

My Yoke

Jesus was baptised by John with the 'Baptism of Repentance' not because he had any sin to confess, but to 'fulfill all righteousness' (Matthew 3:15). The only way to atone for sin is death: blood has to be shed for the remission of sin (Hebrews 9:22). The sacrifice also had to be without blemish, therefore we could not die for our own sins (Leviticus 4:32). Therefore Jesus, who had no sin was going to shed his blood to provide for our righteousness and by taking John's Baptism He would also take on the role of bringing about our sanctification so that in the end we would have redemption; yet not be able to take any credit (Philippians 2:13, 1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

Jesus points out that whatever we try in 'Right Living' will be inadequate (Matthew 5-7). Jesus asks us to take His yoke upon us for all He requires is obedience (Matthew 11:29-30, 2 Thessalonians 1:8, John 14:15, 1 Samuel 15:22).



A yoke defined is 'a wooden frame or bar with loops or bows at either end, used for harnessing together a pair of oxen, etc.'. On the farm we put a yoke on two animals: one mature and seasoned the other 'green' with no training. The load is pulled from a ring attached to the center of the yoke between the two loops. For the first while, the 'green' animal tries to go off on its own and the mature one does all the work plus the work of the 'green' one. Eventually, if the 'green' one does not get out of the yoke, it will start to walk along. Then, as it starts to mature, it will actually start to pull with the mature animal because it has learnt. With some animals it takes a long time before they start to pull their share, some never do; but they are still yoked.

If the 'green' animal fights so much that it gets away: it was yoked but is no longer. Whether the 'green' animal learns anything or not while in the yoke, if it dies it is still yoked. Sometimes the 'green' animal gets overzealous (1 Samuel 15:22) and tries to do all the pulling causing the mature animal to have to try to hold him back: again he can rip himself out of the yoke if he chooses.

In this picture, Jesus is the mature animal and we are the 'green' animal. All we have to do is obey as God attempts to lead us. Our sanctification is initiated by God and the evidence of it is a sign of maturity. Sanctification is the process that is occurring while one is in the yoke.

And Jesus answering said unto him, *Suffer it to be so now:*

for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. (Matthew 3:15)

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. (Hebrews 9:22)

And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish. (Leviticus 4:32)

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:30-31)

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:29-30)

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: (2 Thessalonians 1:8)

If ye love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. (1 Samuel 15:22)

For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (Hosea 6:6)

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:

because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. (Hosea 4:6)