

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

A yoke is a wooden crosspiece that is fastened over the necks of two animals and attached to the plow or cart that they are to pull. Its important feature is that it is used for a couple of animals so as to synergize and maximize their strengths.

So, when Jesus said “my yoke is easy,” he meant that although we, who are weary and burdened by the weight of what our lives throw at us, may suffer from loneliness and stress, our burden can be significantly alleviated thanks to Jesus Christ who carries our burden with us at the other side of yoke. Since powerful Jesus carries a lot more than we can, we are left with a lot less burden. Thus, we can say that the yoke of Jesus is easy because his yoke takes over most of our yoke.

The hardships that we face in our lives do not get abated in intensity but become less burdensome thanks to Jesus, our partner. We just need to walk with Him keeping pace. If we failed to do so, we will make Jesus quite uncomfortable in helping us and, in turn, our carrying of burdens becomes less fruitful. The yoke of Jesus is purely that of love, hence if we carry our yoke with the love that Jesus have, we do it keeping up with him.

The phrase ‘My burden light’ means that His burden is a spiritual one. Spiritual burdens sever our ties of attachment to earthly things so that we can go upward. Spiritual burdens do not remove nor reduce our physical or mental burdens but it transforms them into spiritual ones by giving them spiritual values and meaning, and by purifying our mind, heart, and soul so that these burdens may become light.

The burden of Jesus was purely spiritual one. His life was full of spiritual battles, and he lived to build the spiritual kingdom, pursue the spiritual values and meaning, and focused on things eternal. If we become a spiritual person, we can continue our journey with Jesus side by side. In that way, our burden will become Jesus’ which is light. By doing so, instead of being burdened by the weight of our lives and going down toward the earth to get attached to worldly things, we can have spiritual perspective in life, and spiritually upgraded to see the heavenly realities and focus on eternity. That’s how we taste the lightness of Jesus’ burden.

In short, when we take the yoke of Jesus upon us and learn from him, we do that not to remove or reduce our troubles or stresses but to make our hardships bearable and uplifting because Jesus shares our yoke, and our burden becomes that of Jesus, which is spiritual, that is, light and freeing.

So, when we take the yoke of Jesus upon us and learn from him who is meek and humble of heart, we will find true rest for ourselves.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Fr. Don Bosco Park