

MY YOKE IS EASY

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In the popular Charles Dickens story 'A Christmas Carol', the miser Ebenezer Scrooge worked his long suffering employee Bob Cratchit to breaking point (this is where we get the insulting term 'scrooge' from... meaning someone who has plenty, but is not generous or caring to those who don't). He provided only minimal heating, expected Cratchit to work on holidays, and constantly displayed an air of criticism and suspicion. No one would want to work for a boss like Scrooge, who represents the worst, yet common traits of humanity!

Selfish and self-centred people are always a problem for the people of this world... because it creates more selfishness and more unhappiness.

Jesus, the Son of God and Lord of all, promises rest and comfort. MAT 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Jesus actually cares about our life situation and wants to do something about it. Before he revealed the easier nature of his yoke, he prayed that God would provide this blessing for those who were humble, like children... **25** At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast **revealed** (through the Spirit) them unto babes. Jesus is asking God to give us what he has received himself.

What Jesus describes is the opposite to the way the world views power and leadership... we don't often hear kings, tycoons, dictators, or superstars described as gentle. Jesus invites those who are weary and burdened, not just those who are powerful and strong. Then He promises rest to the heavy hearted. The Lord is not like Scrooge, trying to squeeze every drop of our potential for His own gain. He cares deeply about our wellbeing.

This is how the process becomes effective.

29 Take my yoke (coupling device) upon you, and learn of me (this is often one of the overlooked conditions which comes with the yoke... *learning*); for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (manageable). Jesus is not weak nor insipid, he is still our Master and Lord. He still provides a yoke for us... duties and responsibilities. However, unlike any other master we might follow, only He cares for our souls and assures that our burdens are manageable. He is our Master, but Jesus will never treat us with abuse. Jesus was full of joy for the blessings he was securing for us.

Our yoke is to do the will of God through the power and joy of the Holy Spirit... we are empowered to do his work for him. He is the master, we are the workers.

Our body has become the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1COR 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? As the temple of God, we should become a source of spiritual enlightenment/*teaching* and comfort, for the peoples in our world... Jesus was filled with the comforter as we now are. This follows the earlier pattern set by Moses when the first tabernacle (temple) was constructed.

One of the main disciplines of being yoked to the Lord... is teaching and reproducing blessings.

Like servant like master. 2COR 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

The tabernacle was built by people who were yoked to the teaching of the spirit and its power.

Bezaleel and Aholiab turned the heart offerings of the people into something beautiful and without spot or blemish, by which the Lord and the people could be blessed. EXO 35:30 And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name **Bezaleel** (in the shadow of God) the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; **31** And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship (same pattern as being filled with all the gifts of the spirit); **32** And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, **33** And in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. **34** And he hath put in his heart that he may **teach, both he, and Aholiab** (father's tent), the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. God revealed skills and abilities never seen before, so his tabernacle could be built and fully functional.

These two men went on and trained others in the building of God's house, ark of the covenant, etc... being yoked in the same spirit and purpose.

Now we have the Spirit of God... the true rest and refreshing, we are called to follow the same pattern. 2TIM 2:1

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace (the covenant) that is in Christ Jesus. **2** And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same **commit thou** to faithful men, who shall be able to **teach** others also.

This is also what Bezaleel and Aholiab did!

Jesus gave his disciples a final reminder of how to serve the master in an effective manner.

We are also asked to offer the same to the unsaved. MAT 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. **19** Go ye therefore, and **teach** all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **20** **Teaching** them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

In the fictional story 'A Christmas Carol' the miserable and unfriendly Scrooge is haunted by his past to the point that he repents and changes into someone who is more gentle and loveable. Likewise, Jesus Christ offers to lift the burdens of life from us, so we can turn, and offer the same opportunity to others. This is the point of the comparison.