

August 17, 2020

A Burden to Bear

How hard is it to follow Jesus?

Matthew 11:28-30

⁸ “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.”

It's true. Several men left successful fishing businesses. Others left homes, friendships, family and other lucrative ventures. These early followers of Christ had to give up a lot.

The call of Christ is one of abandon. It is a call to carry one's cross.

So how does one reconcile this familiar verse in Matthew 11? How could Christ say that his burden is light, knowing that we'd each need to take up our cross?

First, the burden of guilt, shame, and condemnation are lifted.

Jesus just finished talking about cities that saw his mighty deeds (11:20-24) yet failed to repent and follow him. The burden of the impending judgment spoken over them in the preceding verses is too heavy a weight to live under. For the one who repents and follows Christ, that burden is gone. What joy to find this new rest found for your soul, knowing that the “wages of sin” is gone

Secondly, the emotional weight of this world is lifted:

The burden of futility... lifted and replaced with purpose
The burden of hopelessness... lifted and replaced with hope
The burden of performance... lifted and replaced with contentment
The burden of sorrow... lifted and replaced with joy
The burden of loneliness... lifted and replaced with relationship
The burden of worry and anxiety... lifted and replaced with peace

Yes, you'll have a cross to bear, but with the elimination of all the above, along with the added benefits, we can rejoice. The new task in which Christ is our partner will be far lighter in comparison.

Let's commit to this new calling into a fulfilling and worthwhile labor. We will find it a place of rest and of peace and of joy.