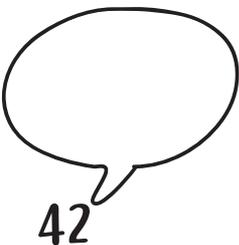


INSPIRATION

Matthew 11:28-30 ²⁸ *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”*

Matthew 11:30 says that Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light. Because of this, many people may think that choosing to be a Christian is easy. But, let's not forget the verses directly preceding this one. The Scripture talks about people who are weary and heavily loaded down with life, people who do not have peace. These are not the characteristics of an easy, carefree life. But, wait! Verse 30 says that Jesus' yoke is easy... If the Christian life is not easy, what does this mean? Think about an actual yoke. Farmers would put a yoke on livestock when it was time for them to work the fields. The yoke has two collars, a place for two animals to work side by side, allowing the workload to be shared. I've even heard of a lighter yoke where one of the collars is larger than the other causing one animal to take more of the load while the other is in training. Sometimes it feels like that with Jesus, like he carries the heaviest part of our burdens for us while He is training us to handle more. So, God doesn't say you won't have any troubles. He just says that He will help you carry your load, giving you peace and rest. All you have to do is give it to Him.



APPLICATION

What burden are you bearing? If you're not bearing one right now, you can be sure one is coming. The old adage says, "you have to have your bad days to appreciate the good ones". But, in those rough patches, are we resting in Jesus? When you and the ex-spouse don't see eye-to-eye on how best to meet the needs of your child, do you give it to God? When stress is burying you alive at work, do you let God give you the grace to remain calm? When the unexpected life change is hurled at you without warning; do you try to control it all, or do you find peace in Jesus? When tragedy strikes, what do you have to hold on to? Do you carry the weight on your own, or do you empty yourself into your Heavenly Father?

Has tragedy struck in your life? It can be quite traumatic. It can come in a moment's notice. And it can leave us in utter shock. It can leave us completely numb in one instant and then to deep despair in the next moment. BUT, in all of it we have God to hold on to. Actually, He will hold us. He will walk with us through the most difficult of situations. In fact, it's hard to imagine just how lost those without Jesus are. So, know this, there are difficult times to come. Those times, where we learn to lean on Jesus more, will be heartbreaking. But He gives use peace and rest until we feel the joy again.



Life is going to be easy.

CONTEMPLATION

1. We all have little “pet peeves” and situations that bring us frustration throughout the day. Are you so focused on God that you can keep these things in perspective and let them “roll off your sleeve,” or is this an area in your life that you need to give to God?

2. How do you know if you have given your burdens to the Lord? What are some indicators that you have done so, or have not?

3. Are there times in your life that you know, without a doubt, that God was carrying your burden? How do you know?

4. When life starts getting too busy or stressful, do you hold tight to what little control you have, or do you hand it over to Jesus? Consider any areas in your life that you need His help and the rest only He can offer.



ELABORATION

In John 15:18, Jesus lets us know that the world hated him first. There are many things about Jesus that do not line up with what the world believes. The world says that success has everything to do with financial wealth. Jesus impacted the world forever with very little money related to his ministry. The world says that a king should act “kingly”. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, one of the most humble rides ever. Jesus assures us that he will give us rest. Read Matthew 11:38. How are you encouraged by Jesus’ words “I will give you rest.?”

Further Reading - James 1:2-18; Isaiah 40:30-31; Romans 15:13; Daniel 1:1-21

PRAYERS & PRAISE



Life is going to be easy.