

# Letters to the Church



FEBRUARY '25

## DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

Are you tired? Are you feeling worn out? Do you find yourself overstressed daily? Are you so behind on your “to-do list” that you don’t even want to look at it anymore? Do you have the sneaking suspicion that coffee is no longer what just helps you wake up in the morning, but what you rely on to carry you through the whole day? You’re not alone. We live in a culture and time so busy and burned out that we as Christians might not realize how spiritually (let alone mentally and physically) unhealthy the hurried pace set by the course of this world is (**Ephesians 2:2**).

Our master offers us a solution. But, as usual, it’s an “upside down” one. To the exhausted, he offers that last thing we’d probably say we need – another weight to carry on our shoulders. We might be thinking, “I don’t need another weight; I need a vacation!” But hold on; he’s the Lord, and he promises rest. And not just for our bodies or minds, but for our souls. Listen to his invitation:

*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

**MATTHEW 11:28 – 30**

Ok so, what exactly does he offer us? A yoke. Yeah, but what’s that? And hurry up; I’ve got to get back to my busy schedule. A yoke is a tool used to shoulder heavy physical burdens, sometimes alone, sometimes shared. Now again, at first, that doesn’t sound like relief; it just sounds like more burden! But hold on. Take a breath. Slow down. Let’s take in the master’s teaching. Notice he says, “take my yoke upon you.” This implies taking off another yoke and exchanging it for his. The ones we’ve been carrying have burdened us down and burned us out. While the one he offers is easy and light. The master is calling for us to come alongside him, to join in his work and, paradoxically thereby, find rest.

Notice he gives four verbs for us: “come,” “take,” “learn,” and “find.” First, he says, “come to me.” He offers this invitation of relief to each of us personally. Then, “take my yoke.” He’s presenting a new way to carry the burdens of life – alongside him, lifting them with us. Then, “learn from me.” We will learn this new yoke (new teaching of how to live) as we follow in his footsteps and teaching. And lastly, the promised outcome - in his work: “you will find rest.”

Now, of course, Jesus isn’t the only one offering us a yoke in life. Other masters (today, we often call them influencers) would gladly have us come to them and follow in their footsteps and teaching. There are many, but they all, like the Pharisees, only “tie up heavy burdens, hard to



bear, and lay them on people's shoulders" (**Matthew 23:4**). But only Jesus can offer the way that is easy and light. Other masters weigh their followers down. The Pharisees were "not willing to move" a finger to help, but Jesus brings us relief as he comes alongside us and does all the heavy lifting for us.

Christ came into this world so that human beings could be human beings, crowned with the privilege to bear the image of the Creator. He did not make us to be rats running an endless and exhausting race. Jesus lived life here intentionally and unhurried. He showed us the dignity and beauty of what human life was meant to be. He offers us what he modeled himself - the way we can bear the weight of our humanity without all the strain and exhaustion of the world. The reason we get so stressed and burned out is because we take up laboring under heavy yokes that we weren't made for.

So, come to the gentle and lowly savior. Take his yoke (his life and teaching) and learn from him. Slow down in a frantic world. Live intentionally under his lordship, choosing investments of lasting value. Rather than a rush around, get it all done, cram it all in, and then crash, veg out, and binge life - redeem the godly contentment of a peaceful and quiet life (1st Timothy 2:2). Find the rest that your soul needs in him (let your body and mind follow). He's not offering a quick fix or a life hack to buy you more hours so that you can cram even more into your hurried day, but a lasting solution to enter into his work and, thereby, his rest.

**YOUR PASTOR & SERVANT,**