

Good Morning, TAC

We are in a season that is better acquainting us with the often-overlooked aspects of Adonai's nature. One of the first written works in our Bible is a song that extols our God as a Warrior.

Exodus 15:3 (ESV)

3 The LORD is a man of war;
the LORD is his name.

This Church is making progress in imitating this facet of God's character and that is good because we started from an extraordinary deficit. We have a choice before us today. We can behave like little boys that are all dressed up in a Military uniform that is way too big for us **or** we can grow beyond slogans and into the practical implementation of a Warrior Ethos in our daily affairs. You are all aware that the glorious King who commissioned us into His service said:

Matthew 5:13 (NIV)

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

Matt and I were surveying the affairs of a particular Marine Corp fire team and their struggles with the addition of new soldiers that were unprepared for the nature of the conflict that this fire team had learned to thrive within. The fire team referred to the new guys as S.A.L.T. We didn't understand this designation at first. It was later explained as:

S.A.L.T

Soldier Absent of Leadership and Tactics

My friends, this is not the kind of Salt of the earth that you want to be. This is the kind that has lost the true saltiness of a genuine soldier of Jesus Christ. This morning we are going to discuss leadership and tactics as Soldiers of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God.

In order to do this properly, you are going to have to position your hearts to receive as a people that have not yet arrived... but, in fact, still have a long ways to go in imaging Adonai in the battle. How many of you have heard the saying, "Freedom is not Free"?

We would like to introduce you to the Marines attitude on the subject:

“Freedom is not free, but the U.S. Marine Corps will pay most of your share.” — Ned Dolan

The liberating yet challenging reality is that many have already contributed significantly to the blessings and resources you enjoy daily--- **without you contributing a single share**. This morning, we will guide you on how to step up and contribute your fair share to the advancement of the Kingdom.

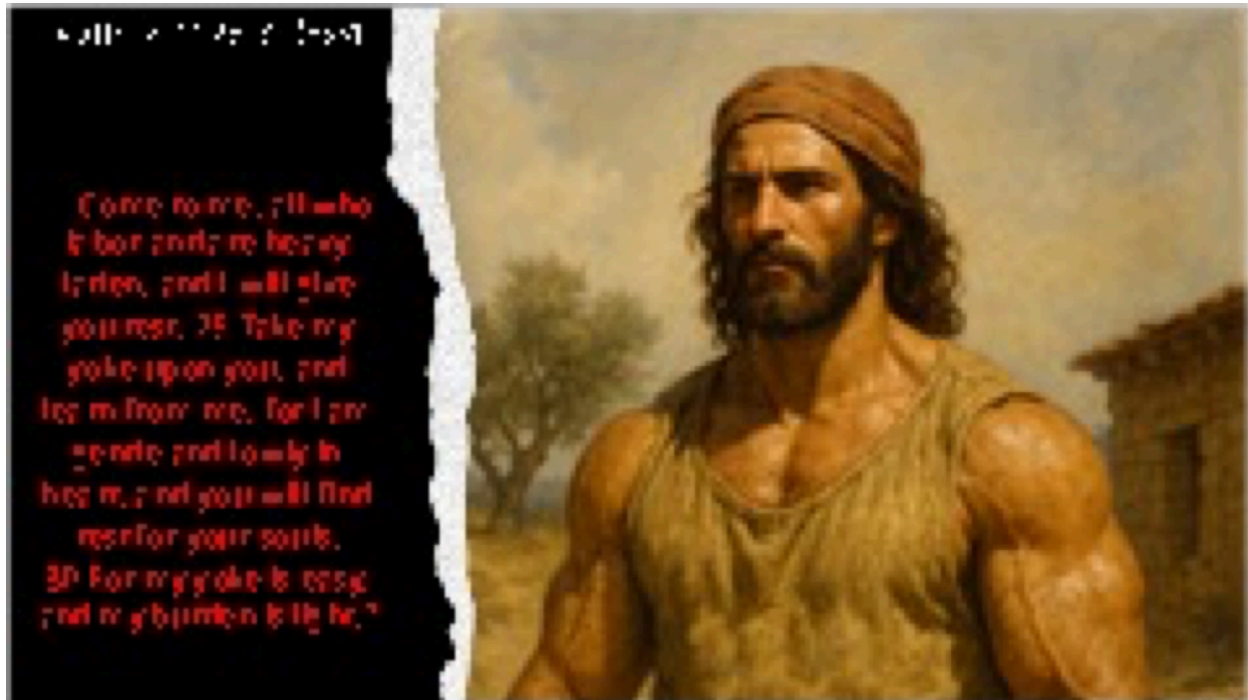
Our Message is entitled:



The title was chosen carefully to convey multiply things to you at once. Our hope is by the end of the message this imagery will mean far more to you.

In North American slang, the term "yoked" refers to having a well-built and muscular physique. It originates from the weightlifting and bodybuilding communities, where being yoked signifies strength and fitness. Over time, it has evolved to describe someone who is physically strong, but it can also refer to someone who is mentally or emotionally tough, indicating resilience in various aspects of life.

We aim to awaken you to being yoked in the sense of emotional toughness and resilience, but we are also targeting what it means to be "yoked" in the sense of the Kingdom of God.



This statement is prolific in the Christian world but so is its misapplication. When people hear of the gentleness of Jesus and the rest for their soles... when they hear there is an easier way with a lighter burden. They imagine that following Jesus is an easy and light thing. In fact, they create religious systems that propagate that very lie.

Have you ever asked yourself why Jesus used the word "yoke" and where the symbolism comes from?

In your own time review **Jeremiah 27** and **28**. Those two chapters promise the nation of God that they will be defeated by and enslaved by the Babylonian Kingdom. Moreover, the chapters indict the false prophets who are declaring peace and safety for the nation that is under God's disciplinary judgement. Jeremiah wore a yoke to symbolize the absolute submission to the sovereignty of God that was required of every man. He told them that they would have to endure terrible things to be shaped into the nation Adonai desired.

So why describe Jesus' "yoke" as rest, easy, and light? This is being compared to the burden of living in rebellion to what God wants to accomplish. Jesus' yoke is not easy, light, or an unburdening thing... **unless you compare it to the weight of sin and rebellion to God's will.** It is only in that sense that walking in physical union with Christ is easy (easy when compared to the sinful results of continuing to walk in rebellion). If you doubt us on this... and you shouldn't since it is likely that you had no idea of the context of Jesus statement, consider what else Jesus said about following him:

Luke 9:23–24 (ESV)

23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

Do you find the denial of self... the taking up of the instrument of your own execution... the losing of your life... light and unburdening? These things are only refreshment to those that have accepted the "Yoke" of the Kingdom as the absolute surrender of their will and daily activities to the Kingdom of God. It is a light and refreshing thing to give up rebellion to God's will in favor of submission to the march towards a glorious giving of your life to the absolute will of God. The "yoke" of Jeremiah required him to stand flat footed against the religious deception of an entire nation (for fifty years). This included imprisonments and serious mistreatment. The "yoke" of Jesus caused him to be killed in the religious capital of the world, on the most religious day of the year, at the hands of the most religious people on earth.

Walking in a manner that is yoked to Christ means that you have voluntarily chosen to be physically bonded to the footsteps of Jesus in the same way that he walked with perfection in the will of his Father. This yoke is not easy or light unless you compare it with the judgment that results from rebellion to Adonai. Accepting the yoke of the Kingdom, is the death of self-determination, death of your own calculation, death of living to please

yourself. The yoke of the Kingdom is the surrender of every asset, surrender of every decision, the surrender of every action to the Messiah. It should literally be as if you wore a wooden brace that chaffed against any step that you took that was even minutely off of Messiah's course. The yoke means that you have accepted and will participate in every event that the Lord directs you towards.

The beginning of being Yoked Warriors is actually being yoked to Messiah and walking as he walks.

As we said in the beginning, don't credit yourself with having done this if the evidence points to the need for your awakening to this reality. A yoked man embraces every difficulty and every hardship as a privilege associated with being attached to Christ. Wearing the yoke of Christ does not require you to understand, to see the merit, or to feel a sense of inner peace... What it does require is raw, unstoppable, obedience in every crucifying step towards the objective of bringing life to the world through union with Messiah.

1. Matt: disinherited and disassociated from every worldly relationship to wear the yoke.
2. Eric: thrown out of my house, thrown out of my peer group, lifetime of criticism to wear the yoke

Being yoked like warriors begins with absolute surrender to the will of God regardless of the consequences. It, however, goes on to be even more than that:



When a warrior bears the yoke of the Kingdom, meaning that he walks in the light as Messiah is in the light, then that warrior will be "yoked" to other warriors that are doing the same. His bond is first to the Lord (he shares the yoke of Messiah) but it is also with his fellow warriors who are doing the same (he shares the yoke with them). It is impossible to have one without the other! You cannot have fellowship with the head of the body without being in connection with all the other members. Being yoked to Christ is being yoked to the other members of his body.

1. Matt prayed Eric into the Kingdom
2. Eric and Matt vowed Fidelity unto God and loyalty unto life with each other until the appearance of the Kingdom

The two of us were not yoked together because we liked the same music, food, or athletic programs... It is not because we are the same color or are from the same place! The Yoke of the Kingdom came to us as individuals experiencing the Word of God. It was the joint mission of the Word of God that yoked us together with Fidelity unto God and Loyalty unto Life. (it is easy to credit yourself with this kind of being yoked to "the larger corporate

body of Christ" but how can that be if it is not first expressed to a singular believer on a life and death level)

- Some in this room lack the genuine yoke of the Kingdom... Partial obedience is not the yoke of the Kingdom
- Most in this room lack the genuine yoke of brotherhood... How connected to the body can you be, if there is not even 1 other person that you have life and death devotion to based on the word of God.

The USMC's Riflemen's creed, originally published in 1942, was designed for the purpose of instilling into each soldier a life and death dependency on the weapon with which he would wage war and a warrior-ethos gained during their time spent in Basic Training.

This morning, we present our adaptation of its seven points, designed to inspire you and offer eternal rewards that far surpass any earthly achievements. They are as follows:

Yoked Warriors Creed

1. This is my Bible. There are many like it, but this one is mine.
2. My Bible is my closest companion. It is my very life. I must master it as I must master my life.
3. My Bible, without action, is useless. Without my Bible, I am useless. I must apply my Bible in truth. I must aim straighter than my enemy who is trying to kill me. I must put him to death before he eliminates me.
4. My Bible has taught me what counts in this war is not the number of Scriptures we fire off, the noise of our bursts, nor the smoke we make. We know that it is the application that counts.
5. My Bible is living and active, even as I, because it is my life. Thus, I will learn it as a brother. I will learn its Pashat truths, its strength of Remez, its Darashic parts, its Sodical insights and its steely resolve. I will ever guard my Bible against the ravages of twisting its truth and damaging doctrines as I will ever guard my legs, my arms, my eyes and my heart against damage. I will keep my Bible well read, well lived, clean, and ready for application. We will become part of each other.
6. Before God, I swear this creed. My Bible and myself are the defenders of my marriage, my family and this church. We are the masters of our enemy. The Word of God is the Savior of my life.
7. So be it, until victory is God's and there is no enemy, but all that is left is right order with God and man!

It is not in our nature to present problems without demonstrating solutions. Almost none of you (if any) are Jews, for that reason we hope to be included as sons of Abraham by faith. Let's look at one of the foundational truths concerning the household of Abraham:

Genesis 14:14–16 (ESV)

14 When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, **he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them**, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. 15 And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. 16 Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.

Let's remind you of the man leading this expedition:
(Genesis 12 told him to)

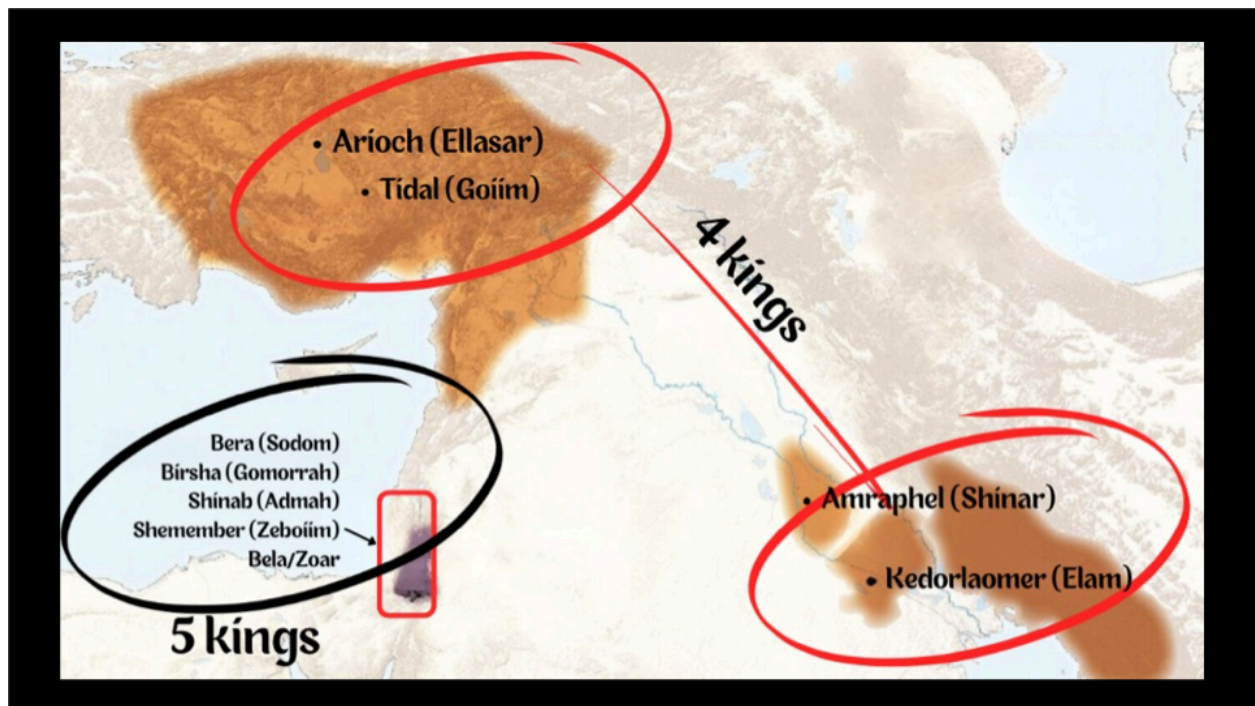


This is Abram becoming "yoked" to the Kingdom. His allegiance was not to his country. His allegiance was not to his ethnic origin. His allegiance was not to his "natural family". He was on an all-out mission to achieve the

mission objective that would bring him and those under his care to the land Adonai would show him.

He was yoked to what Adonai had and would still reveal to him, even while losing all things! This is a yoked warrior! While on that journey a transnational conflict broke out. This was not in the preplanned itinerary, but Abram was unphased by the difficulty because he considered it a privilege to be yoked to the will of God.

(The shape of the conflict according to Genesis 14)



A coalition of 4 transnational powers that was comprised of 4 Kings took a relative under Abram's care captive. Abram rallied himself with the 318 trained men raised under his direction and marched (something like 100 miles) to rescue a fallen member of Abram's house.

The question before Abram was:

Isaiah 49:24–25 (ESV)

24 Can the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?

25 For thus says the LORD: “Even the **captives of the mighty shall be taken**, and the **prey of the tyrant be rescued**, for I will contend with those who contend with you, and **I will save your children**.”

- Neither the 4 king coalition nor the 5 king coalition is comprised of good people. The issue is that tyrants have taken captive a Hebrew. Now the yoke of the Kingdom requires Abram to rescue this man because he is part of a larger destiny.
- Abram didn't take along 318 lightly committed men.
- Abram didn't take along 318 well-meaning but ill-prepared men
- Abram didn't take along 318 men who just liked to fellowship kind of men

No, Abram took 318 TRAINED MEN who were raised in his house and would fight for God's Will and fight for their brother! Moreover, Abram didn't do it for a reward... he refused to be compensated with the plunder. Instead, he did it for love of God and love for his brother. Yoked Warriors never need to be rewarded for their exploits... they do it for Adonai and their brothers!

Can you rightly say that you are Yoked Warriors:

- Do you live and die for the Will of God
- Do you live and die for the welfare of your brothers

1 Timothy 4:7–8 (ESV)

7 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

Any person within this church whether male or female that is still associated with pet issues, eccentric health prerogatives, and ancillary issues needs training in righteousness. Abram's household must be trained in the Yoke of the Kingdom and the Yoke of Brotherhood.

This is what the O.A.C is based on and it grew straight out of our bearing the yoke of the Kingdom and the yoke of brotherhood. This will cause you to get more serious about what happens to your brother if you do not act than you are concerned about what happens to you if you do act. In other words, we believe that loving God with all your heart, soul, and strength is expressed in loving your brother more than yourself.

- Have you identified even one person within this body that you are partnered with in the mission of the Word of God that would say you are more concerned with his welfare than you are your own? The Kingdom is based on being Yoked to God and Yoked to your brothers... not in a general sense, in a real and demonstrable sense!

Let's take another example from the Law:

Numbers 14:5–9 (ESV)

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. 6 And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes 7 and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. 8 If the LORD delights in **us**, he will bring **us** into this land and give it to **us**, a land that flows with milk and honey. 9 Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for **us**. Their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with **us**; do not fear them."

You probably recognize this passage as the time Israel turned back from taking the promised land and was given 40 years of disciplinary training to better prepare the children to take the land. Did you notice that Joshua and Caleb spoke as one man?

They were yoked to the Kingdom and yoked to each other. Their unified message was:

- If the LORD delights in US

- He will bring US into the land
- And give it to US
- The enemy is bread for US
- The Lord is with US
- Do not fear them

The two men used the words US five times in only 2 verses. Their speech was meant to get the congregation of Israel to realize that the battle depended on the Lord delighting in the whole congregation... not the size of the enemy. These brothers were yoked to the Lord and yoked to each other... unfortunately the congregation did not share the yoke and further discipline was required!

If we are to be Yoked Warriors, we must train. Our training must include viewing overwhelming adversity as "bread for US" meaning these situations are our edification. You can talk about being warriors all day long, but until you begin to see adversity as an edifying sandwich you are in need of training. (Hey maybe you are the best trained soldier in this house, but what about the guy on your left and right... Because the Lord must delight in US as in all of US... Are you helping to prepare your neighbor?)

Let's move to the Prophets. We are going to pick up with the story of the Gibeonites. They were incorporated within Israel through deceptive means, and yet, Joshua had such respect for the Covenant (or put another way, was so Yoked to the Kingdom) that he went to war on behalf of his needy brothers because he was also yoked to the brotherhood.

Joshua 10:6–14 (ESV)

6 And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, "Do not relax your hand from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us." 7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he **and all the people of war with him**, and all the mighty men of valor. 8 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands. Not a man of them shall stand before you."

9 So Joshua came upon them suddenly, **having marched up all night from Gilgal**. 10 And the LORD threw them into a panic before Israel, who struck them with a great blow at Gibeon and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah. 11 And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

12 At that time Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

“Sun, stand still at Gibeon,
and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.”

13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped,
until the nation took vengeance on their enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. 14 There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded the voice of a man, for the LORD fought for Israel.

Do you want to be YOKED WARRIORS? Notice that Joshua did not weasel out of this commitment because it was difficult. He and the nation marched through the night to come to the aid of their covenant partners. This was not based on the merit of the Gibeonites but the Warriors commitment to the Kingdom Covenant and the Covenant of Brotherhood.

Yoked Warriors do not sit around and lament their circumstances or what got them into the situation. Joshua didn't ask for better weaponry, better numbers, or better fighting conditions... he only asked for more time to kill every last member of the attacking party!

- Brothers and sisters, your commitment to the Kingdom or the Yoke of the Kingdom will be tested by how far you will go to honor the Kingdom above your own needs, safety, or concerns.
- Our Faith is expressed in God by the Yoke that we share between us. Again, is there even one person in this room that has life or death confidence that you value his life more than your own? (We can't claim this in some corporate sense, if it is not demonstrably present between individuals in this room)

Let's continue in the Prophets by going to one of the best examples of being Yoked to the Kingdom and Yoked to the brothers.

1 Samuel 14:7 (ESV)

7 And his armor-bearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart. Do as you wish. Behold, I am with you heart and soul."

In our time you may hear this kind of sentiment occasionally but it is rarely true if the event is perilous or extends beyond a day or two. The reason that the armor bearer can say this to Jonathon is that the things in Johnathon's heart have been put there by God. Eric and I share this kind of yoke of brotherhood, the things we have united around have been deposited in our hearts by the Word of God. Who is your heart and soul with in an unquestioned manner because the Word of God has shaped their desires?

- Any task one of us is involved in is a task the other labors for
- We are strengthened by the confidence that what the Lord has said to one of us is for both of us...Yoke of brotherhood

1 Samuel 14:11–14 (ESV)

11 So **both of them** showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves." 12 And the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you a thing." And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me, for

the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel.” 13 Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer after him. And they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him. 14 And that first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, killed about twenty men within as it were half a furrow’s length in an acre of land.

This is not just a beautiful story it is an example of YOKED WARRIORS... their allegiance was to the Kingdom of God and that aligned in a Yoke of Brotherhood.

In the Bible a yoke can refer to a farming instrument, a way of life, or even the exponential ground that can be covered by two people as opposed to one. Take a look at this slide:

• 6776. **תְּנִשְׁמֶד**: I. **A masculine noun referring to a couple, a yoke, a team of two, a pair. It refers to two of something, a team or a pair (Judg. 19:3, 10; 2 Sam. 16:1; 1 Kgs. 19:19, 21; 2 Kgs. 5:17). A yoke of oxen refers to two oxen, a pair (1 Sam. 11:7). It is used in the idiom, yoke of land, about an acre, referring to the amount of land plowed in a day by one yoke of oxen (1 Sam. 14:14). Job possessed five hundred yoke of oxen (1:3).**

• II. A masculine noun referring to about an acre of land; land plowed by a team of two oxen in a day.

• Baker, W., & Carpenter, E. E. (2003). In *The complete word study dictionary: Old Testament* (pp. 955–956). AMG Publishers.



Jonathon and the Armor bearer defeated a superior force and cleared as much ground as two oxen can work in 1 day because they Yoked Warriors! At LCM we refer to this as Semed team fighting and it is the only way to take down Spiritual Powers that are bigger than you as an individual.

"Men do not fight for flag or country, for the Marine Corps or glory or any other abstraction. They fight for one another."—
William Manchester

"Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines don't have that problem."

“No one ever drowned in sweat.” — **USMC**

- Matt and I fight for the Glory of God in the overall scope of our lives, but on a daily basis the focus of the battle is fighting for one another to achieve the purpose on their life.
- When our lives are over... we will not have to wonder if we made a difference... we have already made all the difference for each other
- Neither of us fear or shy away from the hard work of the Kingdom because we do not believe that the Lord will allow us to drown in sweat.

We could go on to talk about David's three mighty fighting men (In 2 Samuel 23) and how the three chiefs among them stood next to each other. We could tell you the way that story has informed the relationship of Wade Sutherland, Matthew Perot, and Eric Stephens... but if you aren't getting the Yoked Warriors concept by now then you wouldn't get that example either.

Let's cover what we believe to be the essential area of training that this house requires to become Yoked Warriors because it has something to do with a fear of drowning in spiritual sweat. I want to take this opportunity to say that I **hate the saying "Many hands make light work" the Yoked**

Warrior is not looking for light work. He endeavors to spend his all in the accomplishment of the work or die trying. More than that... He is committed to doing it with his brother whom he genuinely loves more than himself.

Let's turn to

Mark 14:31 (1984 NIV)

31 But Peter insisted **emphatically**, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

NIV

This is certainly the language of a Warrior. Promising Fidelity unto death and loyalty unto life! Notice that every disciple said the same as Peter... Peter insisted this was true emphatically. You know how the story turned out though, they're deeds did not match their bold proclamations.

- You have to ask why? Did the disciples have a commitment problem?
- Were they not properly motivated?
- Did they not possess the right desires?

While you are thinking about those answers, please remember that these men had already left everything to follow Jesus and had been with him three years.

- Luke 5:27-28 records Matthew Levi leaving everything to follow Jesus
- Mark 3:13-14 describes all 12 coming to Jesus from their various places in life
- Matt 4:18-22 describes Peter, Andrew, James, and John all leaving their livelihoods, families, and homes to follow Jesus.
- Matt 19:27 makes the claim that every one of the disciples left everything to follow Jesus

Arising Church the disciples were more committed than you are and they proved it with their deeds on many occasions. They made pledges like Warriors and promised to have fidelity unto death and loyalty unto life. So

the question remains why did they fail to live up to very Creed that they had promised themselves to on the last day of Jesus earthly ministry?

Answering this question is part of the training that you need to become Yoked Warriors

As always the Bible is going to tell us and then we will know what we should do:

Matt 26:36-43 (1984 NIV)

36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

- Do you really think that their friend saying this to them had no effect on them?
- They loved Him; they expressed it in their actions at every turn for 3 years!
- I am sure that they were concerned for Jesus, moved for Jesus, and wanted to keep watch with Him like soldiers would keep guard over a commanding officer.

39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

40 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. 41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. **The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.**"

- This was not a commitment problem, as in desire, it was a weakness problem. They wanted to be Warriors that could be counted on but they were not yet able.

- The spirit of the men was willing but the weakness of their own flesh overcame them
- Can you imagine how they felt when asked the ? Could you not keep watch with me.

42 He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

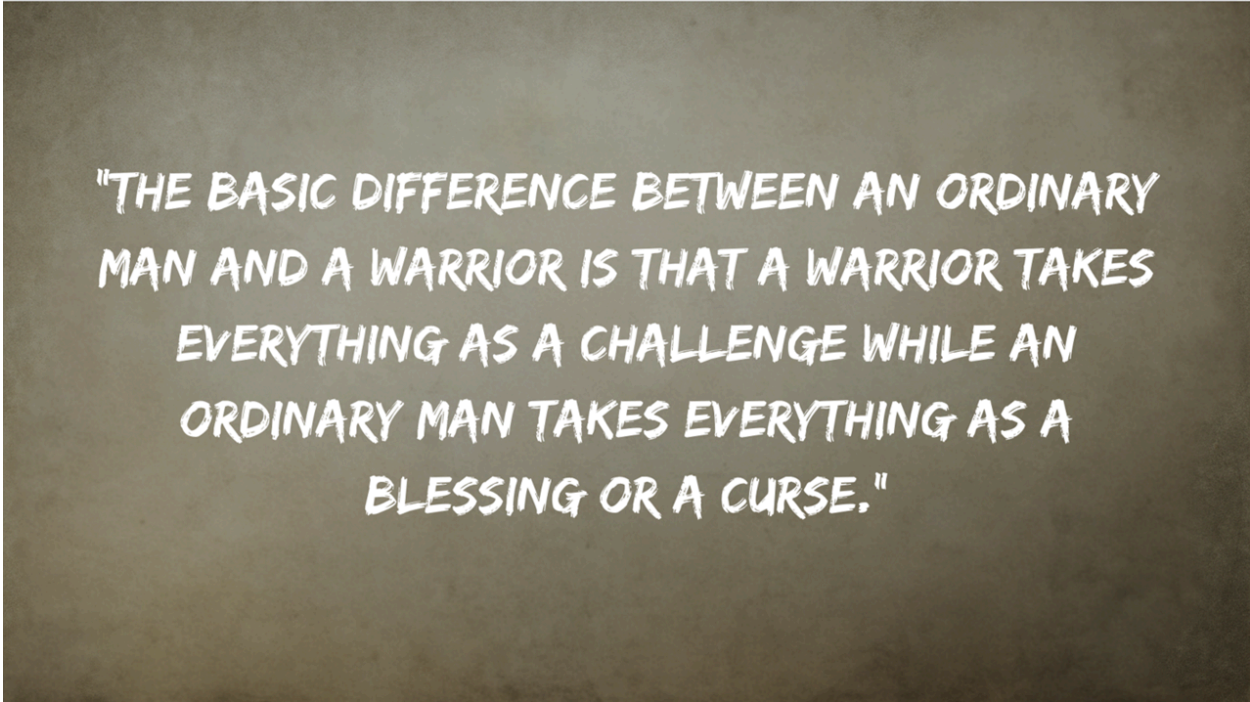
- Ironically, in the very moment that Jesus disciples were giving into the weakness of their own flesh, the Lord of Glory and ultimate Warrior was being strengthened from Heaven by Angels and (Luke 22:43 says so)

43 When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. 44 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

NIV

What are we to learn from this and how does it relate to becoming Yoked Warriors?

While acknowledging that this behavior was indeed sinful, it is important to recognize that it stemmed from a place of weakness rather than a deliberate act of rebellion. Transformation is an ongoing process, not a one-time event, and these individuals still require continuous growth and change. They remain loved and called, and their journey of transformation is far from complete, they are still in training. This is true for everyone in this room, even if most of you are unaware of the specific areas in your lives that need transformation.



"THE BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ORDINARY
MAN AND A WARRIOR IS THAT A WARRIOR TAKES
EVERYTHING AS A CHALLENGE WHILE AN
ORDINARY MAN TAKES EVERYTHING AS A
BLESSING OR A CURSE."

Far too many in this room want your weakness to be accommodated. Whether you say it out loud or not, you want to build nappy time into prayer time so that your immense need for further transformation is not evident to everyone. This is tantamount to simply saying, "Not everyone was blessed to be able to stay awake." or "I was cursed with the inability to stay awake"

Yoked Warriors do not look at the world this way. Every obstacle is something to be overcome in the power of God. They are never to be avoided or accommodated because that would leave you untransformed.

Let's run through a few of our Biblical examples:

1. Do you presently possess the spiritual stamina to march like Abram and rescue Lot because you are Yoked to the Kingdom of God and Yoked to your brother?
 1. Or would you rather just accommodate your weakness with the thought that you were not blessed with this kind of aptitude and maybe the brother is just cursed.

2. Do you presently view every adversity as bread for you and your brothers because you are Yoked to the Kingdom of God and Yoked with your brothers?
 1. Or would you rather think about it as being cursed with adversity and blessed with ease
3. Do you presently see every battle as winnable and march through the night with the slightest hint that your brothers are in trouble like Joshua and the Gibeonites?
 1. Or do you pacify yourself with the consoling thought that you would if you had better preparations or the other brother had not committed himself to such and impossible feat
4. Do you presently share a bond with another brother like Jonathon and the armor bearer. Who are you with heart and soul, even in death defying circumstances
 1. Or would you rather just accommodate your weakness with the thought that some are blessed with these kinds of relationships and you are not

The point of working through these things is to see the areas that your Yoke of the Kingdom which is your Yoke of brotherhood needs to be strengthened to be an actual Warrior.

We said in the beginning that some of you lack the Yoke to the Kingdom and most of you have not yet identified a single brother that you would actually die for their benefit or them for yours. We are trying to provoke you to your need for transformation.

Trials and failings are great opportunities to see where you need to be "yet" transformed. While much of our transformation was instantaneous at the cross... clearly much was not and is still being accomplished all the way up to the resurrection.

- As we move through a few versus on the ongoing process... Ask yourself what happens if we accommodate these weaknesses, failings, and sin rather than ask to be transformed in Yoked Warriors
- Can you imagine... the disciples demanding that Jesus structure the prayer time in better accordance with their sleeping habits. Or demanding of Jesus that He simply learn to relate to them better. Or one of the disciples explaining that his situation was unique because of some trauma in his past?
 - Do you want to build nap time into prayer time or become a Yoked Warrior
 - Do you want alternate circumstances or do you want to become a Yoked Warrior

This Church is being trained like Abram's house and that training starts with your ongoing, practical requests to be transformed rather than accommodated in your weakness

Rom 12:2 (1984 NIV)

2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

NIV

- This is spoken to Spirit-filled, saved, believers... they still needed transformation and continual renewing. So do you!
- Otherwise you will not know how to determine God's will and fight for it as a Yoked Warrior

2 Cor 3:18 (1984 NIV)

18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

NIV

- Credited with His righteousness but still being transformed into His likeness. This results in ever-increasing glory and is only achieved by reliance on the Spirit as a Yoked Warrior

- Accommodation would mean less of His likeness... glory that is decreasing... less reliance on His Spirit... not to mention being permanently stuck in the position of a whimpering eunuch.

2 Cor 4:16 (1984 NIV)

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

NIV

- The renewal is day by day... being ever transformed... ever molded into a Yoked Warrior
- When we require others to accommodate us... we waste away, growing worse, the weakness only grows so that others are never able to do enough to truly accommodate it.
- This leads to co-dependence, enablement, and genuinely destructive relationships characterized by resentment. (because you are avoiding the actual solution) which is to grow stronger in your Yoke of the Kingdom and Yoke of brotherhood

Col 3:9-11 (1984 NIV)

9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

NIV

- Have taken off the old... have put on the new; but even the new IS BEING renewed
- If you were in a life and death battle...and you are... Are you happy with your level of proficiency as a Yoked Warrior today?

Eph 4:22-24 (1984 NIV)

22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

NIV

- The old life must continually be put off... Accommodation is a lie to yourself that says, "if they would have done something different then I would have done better" but this avoids the truth that you must be transformed and are not presently anything that resembles a Yoked Warrior.
- The new life must continually be put on... it is not a one time transaction; it is a life of perpetual transformation
- We are to be made New in the attitude of our Minds
- Accommodation hinders this process... Transformation into a Yoked Warrior

Phil 2:12-13 (1984 NIV)

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

NIV

- We are to continually work these things out with the greatest of care... that can't be done if you are expecting everyone else to work around your issues so that you don't have to work through them!
 - It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose and nature as a Yoked Warrior
 - In other words, He transforms you as you work to expose these issues before Him which is your responsibility.
1. Transformation into a Yoked Warrior is your responsibility and no one else can do it for you or keep you from doing it... it is the on-going power of your relationship with the Father and the brotherhood
 2. Every time you ask to be accommodated rather than transformed, you are hindering the Lord from working in you and transforming you into a Warrior
 3. You were chosen by God to be made into a Yoked Warrior. That process is not yet complete... To complete the process you must face

hidden areas of fleshly accommodation and ask Him to transform you--- this does not disqualify you; it is your training as a Warrior.

Altar call 1:

If you are not committed daily, practically, to warfare on God's behalf, then He is not yet your Master and you do not actually wear the Yoke of the Kingdom. Come cry out to him so that you may be transformed into something useful for his service

Altar Call2:

If there is not even 1 other brother in this church that is completely convinced without reservations that you would die to put his interests in the kingdom above yourself, then you may be attempting to wear the Yoke of the Kingdom but you are not Yoked to the body in a practical way

Come cry out to God that you might be transformed into a brother that another can be selflessly joined to in order to accomplish the work of God.