

The Examples Of Jesus

We read in Matthew 11:28 to 30, 'Come to Me all who are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light'."

Those are wonderful words of Jesus. The idea of the 'yoke' is like a farmer or our 'Master'. A yoke makes oxen go where the Master wants them to go, and do what the Master wants them to do. The whole message of the Bible is 'God wants to give us salvation'. He wants to transform us, prepare us for heaven and finally, introduce us to a whole new existence. We need to concentrate on being transformed into the likeness of Jesus and that includes being totally obedient like He was. We need to learn from Jesus and apply the knowledge to our lives. Just reading the Bible is not enough to change you. See James 1:22, 'Be doers of the Word of God, and not merely listeners to it'.

We need to form a one on one, close relationship with Jesus in order to learn from Him. We need to spend time in His company and get to know Him intimately; just as Jesus knows the Father intimately. John 13:15 says, 'I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you'. We need to make Jesus our Lord and our Master and follow His example. If we follow the Lord, we are not pushing against His will, and that makes our lives flow easier and we will find peace. Jesus also once had a 'yoke'. He was, and still is connected to His Father, and in obedience went to the cross to save and liberate us humans, and in return we need to be committed to the Father's purpose. His yoke is all about service and obedience to God.

What kind of things will Jesus teach us? He has told us He is gentle and humble in heart. Just as Jesus learned from His Father and did the things God told Him to do, so we also need to learn to do the things Jesus did and said. Jesus said if you do that, you will find rest for your souls. We will be at peace within ourselves. The soul who learns from Jesus, is a soul at rest. If we are proud, confused and live for ourselves, or striving to live without Jesus' yoke to guide us, we can't learn from God. The Pharisees were a good example of what not to do. Allowing Jesus to guide us will bring spiritual growth, and to do that, we need to be close to Him. What motivated Jesus? The close, loving relationship with the Father motivated Jesus to fulfil the task given to Him, and that is the yoke we need to have too. We must be obedient and fulfil whatever tasks are given to us, just as our Example, the Lord Jesus did. By taking His yoke and completing our tasks, we glorify God the Father. Jesus was speaking to the Father when He said in John 17:4; "I have glorified You on earth by completing the work that You gave Me to do."

Jesus showed us His 'yoke' by only ever doing what God the Father told Him to do. Read John 5:30; 'I am able to do nothing from Myself – but only as I am taught by God and as I get His orders...because I do not seek My own will, but only the will of the Father Who sent Me'.

Several times in the four Gospels we read about Jesus saying just that; that He came solely to do God's will. Read John 6:38 & 39. 'For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will but to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and this is the will of Him Who sent Me; that I should not lose any of all that He has given Me, but that I should give them new life and raise them up at the last day'. In other words, God the Father wants to give us salvation through Jesus the Son.

Jesus delighted to do God's will. Jesus life was dominated by the desire to please the Father and to accomplish all that the Father had given Him to do; and He never once wavered from that thought. That thought determined Jesus' attitude to life; made Him become our servant; He was utterly selfless; Jesus was never negative or selfish, ungracious or unloving. He was always wanting to direct people to the Father and teach people about the Father. That's what made Him reach out to touch sick people; reach out to bless the children; raise the dead; and finally, that's what took Him to Jerusalem and to the cross. That's why at the end He cried out with a loud voice, "It is finished."

The Father was at the centre of what Jesus did, and we must also desire to do God's will in its entirety; right to the end of our lives. We could lose our salvation if we don't. Read in Matthew 7:21; "Not everyone who says to Me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven."

Jesus taught us how to face life, but He also taught us how to face death. His very last words were, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit." That is faith, because when we're dead, there's nothing we can do. Faith, is the way we face death. Face life by living to please the Father and to honour and glorify Him. Are we following His example? What brings us the greatest delight? Following in Jesus' footsteps and serving the Father should be the two things that bring us the greatest delight in our lives. Are we learning from the Lord Jesus daily? In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus suffered anguish but He prayed, "Not My will but Yours be done." We read about that in Luke 22:42. We also read that although Jesus is God's Son, He learned obedience by what He suffered; Hebrews 5:8 & 9. Moreover, Jesus became the Source of salvation to all those who in turn, obey Him. Jesus lived in total submission to the Father, His plans and His purposes. Jesus is the most influential Person in all of earth's history. The Apostle Paul had the same determination to follow the Father. He faced beatings and death but did not waver from 'fighting the good fight'. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." See 2 Timothy 4:7.

In the book of Daniel 3:13 to Daniel 4:3 we see that Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were also prepared to die in order to be obedient to the Father, and were delivered by an Angel of the Lord (Jesus) from an extremely hot, fiery furnace. Daniel was delivered from the hungry lion's mouth in Daniel 6:16 to 23. The obedience of these four incredibly brave men, changed history in favour of the Jews and King Darius of Persia made a decree that everyone had to honour God.

We are all capable of pushing God out to the fringes of our lives instead of keeping Him at the centre where He should be. Jesus - who is our example - never once did this even as a teenage boy. Every year Jesus and His family went to Jerusalem for a Passover feast. One year when Jesus was about 12 years old, He failed to return home with His parents. They searched for Him for three days, and when they found Him, His mother Mary firmly scolded Him for worrying them. Jesus reply was; "Did you not know that it is necessary for Me to be in My Father's house doing My Father's business?" We can read the story in Luke 2:41 to 52. Later in the text it says Jesus was habitually obedient to His parents.

We need to follow Jesus' example of obedience and dedication to God. Fierce determination did it for Jesus, and will do it for us too, and with God's help, we will succeed. We can not, can not, can not, do this on our own. We must be submitted to God, humble ourselves and ask His help, and by the grace of God we will achieve total obedience like Jesus did. If we fail, we need to repent, confess our sins, and get right up and press on to the goal. Total submission to God can actually keep us from falling. See Jude 24. But if we do fall we know we have an Intercessor, Who intercedes on our behalf and can pull us back up again. See Romans 8:27. We all have different callings so we need to ask God what our task is and do what He asks of us. We will not succeed if we try to do someone else's job. The example for this is in 1 Corinthians 12:12 to 25. The body of Christ is made up of many parts. If God calls you to do a task, don't try to do a different one. If you are a hand, don't try to be a foot. We all belong in our own place, doing our own job, in obedience to God's will. Just as Jesus was obedient and was completely and totally successful in His purpose; which was the plan of salvation the Father gave to Him for us; so our obedience to God is the key to a successful Christian life. The word Christian means 'follower of Christ'.

Amen and God bless you.

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