



## The Yokes on Me

By Deborah Wassenberg

*There are some things in the Bible that can be a puzzle to children of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. One of the challenges Kid's Church leaders face is explaining Bible truths so children can understand and grab hold of them. This lesson explains what a yoke is and how this ancient piece of equipment can be relevant to their lives today!*

### You Tube Song Suggestions:

- I am a Christian and My Name is Pilgrim (Newsong Lyrics)
- I Give You My Hallelujah (Hillsong Kids)
- For All My Days (chapelhill kids)
- You Are Good (Bethel Music Kids)

### Bible Lesson: Come to Me

### Bible Reference: Matthew 11:28-30

### Visuals for Flashcards or PowerPoint:

- Visual 1: Child overloaded with boxes or heavy load  
Visual 2: Jesus with arms outstretched 'Come'  
Visual 3: Picture of burdens  
Visual 4: Picture of people adding burdens  
Visual 5: Jesus  
Visual 6: Picture of oxen yoked  
Visual 7: Jesus caring and loving  
Visual 8: Child resting

Words 1: Sometimes you can feel overloaded! Burdened with all sorts of problems. It's hard to balance. You can't see where you're going. You feel you're going to lose your footing, drop everything, and fall. It's exhausting!

Words 2: Did you know Jesus wants to help you? He doesn't want you to be burdened, weighed down and tired. He invites you...'Come to me.'  
You might think, 'No. I've got this. I don't need any help really...'  
But Jesus doesn't want you to struggle by yourself.

- Words 3: What is a burden anyway?  
A burden is a heavy load.  
And you can load yourself up with burdens.  
'I have to be smarter.'  
'I have to be prettier.'  
'I have to be the best.'  
Or even 'I have to be the worst.'  
Maybe you're carrying burdens of sadness, loneliness or sickness.
- Words 4: Sometimes it's other people who put burdens on you.  
'Why aren't you clever like your sister?'  
'Is that the fastest you can go?'  
'Why are you so ugly?'  
'Play better or you're not on the team anymore.'
- Words 5: Jesus said: 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.'  
Whew! What a relief not to have to carry everything alone.
- Words 6: Do you know what a yoke is?  
It's a wooden beam used between a pair of oxen or horses so together they can pull a load. Before tractors were invented all heavy work was done by animals wearing a yoke. Everything from ploughing to pulling trees. In fact animals were called 'beasts of burden.' The yoke was made of wood and hand carved to fit the neck and shoulders of the animal.
- Words 7: Jesus said, 'Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.'  
Jesus is saying, 'I will walk beside you. We'll work together. My yoke isn't heavy, it's light and easy to wear. If we walk side by side the load is shared. Yes, I am God's Son, but I am a servant, too. (That's why Jesus said He was gentle and humble of heart.) If you don't let me help, life is hard work!
- Words 8: Jesus said if you learn from Him you will find rest for **your soul**.  
You soul is...
  - where you think (your mind)
  - where you decide (your will)
  - where you feel (your emotions)How wonderful to feel peaceful and rested instead of confused, worried and upset. Thank you Jesus!

## Ministry to the Children:

There is one burden Jesus takes off you completely. It is the burden of sin. Sin is a very heavy weight to carry. The sin of the whole world was put on Jesus when He died on the Cross. He did not have to carry it but He chose to so that we wouldn't have to carry it ourselves. (He personally carried our sins in his body on the Cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. 1 Peter 2:24a.) *Altar Call for Salvation.*

Some of you are feeling overloaded. Jesus is inviting you today: 'Come to me...' He wants to help you and walk beside you. He wants your soul to rest. *Altar call and prayer for children.*

## Memory Verse: Galatians 6:2

'Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.'

*If you know someone who is sagging under a heavy load, God wants you to help them. The law of Christ means '...that you love one another as I have loved you.'*

### You Will Need:

- 2 pairs of overalls to represent 'removalists'.
- 2 sets of cardboard packing boxes with one or more words of the Memory Verse written on each box.

### How to Play:

- Divide children into two teams.
- Set the boxes down in one end of the room.
- Place overalls in front of each team.
- On 'GO' the first team member must put on the overalls and run to the far side of the room to collect a box and run back to the team with it, remove the overalls for the next player to put on and retrieve a box.
- Once all the boxes have been collected, the team must put them in the correct order so they can read the Memory Verse. First team to complete the verse wins.
- Both teams recite the Memory Verse together.

## Game: Yoked Tag

Two children are chosen to be 'it'. These two children chase as a couple (yoked together) by holding hands. If either of them tags another child, they become free and the child who was tagged becomes one of the chasing couple.

## Craft: Decorative Pillowcases

*This craft is always popular. If you are unable to fund a pillowcase per child, ask them to bring one from home. It really is worth it.*

You will need:

- One white or light coloured pillow case per child
- Fabric pens
- The Scripture Matthew 11:28-30 written out so children can copy all or a portion of the wording onto their pillowcase.
- Optional: Cardboard (thin cereal box card will do) to put between the sides of the pillowcase so the fabric pen ink doesn't go through.

What to do:

- Allow the children to be creative and decorate the pillowcase in their individual style.
- I showed the children some samples to give inspiration.

