

Yokefellows

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[0 : 00] Grateful for that. Matthew 28. Turn there. Never seen this passage before until just the other day. Hit me like a ton of bricks. Like, wow. That's awesome. I didn't know that was in there. Let me just talk to you first. Why would I take the time to talk about the Oakfellow ministry?

Shouldn't we be doing this stuff for everybody? We're a body, right? Shouldn't we be doing this stuff for everybody? The answer is yes. We should. I was talking in our life group Sunday, and we were talking about 1 John chapter 4, 7, and 8. That's where 1 John 4, 7, 8. Anybody else raised on Bible songs in your car? Cassette tape?

That was me. Yeah, I could sing that. I won't because I get embarrassed enough singing. Anyways. But, you know, it says, Beloved, let us love one another. That's a command, by the way. Beloved, let us love one another. You should do that.

It's a good idea. You know, the one another's in the Bible is a great study. I think there's like 35 of them. I just made that number up. I'm pretty sure that's the number I heard. I didn't count them myself. But it's a great study.

There's a lot, you know, just what we're supposed to do for one another. And, you know, we're a body. The Bible's very clear that the thumb's not more important than the nose, and the eye's not more important than the other stuff.

[1 : 06] And, you know, we're all important. So, are the missionaries more important than us non-missionaries? Absolutely not. That's not what I'm telling you. That's not what you say. We have a ministry devoted directly to making us be friends with somebody else in the church. That seems weird.

Well, it is kind of weird. But it's necessary. The reality is, I'm going to be very honest with you. And this is to my shame. If I know you, that is great.

If I don't know you, that is great. That is me. I'm sorry. It's not right. My wife thinks I should do better. You know, for my sister, it's the total opposite.

If she doesn't know you, this is a travesty that must be remedied immediately. I mean, if I sit over there, and you sit over there, and I don't know you, it ain't happening. I'm sorry. Okay?

You're going to have to come 99% of the way. It's just, that's, it's something I need to work on. Okay? Keep me accountable. Micah, keep me accountable. Okay? I need some help on this.

[2 : 08] The reality is, we need to do better about all of it. Okay? We need to do better about loving one another. We are a body. We are a church. It's a big deal. It's a really big deal.

We're going to talk about that. It's a really big deal. We ought to love one another. Why do we have a yoke fellow ministry? Why don't we talk about that for missionaries? Why is it something special? It's because they're an ocean away.

Okay? When you're hurting, I can see it. When it's Father's Day, and Stephanie is hurting, you'll see it on her face. And you can remember and say, hey, I know it's a tough day for you.

I love you. I'm praying for you. When Kylie's birthday comes around, you're not going to see Jackie's face. It's my job to make sure you remember.

It's my job as their yoke fellow to make sure that you send them a card or you send them a text and you say, I know this is going to be tough. We love you and we're praying for you.

[3 : 05] That's why we need this ministry. Because you're not going to see them. Without a yoke fellow ministry, it's so easy just not to call because you don't think to call or to text or to email or to WhatsApp or whatever it is.

I mean, it's just, you need something to make it intentional because they are a world away. And sometimes they feel even further away. They feel on an island. And we need to be in a yoke.

I believe in it. Okay? So I'm not saying one's more important than the other or anybody's more special than the other. I'm the other. So I think I'm pretty special. All right? So it's just necessary.

Matthew 28. Y'all know it. I'm not anywhere near it. It's on my paper though, so it doesn't matter. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. All right. Number one, this is the job. It's the Great Commission. That's the job. Okay? Let me just tell you, let me let you in on a big secret.

[4 : 19] It's your job. It's not the missionary's job. It's not the preacher's job. It's not the pastor's job. It's your job. It's my job. It's all of our job. Well, that's the job.

Go in, baptize, teach, make disciples. That is the job. It was given to us by Jesus Christ. It's a big deal. Okay? Jesus Christ himself was the one speaking here and he was speaking to the church.

All right? He was speaking to a group of disciples, but that was the church, the church that he started. We'll talk about that more in just a second. But he was speaking to the church. So this did not expire with the apostles. This was to the church and you're the church.

It's our job. The reality is, if we as an entity, as a body, are not committed to fulfilling the Great Commission, we are not a church.

A church is a gathering of believers. It is a local assembly. It is a voluntary gathering of people of like faith with the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

[5 : 22] It is integral to what a church is. It is. Because the founder and maker of the church is the one who gave us this commission. He said, I will build my church.

And he said, Hey, church, I got a job for you. So he's like, this is why I built you. This is why I made you. This is why I died for you. This is why I bought you. This was given to us by Christ.

Let me tell you why it's such a big deal. Turn with me. Colossians. You don't have to turn there if you don't want to, but you're more than welcome to. Colossians 1, verse 12. We're going to read a pretty lengthy passage. It would be good to turn there. A pretty lengthy passage. This is one of my favorites in the Bible.

I say that about a lot of stuff though. It's what I read most recently. So it's a favorite. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.

So good. And hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom, so it's in His Son, we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who, still talking about Jesus, His Son, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.

[6 : 29] For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things and by Him all things consist.

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.

And having made peace through the blood of His cross by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, by Him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven, and you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled.

I could read on and on. It's such a good passage of Scripture. But did you hear all that Jesus did? All right, He is our Creator. All things were made by Him and for Him. He's our Savior. He purchased our redemption.

We're translated into His kingdom, the kingdom of His dear Son. You know, He saved us. We were aliens, but He reconciled us. I mean, He created us.

[7 : 30] He saved us. He's the head of the church, it said. He's the firstborn. He founded the church. Do you all remember in Matthew, chapter 18-ish, it says, upon this rock, I will build my church.

Jesus looked at Peter and said, hey, I will build my church on that statement that you made that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. He said, I will build my church. This is not Trent Cornwell's church. This is Jesus' church.

This is not, you know, Trent did not build his church. Trent did not build Jesus' church. Jesus said, I will build my church. This is His church. He made it. He owned it. He founded it.

He bought it. We could go to Ephesians chapter 5. That beautiful relationship, that imaging of marriage and the church. He said, husbands love your wives. Even, you know, we always talk about how wives submit to your husbands.

That's got to be tough. I mean, I know me. Okay, that's got to be tough. But listen, the standard was set pretty good for men too. You love your wife like I love the church. So I'm not going to say who has the tougher job, but it's a pretty high bar.

[8 : 35] They said he loved it and he gave himself for it. So he founded the church. He died for the church. He bought the church. Listen, he has the authority to tell us what to do. Y'all following me? All right, if he's our maker and he's our savior, if he's the founder of the church and he's the one who bought the church, he built the church, he made the church, it's his power that empowers the church, this is his.

So when he comes in Matthew chapter 28 and he says, all power is given unto me, he's saying, I got the authority to tell you what I want you to do. I have that power. I have that right. I can tell you your job because I made you.

It's also encouraging that it also means that no one else has the authority to overtake that. If China says you can't do the Great Commission, you say, sorry, Jesus has all power. It's like, you think you're powerful?

Jesus has all power. And he says, all authority is given to me. Go ye therefore with that authority. And somebody says, nope, sorry, can't do that. You say, nope, sorry, going to because that's what Jesus said to do.

That was free. So it was given by Christ. The Great Commission was given by Christ. It was given to the church, the body, the gathering, the assembly, us, all of us.

[9 : 49] There are no loopholes. There are no exceptions. It's all of our job. And if it doesn't get done, it's not Robert's fault. If Africa doesn't get reached, it's not Robert's fault.

It's Robert and my fault. And it's your fault. It's our job. Y'all with me? Trent uses the illustration of, you know, we hold the rope. Either side lets go and this doesn't work.

We all need it. We'll look at it in a little bit, but Paul referred to them as the yoke fellows. And that bond, that apparatus that links two together, Paul was saying, I can't do this by myself.

This isn't a job for one. This is a job for the church. Chuck's my hero. So, it was given to the church, the whole church, not just the missionaries, not just the clergy, not just those paid to do it.

It's all of our job. It's all of our responsibility. You need to take that seriously. You know, you're standing before God and give account for that. That's your job.

[11 : 03] When it says going to all the world, it means all the world. It's not like all the world you can. It's all the world. In Acts chapter 1, verse 8, you know, we're supposed to go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the uttermost parts of the world.

It didn't leave any room for interpretation there. It's like, there are no loopholes. It's like, here, there, and everywhere, in the words of Sam I am. Okay? I mean, it's like, let's get it done.

It all has to be done. The beautiful thing it says both in Jerusalem and Judea. Y'all have been taught this stuff. You know it. I'm not like light bulb. You're like, oh, wow. Never heard this before. I know. Okay? I'm trying to set a foundation here.

Okay? But it says both. That means like at the same time. Both. You do it all. Okay? It's not reach Alpharetta and we'll move on to Atlanta. Reach Atlanta and we'll move on to Georgia.

Reach Georgia and we'll move on to the United States. Reach the United States and we'll move on to, you know, Central America, North America, Central America. This isn't risk. Okay? This is world evangelism. It's like, get it all done right now.

[12 : 06] That person in Papua New Guinea has one lifetime to hear about the gospel and then it's eternity too late. We gotta get it done. Are y'all with me? We gotta get this done.

This is a big deal. This isn't like preferential either. He didn't say, hey, if you get around to it, if there's enough time in the agenda, if there's enough money left in the budget, let's try to get this done, fellas.

That's not what he said. He said, go. He said, this is your commission. This is your job. This is the main job of the church. This is your purpose. Purpose.

Like, there's no reason for you to be at church if you're not trying to evangelize the world. This isn't a social club. This is a church. We got a job to do and it's all of our job.

So you need to say, it's my job. Our missions conference this year is called All In. It's because we all gotta get involved in this. It's a big deal. So that's the job.

[13 : 05] That's the great commission. That's what we need to get done. Let's talk about the yoke. Turn to Matthew chapter 11. There's a couple places we talk about it. Matthew chapter 11, verse 28 is a reference to it. I love this passage of scripture.

It's not really what we're talking about tonight but I want to go there anyways because I like it. Alright. I preached a whole message on this and I'm gonna try my best not to because I don't have enough time.

Matthew 11, verse 28 says, Come unto me, all ye that are labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. That's beautiful, isn't it? Any of y'all ever been tired? Jesus says, Hey, you're tired? Come to me. Don't go to the pills.

Don't just turn on that, you know, don't just veg out watching that show. It's like, I know you're tired. He said, Come to me. And guess what he said? He said, Come unto me and I will give you rest.

That's such a beautiful promise. And then he blows my mind. Take my yoke upon you. I was fully expecting, be like, here's a pillow. Come unto me, all ye that are labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

[14 : 12] Take my pillow. That makes sense. He says, Take my yoke. Do you know what a yoke is? It's a big, heavy, wooden object that you strap two beasts of burden to and they hook a plow to it and they pull in a field.

That does not sound like rest. That sounds like work. Is anyone else confused? It's so beautiful. The promise of the yoke is rest because Jesus is in the yoke.

Isn't that beautiful? The purpose of the rest of the yoke is the field. He says, The fields are wide unto harvest.

He says, Pray that we get the job done. It's beautiful. And I think my favorite thing about the yoke is it's a partnership.

Side by side, shoulder to shoulder, there is no way to get separation in the yoke. You are shoulder to shoulder with Jesus Christ when you get in the yoke.

[15 : 20] You tell me, I'm sorry, that's better than a pillow. You can't get that on a couch. He says, Come unto me. The rest doesn't come from laying down the burden.

The rest comes from getting under it with Jesus. It's just awesome. There's no room for burnout in the Christian life. Just take your time and go see Jesus.

We can't put down, we can't put the weight down. We got a job to do and it's too important. Take my yoke upon you and I will give you rest. And you just, you just saddle back up and you say, Let's go God, we got this.

You re-up, you say, the job's too important and you find your strength in Christ. The same thing we can take to the yoke fellow ministry.

I know I'm not Jesus and Mitch ain't Jesus. So, we ain't finding what we need there. But it's still that partnership. It's that purpose. It's that, it's that awesome purpose.

[16 : 22] Can I tell you something? A yoke's not pretty. I'm sure with the modern farmhouse, people are like bedazzling them suckers and sticking them up on a wall. But it's not made to be a decoration.

It is a, it is a tool made for work. It's not fun. It's not light. It seems like it'd be painful to wear that thing.

It will cost you something. It's all about getting the job done. It's all it's about. It's all it's about.

No one cares what the brand of the yoke is. No one cares what color it is. No one cares how pretty it is. No one cares what features it has. It's just, did it get the job done?

It's all it's about. That's the purpose. The partnership, it's a wonderful thing. Takes two. Yoke is useless without both animals in it.

[17 : 29] Without both beasts in that thing. It takes a partnership. It's mutual. Can I tell you one of the changing things in the relationship between Mitch and I? I came home from work and these two dingbats were setting up a big green egg.

They were trying to surprise me and have it done before I got there but I think they miscalculated the weight and extent of what it took to get it together and they were still there working on it. But that dingbat bought me a big green egg.

That is an expensive, ridiculous, over the top gift and if I was a better man I would have refused it but I really, really wanted it. I mean Mitch is a stupid, generous guy and I love him for it.

And if you're wondering can my friendship be bought, yes. That's absolutely what I'm saying. There are some attachments that I'm looking for so if you want to be my friend I've got a list.

I can send you my Amazon wish list. We can be best friends. But it wasn't that. That gift told me that he was fully invested.

[18 : 37] It said, this isn't about what you can do for me. You are not my yoke fellow. We are yoke fellows. It said, this is not something you do for me. This is something we do for each other.

This is mutual. This is a friendship. This is two people who love each other and are committed to get the job done. And we are equally putting the burden on and we're strapping the yoke on and we're just plowing.

And we're going to plow and we're going to plow and we're going to plow and we're going to laugh together sometimes and we're going to cry together sometimes but we're going to get the job done. And it was a big green egg that helped me to see that.

And I'm telling you, it was transformative. And it really wasn't about the cost. It is like the second favorite gift I've ever been given. My wife gave me a chainsaw. I love that thing.

MS290 16 inch blade. I mean that thing, chain, it's just, I love that thing. 15 years old and runs like it's just as good as it did. Anyways. We had another very transformative moment in our relationship.

[19 : 40] Mitch was going to pay Chase \$50 to take him and his wife to the airport and his son just landing at the time to the airport. And I found out about it and I was furious. I said, Mitch, dingbat, what are you doing?

I'm paying Chase to take me to the airport. Mitch, that's my job. I will do it for free. I don't want you to. I don't care. I'm taking you to the airport. But it's like 3 a.m.

I was like, I will follow you as you pay Chase to the airport if you do not let me take you to the airport and you're going to waste all of our gas. I'm taking you to the airport. He said, that's just, I don't want you to have to do that.

And I was, we were texting, messaging back and forth and I said, Mitch, I want you to understand something. So when you go to Peru, I cannot help you learn language. I cannot watch your kids when they're sick and you have to go and you need to go to language school.

There's so little I can do for you in Peru. Right now, I can take you to the airport. He said, Mitch, you need to let me in the yoke. I am your yoke fellow.

[20 : 39] This is my job. This is my opportunity to get in the yoke. Let me in the yoke. And I don't know how many times I took him to the airport. You know, some of the sweetest times. I mean, an hour drive to Atlanta, we just get to talk.

You know why? I knew his agenda. I knew when he was flying out and I knew when he was flying in. I knew what churches he was going to. You want to know why? Because I had to pick him up. And if he didn't want to be standing there on the side of the airport, I needed to know his agenda.

It kept me involved. It kept me a part of it. I knew what he was doing. I knew he was going to be in Arizona for three days and he was going to be in California for a week and he was going to go up to Oregon and he was going back to California and he was going to fly to Atlanta and I was going to pick him up.

It gave me the chance to be like, when do you fly? I'll leave at 6 a.m. I need you to pick me up at 3 p.m. When are you going to eat? That's a great question. I'll have Chick-fil-A. What do you want?

It's just, he let me in the yoke. It was some of the best times to me. But I had to have that conversation with him and say, Mitch, you've got to let me in the yoke. And it was, again, it was one of those transformative moments.

[21 : 44] But it's got to be mutual. Both have to be given in this. And then there's a power to the yoke. Do you realize that in the yoke, two animals can do more work together in the yoke than both of them can do combined by themselves?

We can get more done if we'll get in the yoke. That's what it's all about. So that's the yoke. Then the yoke fellow ministry. Philippians 4.3 is where Paul mentions this term.

I love it. I love that the Bible, I love that God put this word in there because it's just such a great illustration of what this is. He says, I entreat thee also true yoke fellow. Isn't that awesome?

True yoke fellow. He said, you got in the plow with me and everything that I'm doing you had a part of. That's good stuff. Help those women which labored with me in the gospel with Clement and also and with my fellow laborers another great word whose names are in the book of life.

It's just good stuff. So let me just talk to you very practically about the yoke fellow ministry and I'll ramble for a little bit tell you a couple stories and then we'll be done.

[22 : 59] It takes time. Anything worth doing just takes time. Any friendship, any relationship it takes time. You've just got to know.

The yoke is an object for work. So you have to work in the yoke. It's going to take some effort. It's going to take some energy. It's going to take some planning. It's going to take some communicating.

I mean, you have to put some effort into it. You need to talk. You cannot be able to It's amazing. All the women are like, you can't have a good relationship without communication.

They're like, hey ma'am. All right. My wife made me read a whole book about it. But you need to talk. Ask about everything. Ask about routines.

Ask about friends. Ask about disciples. Ask about prospects. Ask about hurts. I was messing with Mitch the other day and he told me about two guys that he got to talk to and they were coming in. He's like, there's this family of seven, another family of seven, another family of three that came.

[24 : 05] It was super exciting. I've been talking with them. He said, but then there's this one guy and I was going to baptize him but he's kind of falling off. I want you to pray for him. I mean, to have that conversation, man, I felt like I was in Peru and I felt like I was working in Peru and I started to pray and I felt like I was part of the team.

I'm like trying to weasel my way into the Peru team. It's like I haven't earned it. You know, I don't get a pen or anything. I have no ring or anything. I mean, I'm not in any of the secret societies or anything but I'm still trying to weasel my way in because I'm a Yoke fellow but I felt part of it.

That's a great conversation but you don't hear it unless you ask. You got to get on the phone or get on WhatsApp or Zoom or FaceTime or Marco Polo. There's an app for that. Okay? You can communicate.

There used to be a time where you had to put stamps on stuff and send it and it was like three months later you could communicate with your friend in Peru. I mean, it is instant. It is awesome. But you got to talk.

I mean, seriously, ask about everything. Just get to know them. It's so much easier. It's easier on one of their own deputation because there's times where you can talk and you can be together and you can go out to eat and those kind of things.

[25 : 19] When they go on the field, I mean, you really have to put the effort into it. Fine, okay, and good are not answers. I read a book which that's another thing you can talk about.

Ask them, what books are you reading? This is the books I read. I mostly listen to audiobooks because I hate reading. I wasn't supposed to say that. I'm sorry. I'm not a very fast reader so if you do audiobook you can read fast without reading.

Anyways, but I was telling Mitch I had this list of books from my wife and they're all about how to be a better husband, how to be a better husband, how to be a better husband, how to be a better father. I was like, I think she's trying to tell me something. It's like, this is a little hurtful.

But I read one book and it said the four letter word that's not allowed in our home is fine. Because you say, how's your day? Fine. It's not an answer. You're going to have to go a little further than that.

You're going to have to ask follow up questions. It's not okay just to say okay and be like, this was an awkward 20 seconds. Talk to you later. It's not going to work.

[26 : 20] Alright, so it takes time. It takes being intentional. It takes planning. You've got to think ahead. Put everything on a calendar. The wonderful thing is there's an app for that.

Every birthday. Listen, I'm terrible at birthdays. Don't even ask me my mom's birthday. I go to the pharmacy and I have a note on my phone that says when my kids were born. Judge me. I don't care. Okay? I got most of their birthdays.

It's that date at the end, like 08, 04. I get mixed up. It's like, I was married in 04 so Abby was not born in 04. Okay, that doesn't work. Okay, I'm sorry. I don't know. I have to look at the note in my phone.

But there's an app for that. And it can remind you, this is an important day. Mitch was born. Like, oh, yay. Alright, you know, Landon's birthday, Ryan's birthday, Jackie's birthday, their anniversary. When Kylie was born.

These are important dates that you need to remember. Put them on your calendar. You've got to put all this stuff on the calendar. He says, hey, we're going to have the grand opening of Omega at this date. Put it on your calendar. And then pray about it. And then the next, then that afternoon, say, how'd it go?

[27 : 19] It's like being a friend. It's this amazing concept. You're just being a friend with somebody who lives a couple thousand miles away. But you can do it. You just have to plan ahead. You have to be intentional about it. You have to think ahead. Schedule calls.

Schedule FaceTime. I'm not very good at this. Mitch and I, we chat and talk. We WhatsApp a whole lot. My wife and Jacqueline will be like, hey, why don't we FaceTime on this day, at this time? And they plan that ahead.

And then like seven hours later, they're still doing it. And I'm like, okay, I only have, look, you know I'm not a good father. You sent me a book. Okay? So, you, you're going to have to get off the phone and do something or I'm going to hurt somebody.

Anyways. But they're good about that kind of thing. I'm not. All right? We're not as good. So, you know, it's a little bit of your personality. But sometimes you just got to say, we have said, hey, we're going to FaceTime. You and Jacqueline get together.

Me and Stephanie will get together and we'll FaceTime together and we'll have this, it's like a date across the world where we're double dating and we can talk and see your face and you can bring the boys over and see how big they've gotten. All it takes is just a little bit of timing and you can make that happen.

[28 : 18] Running out of time. So, schedule things, plan things, be intentional. You got to think. All right? It, it, it takes tough, honest conversations. All right? I've told you that.

I had to tell Mitch. You got to let me in the yoke. Sometimes you got to talk. Sometimes you got to say, look, I'm trying. I'm trying, but you know, look, I'm calling, I'm calling, I'm calling. You're never calling me back. I'm texting you and I know you're busy.

I'm busy. We're all busy, but man, I think this relationship is worth it. Let's, let's make, you know, so if you need to have those conversations, have those conversations. One of those tough conversations may be, look, we're just not connecting. Maybe we need to swap yoke fellows or something.

Let me, let's give somebody else a try. I know that's got to be an incredibly difficult conversation. All right? The first yoke fellows I ever were yoke fellows with came off the field. So, you know, I guess I blew that one. I'm just kidding. It was, it was a, we're still friends to this day.

We're great friends. They, it was, it was family things and, you know, health stuff that they, and so it's just, it's fine. But I always joke about that. Like I, I became their yoke fellow and ran them off the field.

[29 : 15] It's like, I'm, I'm one for two so far. That's 500. If it's baseball, we're, I'm awesome. Okay. But you know, not everybody connects and that's fine.

It may be a tough conversation. We say, Hey, let, let's, let's just, we're still friends. I still like you. Let me try to, let's try to link up with somebody else. I don't think that's a bad conversation to have. And I know it'd be difficult and that may never happen, but I think it'd be worth having if you think you can connect better with somebody.

Listen, I'm telling you, Mitch and Jackie, they're, they're our best friends. And I'm so glad that we connected. It's something God did. And, uh, honestly, I want that for you. Uh, no guilt.

Okay. We're all busy. It should not be where every time you call her, okay, I'm sorry, I haven't called in so long. Just scratch that out of your vocabulary. It doesn't matter. Okay. You call now. So you don't have to start every conversation with, oh man, I know it's been a long time.

Sorry. Who cares? It's a busy life. All right. I'm sure they weren't sitting around saying, I wish Stephen would call me. Okay. I know it's not, it's not like that. All right. He's not your girlfriend.

[30 : 15] All right. Y'all are okay. It's not, it's not eighth grade dating. Okay. So you don't have to feel guilty about it. It's not like, oh man, I haven't called my Oakville in three weeks. This is terrible. I'm an awful person. I should feel guilty. No, just call him. Hey man, how are you doing?

There's the conversation. It's all good again. Okay. So there's no guilt. There's not really, there's not a right and wrong way to do it. Just do it. Just jump in and be friends. It'd be all right. It takes both sides.

We've talked about that. You know, there's gotta be mutual involvement. If you call and they don't answer and they never text you back, then it's just not gonna work. It takes an investment. And I'm not talking about money unless I'm talking about money.

But it does take an investment. All right. You can say, you know, you know, you, all you need is love. She needs an anniversary gift too. All right. Flowers don't hurt.

All right. So I'm not saying you have to, like you don't have to fix their car if it breaks on the side of the road on deputation. But you should probably give something towards that because they're your friend. I mean, isn't that something you would do? You don't have to send them some elaborate birthday gift or something, but you can send them something.

[31 : 15] We sent a edible arrangement, which is ridiculous. I mean, like if you cut up a pineapple, dip it in chocolate and stick it on styrofoam, apparently it's worth a hundred dollars.

I don't know how that magically happens, but a five dollar pineapple becomes a hundred dollar. Anyways, I don't want to talk about it, but we sent that to California on Jacqueline's birthday and you know, it probably meant a lot to her, but I know it meant a lot to their parents because the first time we walked in their door to stay at their house, they're like, you know, it meant a lot to us when you sent that, that fruit to her on her birthday.

So, I mean, it doesn't take a lot of money. Do you know how much money you can, you know how much Paw Patrol stickers you can buy at a Dollar Tree and you send those to Peru and you've made that kid's world? Well, he thinks you just bought him the moon and it's two dollars worth of Paw Patrol stickers.

I sent Josh Ewing a pack of six Snicker Bars because I asked him, I said, I said, what can you not get in Indonesia that I can get for you in Georgia? He said, Snicker Bars. It wasn't even like, no man, don't worry about that.

No, he's like, Snicker Bars. Snickers, full size, six pack, thank you. No, he didn't say it like that. But I mean, as soon as he got them, he texted me. It's like 6 a.m.

[32 : 25] there and he's like, you're my favorite. I was like, I know. But I mean, it's like, it doesn't take a lot of money, but it does take thoughtfulness. I'm out of time, but I'll tell you a funny story.

So Stephanie got, when Chris Fees was going down to Peru to be a notary and Kylie had just passed away, Stephanie had this really expensive face cream or something like that. And so she was sending it to Jacqueline.

She's like, you know, that'll fix everything. Just kidding. But it's like, you know, it's just thoughtful. But we gave it to Chris. I thought it was a candle. And I said, yeah, you just, you know. And then Stephanie's like, face cream.

And I was like, oh wait, face cream? That's a big old thing of face cream. And it's in Chris's carry-on because all he's taking is a carry-on. So he can't take that in his carry-on. Like, this is not good.

So I call Chris. I'm like, dude, have you left your car? Leave the face cream in the car. I'm already in the airport. Oh, crap. I don't know how to say that. Sorry. I was like, let me know how it goes.

[33 : 24] Well, some TSA agent got a lovely face cream gift. So you have to think about those kind of things on how things ship and travel. And so, no face cream for Jacqueline. It takes an investment.

It takes the whole church. Listen, for you to be close to them is great. For you to make sure everybody's close to them and remembers them and thinks about them, that's the job.

For me to remember when Jacqueline's hurting, when Mitch is hurting, or when they need some love and support, for me to know that is great. For me to make sure you know that, that's the job.

To make sure you don't forget, that's the job. To remind you that it's their birthday, that's the job. It takes the whole church. So it takes a lot.

But let me tell you, I get a lot more than I give. I can promise you that. It gives you some of the best friends you will ever have. It gives you purpose. I was at a point in my life where I needed purpose.

[34 : 23] I was really struggling. I'll be very honest with you. I was in full-time ministry, and I wasn't in full-time ministry. And I felt like I didn't really know where I fit into this whole thing. Being a Yoke Fellow helped me fit in.

It helped me know where I could get involved, right where I was, and what I was doing. And I was really struggling with purpose, and this was part of what helped me find purpose. It gives your whole family a part in world evangelism.

You cannot pay for that. You cannot pay for that. My kids know so much about Peru. They talk about Peru. They talk about church planning. They talk about missionaries. Why? Because we're Yoke Fellows. There's not enough money that I can give you for what it does for my kids to know and love Landon and Ryan and to think about them all the time and to talk about them and for us to send...

We FaceTime whenever we're opening presents. They're opening our present in Peru and we're opening their present in America and my kids are seeing that. And there is no price I can put on that.

I mean, that is just worth it. That my kids grow up just knowing that God is doing something awesome in this world. He's doing something awesome in Peru, in Indonesia, in South Africa. The Yoke Fellow ministry, it's a family thing.

[35 : 32] It's awesome. And it's important that it's a family thing. I cannot minister to Jacqueline. I cannot be best friends with Jacqueline. There's no room in my life for that. Stephanie consumes my life.

She is my woman. She's all the woman for me. There's no room in my heart for any other woman. So I cannot minister. I cannot have that relationship with Jacqueline. It's just not possible. I need my wife to be part of this Yoke Fellow team because she needs to love Jacqueline.

Jacqueline needs to love her. I can't do that. There's really strict limitations to how close I can be with Jacqueline. That's just what blameless is in the Bible, by the way.

And just for free, guys, there is no room for you to have a best friend that's not your wife, that's a woman. Fight me. Sorry. Okay? Tell me I'm wrong. I'm not. When the Bible says blameless, it means blameless.

So there's just no room in your life for that. So it's a family thing. It's a beautiful thing. And I'll tell you this. It was great for my marriage because it's a purpose that we have together.

[36 : 34] We talk all the time about Mitch and Jacqueline. We pray for them constantly together. It's a beautiful thing that we plot. We scheme.

How can we get them flowers for the funeral? How can we do this? What can we do?

We think about this and talk about this. It's a beautiful thing. It's a wonderful thing. I mean, it's an all-consuming thing in my life.

And I love it. I love every second of it. So I encourage you. I went a little over time, but I could talk about this all day. And I'd be happy to. If you have questions, ask me. I mean, I'm not, by any stretch of the imagination, a perfect yoke fellow.

I'm still learning. But that's what, there's no such thing as a perfect friend or a perfect husband or a perfect wife. We're all doing better. But just get in the yoke. Find your partner. I can give you names. I got Cooper to send me the list right now.

[37 : 32] I know the Shreves need a yoke fellow. Andy Smith needs a yoke fellow. Mike Staley needs a yoke fellow. Some of them need three yoke fellows. They need a lot of help. So there's a place for you. Get involved.

If you're in a yoke fellow relationship and it's not the best relationship, then have a tough conversation and say, let's try it again with somebody else. Because we want that connection. We want to be a help. And we want somebody to be a help. And let's make sure this is a good yoke.

Because the purpose, the job, let's just get the job done. I'm going to say it again. Being a yoke fellow with Mitch and Jacqueline is one of the greatest privileges of my life. It's one of the greatest privileges of my life.

I love it. And I would encourage you to get involved in it. Let's pray. God,