6: 31-33)



The Price... Jesus has paid it, but we still have a price to pay...

We don't take the yoke off
He wants all our lives

All of us for all of Him



The Price

“The only thing that counts is faith working through love” (Gal 5:6)



“Jumping from one change to another, and one big answer to prayer to another, from one surprise development to another make give a false impression. I have found this a nerve wracking chapter to write. It has not been an exciting succession of “success”. They have been sicknesses, accidents, depressions, discouragement, frustrations and exhaustion. There has been a succession of difficulties which arise from having little money, a succession of temptations to give up, to call it too much, to say we had enough and that we want to have a “normal life like other people“. There have been what we feel sure are direct attacks from Satan to stop us, to make us give up. If you want to read what the Bible says about living by faith, read in Hebrews 11 chapter and the first four verses of the 12th. It is not an account of easy lives and a succession of high points. To say the least, there is a variety of things to be experienced. It is far from a soft life.

But there is reality. There is the certainty of the God who is there. There is the possibility of seeing that God works in space, time in history, and in one’s own moment of history. There is the certainty of being in communication with Him rather than having some nebulous psychological crutch to enable one to lead a better life!”

From “L’Abri”, by Edith Schaeffer



His Rest – 24/7 Sabbath

“If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy day of the LORD honourable,
And shall honour Him, not doing your own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking your own words...” Isaiah 58:13

STAY IN CHRIST ALL THE TIME



Gold, silver and precious stones...

This is about our fruitfulness, not our salvation which is by grace alone.

“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”

1 Cor 3: 11-15



The Reward (Sabbath rest continued)

“If you call the Sabbath a delight ...(i.e. if you choose the rest that only comes from taking His yoke)

Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD;
And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.
The mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (Isaiah 58:14)



Same old, same old – or God's new things?

Cosy candles, or blazing bonfires?

School hall, or Park Life?

Wildwood, or the World?



Are you in?

