

# Sermon Notes



**“The Yoke is No Joke”**  
October 21st, 2018

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While we deeply value our time on Sunday mornings, we recognize that unless we are spending intentional time with God and others throughout the week, we are not living out our full potential as disciples. This sheet aims to provide you with enough content connected to the central themes of the sermon to be engaged beyond Sundays. We believe a disciple of Jesus is one who is individually, communally, sacrificially, and missionally engaged in his or her faith. If you need assistance in getting plugged into a group or have further questions about the discipleship process, please reach out to our Discipleship Pastor, Mike Barnes or Pastor Pete.

## Reflection Questions (please use these individually or in groups)

### Sermon Questions:

1. Would you describe your life as a Christian in terms of freedom, in terms of sets of rules, or some of both?
2. Are you prone to "falling away" from grace by seeking value and justification by calculated obedience? Ask God to grow you in grace.
3. Ask God to give our community courage and discernment to identify and address any "agitators" who might endanger unity in the name of trumpeting particular non-essentials.
4. Prayerfully consider who might be the recipient this week of the love that will actively flow from your faith.

### Additional Questions:

5. In what ways have you been the "yeast" in a situation? In other words, have you ever been the one to hold onto something at the expense of others like the Galatians Christians did with circumcision? How might you move on for the sake of others?
6. Do you feel a desire to measure yourself against a certain set of standards that has been set by yourself or society? If so, how might you release yourself from this yoke?

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Galatians 5:1-12** | Are there any laws, like the Galatians and circumcision, that you elevate as a universal standard for following Christ? Is this law central to Jesus' message about loving God and loving others?
- **Matthew 11:25-30** | What do you need rest from in your life? As a helpful tool, ask yourself what is causing the most stress and anxiety. How can you scale back?
- **Philippians 1:3-6** | Don't lose heart when things go awry. It's okay to be frustrated, have doubts, struggle, etc. In fact, God welcomes it. But know that Jesus is a God who suffers with us and does not abandon us. You are not alone.
- **Mark 12:28-34** | Why do you think Jesus told this man, "You are not far from the kingdom of God?" Is being "near" to the kingdom of God the whole point? (Matt 4:17)

## Self-Care Disciplines \*Excerpts from Mary Kate Morse's *A Guidebook to Prayer\** October Discipline: Prayer | Creative Prayer (p.36-38)

Creative prayer is one of the highest forms of prayer, and yet there is no quality standard to its expression. It simply connects us to one of God's primary impulses - to create good things. Not because the thing itself is beautiful or perfect, but because the thing reflects something of the nature and imagination of God and thus draws us to God. Creative prayer is giving God access to areas of our inner life often neglected. Being creative connects us with our essence and with God's nature.

1. Decide what creative prayer experience you might like to do. This can be something completely new and different that will stretch you, or you can do some creative activity you're used to doing. A few suggestions might be: gardening, painting, woodworking, cooking, crafting, photographing, writing etc.
2. Decide how much time you will devote to this, whether 15-30 minutes, several hours, or somewhere in between.
3. Begin with silence to instill a reflective God-focused spirit in you. If you get completely immersed in the project and forget to think about God as part of it, don't worry. Simply come back to God's presence with you.
4. At the end of the time, journal on your experience. Is this a form of prayer that might feed your soul? Did you feel close to God? Were there any blocks? How did you experience God?