



## MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

[www.mzluth.org](http://www.mzluth.org)

April 29, 2012  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
Sermon Text: [Matthew 11:25-30](#)  
Pastor Randy Ott

First Lesson: [Isaiah 55:6-13](#)  
Psalm of the Day: [Psalm 119c](#)  
Second Lesson: [Ephesians 3:14-21](#)  
Gospel Lesson: [Matthew 11:25-30](#)

### **The Yoke Is On You...**

...when you know Jesus like a child  
...to give you rest that is out of this world

Grace, mercy and peace be yours from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Put yourself in the shoes or the sandals of the people that Jesus was first speaking to when he spoke the words of our Gospel. If you didn't know the Father like Jesus said "only those who know him whom I've chosen to reveal him to", it kind of had to sound like a sick joke that he was telling the people. "When you are weary and burdened" he said, come to him and he'll put a yoke on you. That sounds twisted. I'm already weary and burdened. What do I need a yoke for? Those people knew what a yoke is. You're probably thinking that thing in the egg that you're not supposed to eat because it's not good for you. That isn't the kind of yoke he's talking about. He's talking about a kind of yoke that we don't use all that much anymore. Maybe you've seen it in pictures where you get two animals together to pull something. They are yoked together with the wooden beam that is there and their necks are in it, so they have to work together. Or maybe you've seen a picture of someone carrying water from a distant well and they have that piece of wood over their shoulders and they are carrying a bucket of water on each side. That's a yoke.

I don't know about you, but I like going to the sink and getting a glass of water. I don't want to be carrying a yoke with some buckets of water. That doesn't sound like it's easy or light in any way, shape or form. I kind of like indoor plumbing.

So when Jesus says, "Come to me when you are weary and burdened and I'll give you another yoke," that doesn't sound like something that is going to take away my burden. It just sounds like another burden. Now you're going to tell me I have to do this, I have to do that, and if I do all these things, then everything will be okay. That's what they thought of when they heard the word "yoke". The rabbis talked about the yoke of the kingdom is the mosaic law and to be a part right with God, you have to wear the yoke of the Law. You have to love God above all else. You have to love your neighbor as yourself. Then God had spelled out all the ways to do it. That doesn't sound easy or light.

In fact, when I look at my life and look at what God says he wants me to do and not do, that's a weariness, that's a burden because I don't do it. Neither do you. We don't love

God more than anything else. We love ourselves. It's all about us. We certainly don't love our neighbor as ourselves. We just love our neighbor when he loves us more than he loves himself. That's about it. That's how we are. We are warped. We are twisted. We are sinners.

So the person without the Spirit of God, the one that Jesus has not revealed himself to, here are these words and they just think it's nuts and nonsense. What was read to us in the First Lesson, "my ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts says the Lord," this is one of the areas where you see it, especially when it comes to the way of salvation. Our thoughts are you have to do something, you have to earn it, and we just can't understand anything else.

In the Second Lesson we were told about the love that surpasses knowledge. There we are starting to see what the yoke is that Jesus is talking about. The yoke that he puts on our necks when we are weary and burdened by our sins is his life and death in our place. It's his love for us that lead him to do all this for us while we were still sinners. It's not that you and me being in heaven is going to make heaven more glorious. It's not going to make Jesus anymore divine than he already was. But because he is love, he comes and brings this yoke that does everything. He lives perfectly because we are sinners and we can't carry the yoke of the Law.

He died as the punishment our sins deserve so that we don't have to carry the burden of the wages of sin is death. Now he says when you are weary and burdened and you're rundown in your daily life, flee to what you know to be true. What you and I know to be true as Christians is that God has loved us with an everlasting love. God has taken away our sins. He's met our greatest need.

So now as we live in a world that so often makes us weary and burdened and rundown because of the affects of sin... hurts in our relationships, health struggles, problems with the people we work next to every day... as we struggle with those and we get weary and rundown, he says "Run back to me. Fill on my yoke because my yoke is my love for you. All those burdens you are putting up with, all those things you're enduring, know that the One you are now yoked to is not another human being, it's not the Law, it's me. I love you and I'll be with you and I'll help you as you go through every one of these struggles."

Now we want to be yoked to him. You and I need it very much in a sense because when we face struggles and difficulties, we look in other directions. We try to figure out why it would happen. We try to figure out all these other things. What God is telling us is when you are weary and burdened by these things, just put on that piece of wood that is his love and focus on his love. That helps us to endure and carry these burdens and the things that make us weary as we go through our life. Our struggles, our pains, our sorrow, our sufferings, they get lighter. They don't go away. They get lighter because God's love for us in Christ is right there along with us carrying them.

Sometimes it takes someone that just believes it and doesn't have to see proof or doesn't have to see evidence. It takes someone who just knows this love that surpasses knowledge because the Spirit lives in their hearts to remind us of these truths. What I've seen pastorally is sometimes the people that remind us of this is our children. They hear the stories of Jesus' love in school or in their Wednesday school class and they see their parents struggling. They see their parents worried. They see their parents having difficulty in life. They are the ones that speak up and remind their parents, "Yeah, but God loves you. Jesus took away your sin. No matter what happens, that won't change." They say it in their own words and in their own way, but sometimes when you and I grow and we get older and we get farther and farther away from this day-to-day training in God's Word, we start becoming the wise and learned of the world that think we can fix everything on our own and we forget to go to our Savior. We forget to become like little children who just trust God's Word, who trust his promises, who don't rely on what we see and walk by faith and not by sight.

Sometimes you and I need that reminder to have that childlike faith and just trust God. Believe him. Put his promises to the test. He's already loved you and stretched out his arms to die for you. So put on that yoke. It's on you. That's the best thing in the world. Jesus' yoke with his love is on you. Amen.