
The Light Yoke: A Paradox of Yoke, Rest, and Self-Love (Matthew 11:28–30)

Yung Suk Kim

*Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology
Virginia Union University
Richmond, Virginia*

Jesus knows people are stressed and depressed due to heavy life burdens and injustices in society. In the first century in Galilee, many peasants and poor people barely survived day-to-day while elites and local rulers thrived at their expense. The patron-client system bound them to a perpetual hierarchy under which they had to be submissive to their beneficiaries. So, the major stressors and trauma effects come from the unjust economic and political system in the Roman Empire and the elite religious system, dominated by Jerusalem, under which lower-class people suffer the most.¹ In that world of dominance and control, people lived in absolute poverty with mental health challenges. We can only imagine how poor and miserable they were, struggling to survive in such a cruel world. A listless life was rampant as there was no hope. Even breathing smoothly must have been a luxury for them. So much so that people desperately needed salvation and rest, not merely for the future but for their present moments because there would be no tomorrow without today's rest. Jesus sees their needs and invites them to find rest amid the chaos and turmoil in life. He tells them there is hope, rest, and salvation if they join him in taking his yoke.

In everyday life, “yoke” means chains or slavery to the system or elites. It can also be onerous religious burdens levied on people. In an ordinary sense, the yoke has nothing to do with rest because it is a metaphor for servitude or oppression, as Paul uses it as a metaphor for slavery in Galatians 5:1: “For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” But Jesus uses it positively as a metaphor for “wisdom and the Torah” that is testified and practiced by him.² While Sirach 51:26 (Jewish Apocrypha) confirms the positive use of the yoke as “wisdom and the Torah” as the sage invites students to “put your neck under the yoke, and let your souls receive instruction,” Jesus emphasizes his yoke, which is understood as his teaching and practicing of the law or the prophets.³ In Matthew 5:17, Jesus

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says he came to fulfill the scriptures, not to abolish them. For this task, he also took a yoke—a pleasant yet hard burden or cost for his God-given mission—upon himself. He bears his yoke and dies because of it. His bold emphasis on “his yoke” is distinguished from the Pharisees’ emphasis. Both hold the law high as the word of God. But the difference is clear between them. Whereas Jesus reinterprets the law with integrity and puts it in a context where the primary task is to save people, not to serve the Torah blindly or onerously, the Pharisees emphasize strict observation of the law, especially food-dietary and purity laws, with almost no exceptions, at least theoretically. Matthew emphasizes the importance of the law and affirms the Pharisees’ role as long as they uphold the law with integrity. Jesus also affirms the validity of the law in the narrative and acknowledges the good teachings of the Pharisees and scribes (23:2). However, Matthew’s main point is that the law requires careful interpretation. Thus, Jesus justifies breaking the sabbath law in the episodes about his disciples plucking grain and a man with a withered hand (12:1-14), saying that the more important thing is to save people with mercy.

1. Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Sociopolitical and Religious Reading* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000), 259-260.

2. Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1991), 168.

3. Mitchell lists the following six views of the yoke of Jesus: “1) Jesus’ teaching (which presents the fullest understanding of the Torah); 2) Jesus himself (as the embodiment of the Torah); 3) The yoke of Christian grace (which liberates one from the burden of the Jewish law); 4) Jesus’ unique interpretation of the Torah (Jesus’ yoke is a

contrast not to the Torah itself but to certain religious authorities and their misuse of it; 5) The yoke of divine Wisdom (and Jesus as Wisdom personified); 6) The yoke (normally a symbol of labor or servitude) of ‘rest’ and ease, specifically the ‘rest of messianic redemption’ as promised by the Sabbath.” See Matthew Mitchell, “The yoke is easy, but what of its meaning?: a methodological reflection masquerading as a philological discussion of Matthew 11:30,” *JBL* 135.2 (2016): 321-340 (325). I will explore the meaning of Jesus’ yoke later in this chapter.

Context of Matthew 11:28–30

Matthew 11:28–30 reflects Matthew's theology and Christology focused on the Jewish messiah who fulfills the scripture (5:17). Here the tone and message of the verses have a good fit with the overall theology of Matthew emphasizing Jesus' fulfillment language, as Jesus offers his yoke as the embodiment of the Torah and as a way of rest and salvation. Jesus is superior to Moses and reinterprets the law, giving his law to people.⁴ In a sense, his interpretation of the law is the new law, which distinguishes him from others such as the Pharisees, who commit to the yoke of the Torah with their thorough interpretation, often ignoring saving sick people on the sabbath (cf. 12:1–21; 23:3).

Though Matthew's editing hands seem evident in 11:28–30, we should not exclude the possibility that the historical Jesus spoke of this idea of yoke and rest relationships because his saying in these verses reflects his social context where people struggle to find rest due to adverse socioeconomic conditions. In his religious culture, he appears to be a radical interpreter of the law by emphasizing the value of human dignity and equality.⁵ The centerpiece of his view of God is found in Matthew 5:43–48. Here, the point is that God is impartial and loves all. God makes "his sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (5:45). Jesus' interpretation of the law is focused on saving people from their chains or overburdens in life so that they may find rest for themselves. Likewise, his focus is rest and salvation now. So, on the Sabbath, he continues to work to save people who need help and mercy. He criticizes the scribes and the Pharisees in 23:3 because they ignore saving people while they teach good things: "Do whatever they teach you and follow it, but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach." He continues to accuse them: "They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others, but they are unwilling to lift a finger to move them" (23:4).

The historical Jesus is a thorough monotheist; to him, God is the source of life, rest, and salvation.⁶ As a first-century devotee of Judaism, though his view is peculiar in the sense that his God

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is intimate and impartial toward all, including enemies, Jesus is supposed to be familiar with Jewish scripture and other traditions about spiritual life. Marcus Borg posits Jesus' spirituality puts him in the holy tradition of Jewish people who seek close communication with God through prayer, meditation, or the Spirit.⁷ The Gospel stories imply that Jesus seeks a place to pray and reflect on his work, seeking new energy for his ongoing work, settling his identity in God strongly, and finding the meaning in life in this spiritual way.⁸ Through his spiritual life, he maintains his strong self-identity as God's son. Through the Holy Spirit, prayer, meditation, or the ongoing work of God, he cultivates a mind of gentleness and humility, finding rest in God. In this sense, rest is neither an eschatological rest in the future nor the state of being forgiven by God or Jesus. It may be better understood in existential terms that one stays calm with oneself, embracing the love of God within one's mind and finding energy and motivation for life because of God's love and care. One finds great rest and meaning in life and considers oneself precious and vulnerable. One is also propelled to engage with others through love.

Interpreting Matthew 11:28–30

28 "Come to me, all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is *good* (*kind, useful, beneficial*),⁹ and my burden is light."¹⁰

4. Regarding the typology of Moses and his relationship with Jesus, see W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Matthew Vol II* (T&T Clark, 1991), 296.

5. Some parables of Jesus show his emphasis on human dignity and equality. For example, the parable of leaven confirms the value and power of the marginalized in society. Likewise, the parable of the mustard challenges elite culture and arrogance against the lower-class people who have the potential to achieve.

6. The Synoptic Gospels attest Jesus' monotheism. The evangelists understand Jesus as the Son of God who reveals God through his words and deeds. Only God is addressed in the Lord's Prayer Jesus taught to his disciples (Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4). Throughout the gospel stories, Jesus gives thanks to God and honors him and does his work. Even the Fourth Gospel does not equate God with Jesus, who only embodies the Logos. Jesus says: "The Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). Also, throughout John, he keeps arguing that he is sent by God (John 4:34; 6:38). His primary title is the Son of God. In 18:37, he says to Pilate that he was born to testify to the truth. See Mitzi J. Smith and Yung Suk Kim, *Toward Decentering the New Testament: Reinroduction* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade, 2018), 161–175.

7. Marcus J. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 25–96. See also Borg, *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 135–212.

8. Borg, *Jesus A New Vision*, 25–96.

9. Most English translations render *chrestos* as "easy." But its plain meaning is "good, beneficial, and useful." This translation should be challenged because, while "easy" is not implausible due to the contrast between Jesus' yoke and the Torah's yoke, the yoke of Jesus is open to interpretation considering the overall teaching of Jesus in the historical context and Matthew's whole gospel. Indeed, appearances of "*chrestos*" in the New Testament all mean "good or kind" (Luke 5:39; 6:35; Rom 2:4; 1 Cor 15:33; Eph 4:32). See Mitchell, "The yoke is easy, ..." *JBL* 135.2 (2016): 321–340 (325).

10. This is my translation.

In 11:28–30, we will explore the linkage between yoke, rest, and self-love.¹¹ Some may wonder why self-love is in discussion here. I see it as the center of love matters and human existence. Sound theology begins with the self's reflection on God, oneself, and others. Any love discourse would be hollow without a true sense of self-love. Therefore, when we talk about God's love or the love of neighbor or rest or salvation, what lies at the center is self-love—not in the sense of self-centered love but in the sense that the world would be meaningless apart from the self. It is "I" who must respond to God, reflect on oneself, and engage with others. "I" is a unique gift of God, impenetrable—unparalleled by anything or anyone. This "I" is the agency that makes decisions about oneself and others. Any great decision, whether for oneself or others, must be based on one's self-determination. Jesus' willingness to die because of his mission for God's good news and righteousness is his decision, which is a holy one.

To explore yoke, rest, and self-love in 11:28–30, we will focus on the following questions:

1. What does it mean for people to accept Jesus' invitation to come to him?
2. Who are these people whom Jesus invites, what kind of labor/toil do they do, and why are they burdened?
3. What is Jesus' yoke?
4. What does it mean for them to take his yoke?
5. How can we explain the link between Jesus' yoke and rest?
6. Why does Jesus say, "You will find rest for your souls"?

Jesus' invitation and the conditions of toil and burden

Jesus' invitation to come to him implies that he is confident in himself as he says his yoke will give them rest. Jesus is eager to share the good news that they can join him in finding rest for their souls amid chaos, turmoil, uncertainty, and terror. They need peace, hope, and meaning in life now. Good news is necessary now more than ever because tomorrow will be hell without today's hope. So, Jesus' invitation sounds like a spring of water and fresh wind blowing to dry bones. He is like a good shepherd in the parable of the lost sheep (Matt 18:10–14), who notices the lost sheep immediately when it is led astray (c.f., Isa 53:6; Matt 9:36).

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understand the conditions of labor and burden. Labor is a human condition for living, and there are different kinds of labor. Labor causes us burdens, good or bad. Some have good works of burden, which are necessary and provide them with a sense of worthwhile living. Others have burdens of labor due to unjust working conditions. So, we must distinguish between "good labor" and "onerous labor." Jesus addresses the latter condition of labor. So, he uses the active voice ("toil") and passive voice ("are burdened") accordingly. Also, there is the conjunction "and" between the two verbs: "all you who toil *and* are burdened," which suggests that Jesus addresses those who labor in whatever work they are *and* are burdened due to a lack of capacity dealing with it or due to social injustices. So, we must note the difference between the active and the passive voice in Greek and show nuanced differences in our translation. The former means the subject does something (active), and the latter means the subject receives action. In Matthew 11:28, two participles are functioning as verbal adjectives: κοπιῶντες (*kopiontes*) and πεφορτισμένοι (*pephortismenoi*). The root verb of the former is κοπιᾶω (*kopiaō*), which means "to labor or toil." The root verb of the latter is φορτίζω (*phortizo*), which means "to load or burden." The participle form for the former is "present active," and that of the latter is "perfect passive/middle." So we can translate them accordingly without losing the nuanced differences between them. I translate it: "Come to me, all you who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest." While the NRSV or NRSVue is considered a fair, literal translation, it does not capture the point in this verse. It translates the verse this way: "Come to me, all you who are weary and are *carrying heavy burdens*, and I will give you rest." Jesus sees the reality where people labor hard and are burdened by things, others, or institutions. Self-burden is different from externally levied/caused burdens. Most other translations keep this "voice" difference between the active and

11. Davies and Allison list several options to explain the "ease" of the yoke: (1) love for God and neighbor; (2) Jesus' acting for sinners; (3) free from the Pharisaic oral tradition; (4) future reward; (5) eschatological rest; (6) some kind of experience with Jesus. See W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 2 vols., (New York: T&T Clark, 1991), 2:291–292. Among these options, options 1 and 6 make better sense and this chapter stands with them.

passive. For example, both NIV and NET have it and read: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Our question is not only about who they are as they struggle due to weariness and onerous burdens but about their minds in the sense of the psychology of the mind. In other words, we try to understand their minds deeply.

Jesus’ yoke

A yoke is a wooden bar bound to the necks of oxen so that they can work together. As a metaphor, it may be positive or negative, depending on the context. Jesus uses it positively in 11:28–30 because he asks people to take his yoke to find rest. Earlier, we saw that Jesus’ yoke refers to all he teaches and does to fulfill the scriptures. But this yoke comes with Jesus’ character. In other words, we cannot separate his work from his character, which is gentleness and humility, which are interchangeable. He embodies the Torah/law through this character. So, he adds in 11:29: “Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.” Where did he get this character? How did this character work in his embodiment of God’s mission? What does it mean to live with this character in his psycho-theological life or political-theological life? Jesus may have learned about this character from the Hebrew scriptures (the law and the prophets) where God is said to be faithful and graceful. He stays calm, peaceful, and confident because of God’s unwavering love for him. He maintained spiritually close communication with God through prayer and meditation. This deep relationship with God gives him a tranquil mind through which he proclaims God’s good news powerfully under any circumstances. Because of this character, he had empathy for others, sometimes becoming deeply emotional. He wept when he met a widow at Nain whose son had died. He had compassion for those who were lost. When all these are taken together, the point is that he is not arrogant toward others.¹² He was not avoidant of the marginalized people’s needs. He was not fearful or resistant when he had to make a big decision or act.¹³ He was not disrespectful of others. Rather, he is “active, adaptive, energetic, curious, and creative.”¹⁴ Jesus has “the original mind” infused with the AAEC impulse and maintains it through his spiritual practice with prayer or meditation.

Jesus’ character of true humility and gentleness is demonstrated in the way he interacts with himself and others. He is calm and humble, considering himself unique and worthy because this character is God-driven. His humility does not mean that he is lower than others or that he lowers himself. His character remains centered in calmness, flexibility, and love. He does not make himself bigger or showy. He does not belittle others because they

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Jesus’ yoke represents the work of God, which is done through his character of gentleness and humility. “Yoke” is interchangeable with “the kingdom of God” in the sense that Jesus advocates for it. This kingdom is not a territory or temporal concept. Rather, the rule of God may be realized within people’s lives.¹⁵ Here, the rule is not a physical place or a specific time, but God’s love and grace, which must be manifested in everyday life. It is the present reality that helps real people in their daily lives. Jesus embodies the kingdom of God through a negative metaphor of a yoke. The character of gentleness and humility represents the state of Jesus’ mind, rooted in a godly mind featuring mercy, grace, love, and justice. Jesus maintains this character through his prayer, meditation, and ongoing work of God. This character is a prism through which we can zoom into his mind. He exists because of the love of God. So, he gives thanks to God before he does anything. For example, before doing some healing or miracle, he gives thanks to God. Acknowledging God as the starting point of human life is supposed to be a key to Jesus. So, he could stay calm amid so many vortexes of life and move on with his mission. He loves himself because it is a God-given gift since self-love differs from selfish love of oneself. He infuses the love of God into his mind and shares it with others.

Taking Jesus’ yoke means understanding and following the work of God. Douglas Hare observes it this way: “The yoke is not one that Jesus imposes but one he wears!”¹⁶ As he came to fulfill the scripture, which means letting the love of God shine onto all

12. Patte observes: Those who burden others are “neither gentle nor humble in heart: they are haughty and full of pretension; they pretend to be wise and intelligent (11:25), like the Israelite elites condemned in 11:20–24.” See Daniel Patte, *The Gospel According to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew’s Faith* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress, 1987), 165.

13. Jaime Pineda, *Controlling Mental Chaos: Harnessing the Power of the Creative Mind* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2023), 28, 43, 89, 185.

14. Pineda, *Controlling Mental Chaos*, 24, 28, 43, 185.

15. Fraser Watts observes that kingdom “seems to point to a new order that is partly religious, partly socio-political, partly existential and psychological.” Fraser Watts, “Approaching the Gospels Psychologically,” in *Jesus and Psychology*, edited by Fraser Watts, (West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania: Templeton Foundation Press, 2007), 11.

16. Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew: Interpretation A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville: WJKP, 1993), 129.

people regardless of who they are (c.f., 5:17, 43–48), God's people must do the same thing, focusing on delivering people from their slaving conditions now. More than that, his yoke also means people must know how to have and maintain the character of gentleness and humility—which are interchangeable. They need the “mind” engine to push this work of God. Our character formation should be rooted in the character of God in his faithfulness, mercy, and grace. Then, people can be humble, flexible, and gentle, instilling his love into our minds, breathing it into our daily lives, embracing the gift of life of all, loving the self, and engaging with others properly. The mind is a powerhouse of all things that they do. Even if they may know what is right or good, what moves them and drives them is the work of the mind.

A paradox of yoke, rest, and self-love

All people live with a yoke, and life is yoke-driven. The only difference may be that some have a good yoke in life, as seen in Jesus' case, while others have a yoke of slavery in some things. Some may have overburdened jobs that they cannot handle. Even those who claim they are completely free have assumptions or frameworks that move them into action, which means they also have their yoke, though they may deny it, because their conviction in life may be a yoke. For some, work may be a yoke; for others, their conviction in life may be a yoke, whether good or bad. However, the paradox is that rest comes through a good yoke when one participates in the work of God with Jesus. Rest does not mean doing nothing; rather, it involves engaging in meaningful causes and purposeful work that nourish the spirit and renew the soul. In this sense, the invitation to take Jesus' yoke is like his call to the disciples: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people” (Matt 4:19). Following Jesus means learning from him, imitating his character, and participating in his work of God—that is to save people and give them true rest.

Knowing Jesus' teaching or doing his work alone does not guarantee rest if there are no virtues of gentleness and humility. That is why he asks people to learn from him. He cultivated these virtues through scripture, the proclamation of God's reign in the here and now, and his active, dynamic spiritual life focused on prayer and meditation. While we do not know much about his religious lifestyle, what is evident is that he always points to God in his work, thanking God for everything. Respecting and acknowledging the God of the Jews as almighty, merciful, and graceful, Jesus appreciates the very life he lives. He is expressive of God's love everywhere, including within him, open to God's dynamic revelation, ready to be transformed by it, communicating with God through prayer or meditation day and night, and engaging with people freely.

If Jesus is a good model of the yoke with proper virtues, we can imitate him. But the question is how to do so. What does it mean to follow him, especially regarding his character development? One possible place to look at is the state of his mind or attitude toward God, himself, and the world/others. In Jesus' stories from the Gospels, we know he always looks to God as the source of life,

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proclaims the good news of God's rule from village to village, and advocates for those whose voices are not heard. Jesus accepts God's love pouring into his mind, knowing his limits and vulnerability. He says only God is good (Mark 10:18). Only God knows the time and hour (Matt 24:36). God is greater than he (John 14:28). He feels agony and is agitated before impending trials and suffering, struggling to understand his suffering. So he prays at the garden of Gethsemane. Finally, he submits to God and walks the way without losing himself, self-identity, or self-love rooted in God. He is confident and adamant about his mission. He risks dying for God's cause and gives himself to God's hand. That is the ultimate form of self-love that transcends the usual form of self-care or self-centered love. There is also great confidence in believing that “the Father and I are one” (John 10:30).

In addition to the good yoke's paradox about rest, it also imbues people with a good sense of self-love because one may discover life's reason to live and to have meaning through Jesus. One can appreciate a precious gift of life, embrace one's life and condition, and engage with others confidently and lovingly. A good yoke helps form robust self-love, which differs from mere self-care. This self-love is relational, seeking love from God, love within the self, and love for others.

Implications for Mental Well-Being

We all labor hard and are burdened by various works. We are weary and burned out and need rest. We care about ourselves and go on vacations. These days, we hear a lot about self-care and mental health. People are preoccupied with self-care, good health, and well-being because they seek a good life from their perspective. They look for healthy food, exercise regularly, and read self-care books. Some people are restless due to a lack of resources or the instability of their jobs. The poor and marginalized often experi-

ence excruciating trauma from their living conditions. Others are stressed out from their demanding work.

There are some implications for mental well-being from our study of Matt 11:28–30. First, we must know and recognize the conditions in life. We are vulnerable and tire easily. We are affected by the force of the world and are quickly becoming fragile. We should not pretend that we are strong enough to do anything. An analogy of this is helpful. One must stop driving and find a rest area if one feels drowsy while driving. One should not fight drowsy eyes. We must recognize reality and find the time to regain fresh energy. Sometimes, the issue is that people think they can do anything and show off their power or achievements by doing too much work. When we realize we are not superhumans and recognize our weakness and weariness, we can come to God or Jesus, who will give us rest.

Second, in our busy daily lives, the good news is that we have the Lord's invitation: "Come to me, you all who toil and are burdened. I will give you rest." We must be alert with our antennae to check whether we are overburdened. We are not alone in this journey of life. Through our vulnerability and weariness, we can see others in the same light and stand in solidarity with them, so that they may find rest and divine grace. It is important to remember that divine grace is always available to us.

Third, we need a good yoke to take since life is yoke-filled. It seeks the love of God, self-love, and the love of the neighbor. Love matters and moves us into action. A good yoke provides a sense of meaning in life for us. We appreciate the enormous gift of life and all the blessings, even under unfortunate conditions. Giving thanks to God and doing worthwhile work will boost our minds/brains to be filled with dopamine and serotonin. Even when we are engaged in uncertain situations, our brains will be very active in coping with such difficulty. Research shows that our brains are most active when we enter moments of uncertainty.¹⁷

Fourth, "I" should find rest through Jesus' yoke and character. While his yoke informs us of God's mission to save people from their bondage to sin broadly perceived, it is "I" who will find rest and recover self-love. Hannah sought answers for her dark moments of unfair life. She felt overburdened by her barrenness and society's blame on her. She could not find rest in her family or community. The only thing she could do was to go to the temple and pray. She poured out her soul to God. She was raving crazy from the priest's perspective. She was restless, tasteless, and speechless until she got the answer from the Lord. But she regained rest and motivation for life. More importantly, she also regained self-love, which means she cared for herself in good ways—based on God's love and her commitment to public service through her son without avenging her foes. We can also think about Jacob's desperate moment and his wrestle with a divine being at the Jabbok River. He was agitated and unsettled before he met his brother, Esau, who was betrayed by his younger brother Jacob. He was not ready to meet his older brother. He could not control his mind

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easily and prayed to God like a fighter. During his prayer, he may have regained rest and courage to face his brother. Some think this narrative may have been his mental turmoil in preparation for meeting his estranged brother.

Like Jesus, we must begin our work by thanking God for everything we have or experience. Next, we must recognize and accept that we are both precious and vulnerable (weak). God accepts and loves us as we are. He loves us not because we are perfect but because we are his precious gifts. Our part is to accept his grace and love, living the truth of life most genuinely and confidently with simplicity, humility, and love, as Jesus shows.

Fifth and lastly, true rest is not merely about leisure or self-care. It does not come through prayer alone but through the works of Jesus. It comes through our deliberate participation in divine grace, self-reflection and meditation, and the continuous work of God. This also means self-agency is important. We must find our rest through our commitment to God and Jesus. Otherwise, Jesus cannot bear people's yoke. God cannot take their yoke either. No one takes the place of others. We must take a good yoke, which gives us value, dignity, and meaning in life. Then, our yoke is good, kind, useful, and comfortable.¹⁸ Our burden does not feel heavy but light.

18. *New American Standard Bible* has "comfortable" in its translation of *chrestos* (χρηστός), which means usually "good, kind, beneficial, or useful."

17. Maggie Jackson, *Uncertain*, 187.