

# Come unto Me, All Who are Heavy Laden, and I Will Give You a Cross to Bear

How do you reconcile,

Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke on you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. (Mat 11:28-30)

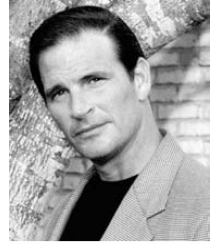
with,

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it, and whoever desires to lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mat 16:24-26)

These two statements would seem to serve as their own enigmas. On the surface, the one may seem to be just as juxtaposed to the other, as is conceivable possible. For how could one find rest under the weight of the cross of Christ? Never was a burden so great. Even Christ fell for a moment under its weight, both literally, and figuratively. Yet Christ alludes to the lightest of burdens. To understand this enigma one must first understand what is represented by each.

In the first passage, the *burden* and the *yoke* speak of our union with Christ. For the Jew being united with God came at great cost and circumstance. He was saddled with the burden of sacrifice and feast day celebration, accompanied by an arduous observance of the Law. Such as Paul would write later was designed to bring man to his knees under the weight of such. Jesus here was comparing the burden of faith verses the burden of religious observance. When

Jesus said, “*come all who are heavy laden*” he was referring to those who were being crushed by the works of the Law and the guilt the absence of grace imposed. Jesus was simply saying join me through the yoke of faith, it is light, and through grace you would find the rest your soul desires.



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In the second passage, the setting has changed from those who would contemplate being yoked with Christ, to those who have already determined to do so. Christ here contemplates the true nature of being yoked. Whereas we are yoked by faith, we are yoked nevertheless, and we are yoked to Christ. By faith, we become inseparable from Him. His life is our life, His burden is our burden, His work is our work, for two cannot be yoked unless they walk side by side, where one goes the other must by needs follow. Our faith serves as the yoke of our bondage to Christ, and our bondage to Christ enjoins us to Him in everything. As we find rest for our souls, we find ourselves yoked to Christ, a cost Christ warned us all to consider. As the song goes, *every rose has its thorn!*

Is it possible to find rest under such a burden? Is the weight of the cross truly light and the yoke easy? We must remember that Christ lifted the greatest weight from all of us, namely, the weight of our sin and guilt. That weight was lifted to provide us the ability to carry something else, the Cross of Christ. In this life, we will carry the weight of either one or the other, which do you suppose in the end will serve heavier to bear?

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