Lighten Your Load  
Matthew 11:28-30

**Objective:** Convince people to come to Christ to ease their burdens.

**Reading:** Matthew 11:28-30.

**Memory:** Matthew 11:29 “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.”

**Introduction:**

1. Does life ever get overwhelming to you? Do you ever feel heavy burdened with cares, problems? Is it too much for you so that you wish there was a way out or someone to help?
2. Do you ever think; “I wish I could just turn myself in someplace where I could relax and know everything was going to be all right”?
3. The answer is to place yourself in the care of Christ. If we want rest for our weary souls...

**We should find an easing of our burdens in Jesus Christ.** (HOW?)

In a world of frustration and religious confusion with endless high pressure programs, systems of rules, and demanding individuals, people problems, we are supposed to be able to find rest in Christ Jesus. Christ’s invitation is open and extended to each one of us. Somehow, we even tend to make a burden out of Christianity, but Jesus’ words make it clear it is not intended to be a burden. Christianity is intended to be more of a refuge; a good place to be. The message of taking Jesus as your lord and master is clear; “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 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. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

If you are feeling weary and heavy burdened, if you are needing rest for your soul, then the idea is to take Christ’s yoke upon you. In other words, …

I. **Submit Yourself Entirely To Christ.**

A. To take His “yoke” means to submit to His care and control.
   1. A “yoke” is a harness a master places upon an ox - in order to control and to direct a burden.
   2. Means for you to submit to His desires and direction. To place yourself in His service.
   3. Can’t serve two Masters; choose one! Choose Christ!

B. **Do you know what “yoke” you are currently operating under?**
   1. Is it peer pressure? Need to Succeed? Family expectations? People pleasing?
   2. Religious legalisms? Boyfriend or girlfriend?
   3. Do you have a purpose for your life? Do you know what your role is? What you are trying to accomplish? What is expected of you? What you need to be doing?
   4. Is it simply help your earthly boss get richer?
   5. Who \ what are you really working for? Who / what are you really serving?
   6. Are you simply trying to get by and then die; or is there a reason for your life?!
   7. Are you looking for love in all the wrong places? Looking at life that has no reason?
   8. Maybe you think you are not under any “yoke”!
   9. I have liberty and no one tells me what to do! Sounds great, but how much burden are you under because you live with no guidance or direction. **Proverb 14:12** “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”

C. **Christ is a great Boss to work for!**
   1. Jesus is a pleasant task-master. As the passage says, Christ is gentle and humble in heart; NOT angry, abusive, over-demanding! Not arrogant and selfish. Leads and directs with others in mind. He is love incarnate!
   2. And, we have all experienced tough bosses who were demanding or unreasonable.
   3. Jesus says, “**For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.**” And it is true.
   4. **1 John 5:3b;** “… his commands are not burdensome…” Properly understood His instructions are for our benefit; In fact, even the Old Testament command to do no work on the Sabbath was in reality a day off with pay every week; “Trust God-He will provide for you was the lesson!”
5. He only asks us to do what He has done and is willing to do Himself; **John 13:15**; “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

6. Service is not a bunch of “I gottas” but a lot of “I wannas”. Intended to be motivated out of love and trust and appreciation for One who loves us and cares for us!

7. Christ’s yoke will help keep you out of much trouble; Avoid problems caused by deceit. Avoid problems caused by illegitimate relationships. Avoid problems caused by sin and corruption, bad behavior. Avoid problems caused by bad choices and mistakes.

D. The burden is supposed to be “light” under Christ.
1. If it is heavy, stressful, oppressive somehow, you are misunderstanding it.
2. Every burden under Christ is administered in love and intended to leave you fulfilled and joy filled.
3. There will always be something to do. There is always a burden of some sort. But here is an allegiance you can handle! Here is service you can carry on with pleasure; with joy!
4. Contrary to what some say, Christianity does **NOT** make one miserable and mean, **NOT** long-faced and bitter. What you get from laboring in Christ is supposed to be the fruit of the Spirit, which is; “…love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23)
5. This Master is directing things for the employees benefit and welfare, not His own! **John 10:10**, “…I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”
6. And, He is the ONLY ONE you need to please! Not pulled and tugged at trying to please so many individuals and forces at once. That reduces your burden considerably right there!

So, if you are feeling weary and heavy burdened, **if you are needing rest for your soul**, then the second part of the offer is for you to

II. **Learn From Christ.** **Matthew 11:29**, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me…”

A. See how Christ submitted to the same “yoke”.
1. Christ placed Himself totally under God’s control.
2. Did what the Father wanted Him to do. Even to the point of death on a cross; **Luke 22:42**, “…if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”
3. Have you learned to be under God’s control like that? Or do you still quit and do it your own way and get into trouble as a result?
4. Do you gossip and then feel the guilt and reap the hurt and anger? No wonder you feel weary and burdened!
5. Do you lie and deceive and worry about being found out? No wonder …
6. Do you hurt others with your actions, thoughts deeds? No wonder …
7. Do you yield to outbursts of anger and suffer from the heartache and destruction? No wonder …

8. Under the yoke of God, Christ refused to sin no matter what;
9. **1 Peter 2:21 ff.**, “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”
10. Are you still trying to sneak some sins in unnoticed? No wonder …
11. Under the yoke of God, Christ **trusted** in the knowledge and power of God to care for Him.
12. This is what enabled Him to stand up and persevere under the burden of trials, etc.
13. **John 14:31;** “…the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me…”
14. If you learn to trust God, you can stop carrying the burden of worry.
15. If you learn to trust God, you can stop struggling trying to figure everything out yourself.

B. See how Christ is gentle and humble in heart.
1. Have you ever seen one gentle and humble who was anxious and worried?
2. People of this nature just don’t get in a sweat. They take what comes. Willing to serve others. This nature, this spirit leads to a restful soul.
3. They have innocent generosity that is patient, is kind. does not envy, does not boast, is not proud. is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs. does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. What a great and peaceful way to be!!!!

4. Pride and arrogance retaliates when hurt and persecuted. Learn from Jesus to “…Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:44) What peace of heart that would bring!

5. Christ forgave the folks that crucified Him, without waiting for an apology. If you require apology before forgiving; no wonder you’re burdened. You have to be angry, you have to keep a stern face. You have to avoid having fun, relaxing around them. Learn from Christ and ease your burdens.

6. Hear the changes to come from learning Christ in Ephesians 4:21-24; “Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

7. Have you put off the former way of life with its corruption and deceit that leads to so much trouble and burden?

8. Have you been re-made to be like God in true righteousness and holiness? To reduce your worries?

9. God IS. That is the very meaning of His name. Anything contrary to what IS will know heavy burden and will ultimately lose! Like swimming against strong current. Learn from Christ, to be like God, and see how light the burden becomes.

**So What?**

Some 600 years before Christ, God issued an invitation to the nation Israel in Jeremiah 6:16. He said to them; “…Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.” Israel chose to not listen. They refused to accept God’s offer for rest and were carried off by armies from the north. Homes destroyed. Families split up. I know they wished they had taken God up on His invitation. They wished they had said “Yes”!

Now God once again offers the same invitation to YOU and me. The invitation is offered to all who are weary and burdened. Now you personally stand at that same crossroads. Say “yes” to God’s invitation to find rest for your soul.

**Closing Prayer:**
We should find an easing of our burdens in Jesus Christ.
We are supposed to be able to find rest in Christ Jesus.

I. Submit Yourself Entirely To Christ.
A. To take His “yoke” means to submit to His care and control.

B. Do you know what “yoke” you are currently operating under? Proverb 14:12

C. Christ is a great Boss to work for! 1 John 5:3b John 13:15

D. The burden is supposed to be “light” under Christ. Galatians 5:22-23 John 10:10

II. Learn From Christ. Matthew 11:29

B. See how Christ is gentle and humble in heart. Ephesians 4:21-24

So What?
Say “yes” to God’s invitation to find rest for your soul.