

# THE ORDER OF THE YOKE

The Biblical term, Yokefellow, which is employed in Philippians 4:3, clearly derives from Christ's call to discipleship, "Take my yoke upon you" (Matthew 11:29). The basic ideas are five:

- **Commitment.** Hearing Christ's call "Come to me" a Yokefellow recognizes that the right answer to this call can give a center of stability in life as he or she joins Christ in lifting the burdens of others.
- **Discipline.** A Yokefellow voluntarily accepts a discipline as defined on the back of this card.
- **Witness.** A Yokefellow is one who knows faith in Christ is not a private affair; to be kept it must be shared.
- **Ministry.** A Yokefellow is one who shares in the universal ministry. The New Testament is clear: all are called; all are recruits in Christ's Cause (Ephesians 4:1).
- **Fellowship.** It is impossible to be a Christian in isolation. A Yokefellow is one who finds or produces a redemptive Christian fellowship.

## A COMMON DISCIPLINE

I, the undersigned, voluntarily undertake:

- **The Discipline of Prayer.** To pray every day, preferably at the beginning of the day.
- **The Discipline of Scripture.** To read reverently and thoughtfully, every day, a portion of Scripture, following a definite plan.
- **The Discipline of Worship.** To share, at least once each week, in the public worship of God.
- **The Discipline of Money.** To give a definite portion of my annual income to the promotion of Christ's Cause.
- **The Discipline of Time.** To use my time as a sacred gift, not to be wasted, striving to make my daily work, whatever it may be, a Christian vocation.
- **The Discipline of Service.** To try, every day, to lift some human burden.
- **The Discipline of Study.** To develop my mental powers by careful reading and study.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed \_\_\_\_\_

# THE MARKS OF A YOKEFELLOW



As the vitality of the redemptive fellowship has been reflected in the life of the churches, five clear marks of its participants become increasingly obvious.

They are:

1. The reality of Commitment.
2. The acceptance of a Discipline.
3. The bearing of a Witness.
4. The participation in a Ministry.
5. The sharing of a deep Fellowship.

**COMMITMENT.** A Yokefellow is not just a nominal church member. He is a disciple of the divine Lord, Christ, and is committed to the work of His Kingdom among men. His belief is not a closed affair, but one that is always open to truth and is unafraid of inquiry or scrutiny. He knows that, to be vital, his faith must grow; it must likewise be made relevant to his life and work.

**DISCIPLINE.** A Yokefellow voluntarily accepts a discipline rather than follow the way of a care-less freedom. He knows he must guard against the discipline's becoming just a matter of form and routine. He sees it as a means of opening his total life to the Mind of Christ and to the quality of living which such obedience affords. Many have found strength by beginning with the Yokefellow minimum discipline.

**WITNESS.** A Yokefellow is one who knows that faith in Christ is not a private affair. To be kept it must be shared. To witness is not a choice with us; it is inherent in Christ's call to discipleship. For many the wearing of the yoke pin, as a symbol of participation, has opened the door of conversations for personal witness to be given.

**MINISTRY.** A Yokefellow is one who affirms the idea: the universal ministry of Christians. He is willing to be used by the Holy Spirit as a means of opening the doors of men's lives to God's love and grace. For this, the term "layman" is inadequate; it usually means one who does not practice, or is just an observer. The New Testament is clear at this point; all were called, all were recruits in Christ's cause. Therefore, the ministry must be seen as universal and inclusive of all the relationships of our common life.

**FELLOWSHIP.** A Yokefellow knows he needs the fellowship of other committed Christians; he cannot be a Christian in isolation. He experiences real growth as he participates in small groups of Christians where worship, study, and sharing of experiences are carried on in an atmosphere of Christ's love and forgiveness and mutual acceptance. This, for many, has been the open door to *koinonia* - the New Testament quality of fellowship.

These marks make it clear that the people involved in the fellowship have joined together voluntarily for the promotion of a vital Christianity.