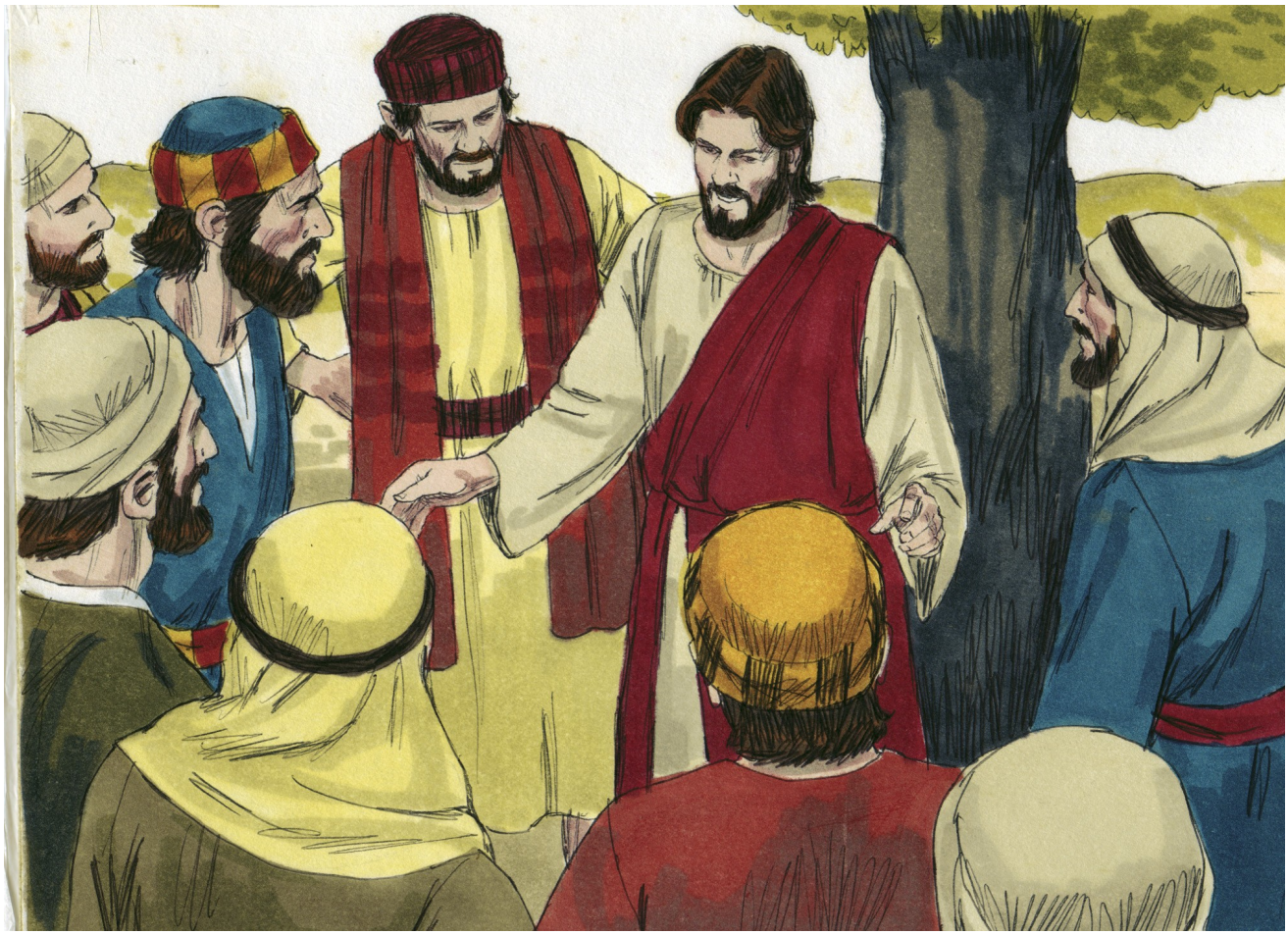
A PUPPET PLAY IN ONE ACT

One Yoke, Over Easy (4 Voices)

Based on Matthew 11:28–30 · Written by Carrie Elderberry



SUITABLE FOR
Ages 5 and up

PERFORMANCE TIME
8–10 minutes

CAST SIZE
4 puppets + 2 live volunteers (optional chicken)

PROPS REQUIRED
A shoulder-yoke with two buckets and 12 weights; a Bible

MAIN THEME
Jesus's yoke is easy not because obeying is effortless, but because the Holy Spirit carries the weight with us.

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v.1.1 · November 2026

To print just the play on its own, print pages 5–9.

PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Synopsis

Two joke-loving kids (CHILD 1 and CHILD 2) insist Matthew 11 tells us to crack an egg on our heads, and two more serious friends (CHILD 3 and CHILD 4) try to explain that a “yoke” isn’t a “yolk.” A VOLUNTEER acts out the weight of trying to keep God's commands alone, as all four children call them out one by one, until the Holy Spirit is the One who makes the burden light. Chicken jokes all around to finish.

Spiritual Concept

We can't keep God's commands by sheer effort—the play makes that visible by loading a volunteer down, commandment by commandment, until they're on their knees. Relief comes only when they ask the Holy Spirit for help, which is the whole point: Jesus's yoke is easy not because obedience is effortless, but because He carries it with us.

Age Suitability

Suitable for ages 5 and up. The chicken-joke section is pure silliness for younger kids; the shoulder-yoke object lesson carries real weight (literally and thematically) for older ones. With four speaking parts, this version is a good fit for a larger group of young puppeteers.

Performance Time

8–10 minutes

CAST & TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Characters (in order of appearance)

CHILD 1 — Loves chicken jokes and teasing.

CHILD 2 — Loves chicken jokes and teasing.

CHILD 3 — More serious, maybe a bit older.

CHILD 4 — More serious, maybe a bit older.

VOLUNTEER 1 — A live (non-puppet) volunteer who wears the shoulder-yoke and is loaded down, commandment by commandment.

VOLUNTEER 2 — A live (non-puppet) volunteer who holds the Bible and loads weights into Volunteer 1's buckets.

CHICKEN — Optional puppet. Non-speaking; clucks around the edges of the scene.

Prop Options

- A “shoulder-yoke” with buckets to hang off of the ends, and 12 weights to load into the buckets. A broom handle worn across the shoulders with two empty buckets will work just fine. A live actor, VOLUNTEER 1, wears the yoke. Another volunteer loads the buckets.
- A Bible
- A CHICKEN puppet, if you have one (optional, but it will add a lot to the play)
- You will need a strong actor for VOLUNTEER 1.

PERFORMANCE NOTES FOR PUPPETEERS

New to puppets? General prep, technique, and voice tips live at gospelpuppets.org/getting-started.

Character Notes

CHILD 1 and CHILD 2's jokes aren't meant to be taken as genuinely not listening—by the end, both admit to caring what Jesus actually meant. Play the early jokes as a comic bit, not as disrespect.

CHILD 3 and CHILD 4 share the “serious” lines; let them be a team, sighing and shouting together where the script has them speak as a pair.

VOLUNTEER 1 doesn't speak until the very end (the ad-libbed cry for help), so the physical comedy of staggering under each weight carries the middle of the play.

Staging

VOLUNTEER 2 drops a weight into the buckets for each commandment —here the four children take turns calling them out, so time each weight to land right as each line is spoken.

The CHICKEN (if used) enters early to cluck around, exits partway through, then reappears for the joke-telling finale—see the script for its cue points.

Reading the Script

CAPS = volume/intensity or emphasis.

Ellipsis (…) = the author's pacing notation.

ONE YOKE, OVER EASY (4 VOICES)

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(Enter CHILDREN. They greet the audience. If you have a CHICKEN, it can cluck around, but don't overdo it.)

CHILD 1: Hey! I've been wondering. Why did Jesus tell us to crack an egg on our HEADS?

CHILD 3: What? Are you crazy? Jesus never said any such thing!

CHILD 2: Oh, yes, He did. We just read about it, in Matthew, chapter 11.

CHILD 4: Honestly, you kids are the limit. Does anyone have a Bible?

(VOLUNTEER 2 holds it up. CHILD 4 is unable to find anything about eggs in the chapter.)

CHILD 4: There is nothing whatsoever about EGGS in that chapter!

CHILD 1: Yes, there is! I'll show you. It's right at the end. It says, "Take My yoke upon you", verse 29. See? Crack an egg, right on your head.

(CHILD 4 looks again.)

CHILD 4: Oh. That's not an egg "yolk". It's a "shoulder yoke".

CHILD 2: *(sarcastically)* Egg on your shoulder, egg on your head. What's the difference?

CHILD 3: It sounds the same, but it's spelled differently! You're thinking Y-O-L-K, like the yolk of an egg, but it's Y-O-K-E, like in the olden days.

CHILD 1: There were eggs in the olden days, too.

CHILD 4: Will you stop with the eggs? The yoke in the Bible goes across your shoulders!

CHILD 2: So, what's the difference? Heads or shoulders, Jesus still wants us to wear an egg upon us.

CHILD 3: *(shouting)* It's not that kind of yolk!

CHILD 1: You know the old riddle? Which came first, the chicken or the egg? So there had to be egg yolks even in the olden days.

CHILD 3 AND 4: *(shouting)* Will you please LISTEN?

CHILD 1 AND 2: We ARE listening!

CHILD 3: *(big sigh)* Ok…The yoke in Matthew 11 is kind of like a long piece of wood. It goes across your shoulders.

(VOLUNTEER 1 comes forward to demonstrate.)

CHILD 4: And you can hang heavy stuff from the ends, stuff that would be too heavy for you to carry, otherwise…

(VOLUNTEER 2 comes forward with some buckets, adds them to the ends of the yoke.)

CHILD 2: *(wasn't listening)* Speaking of yolks, what do you call a mischievous egg?

CHILD 3: *(startled)* You weren't listening to us at all! And eggs are not mischievous!

CHILD 2: It's called a practical YOLKER! Get it? Get it?

CHILD 1: Like practical joker! I get it!

CHILD 4: That is not even funny. Now about the shoulder yoke…

CHILD 2: *(interrupting)* How about this one? What did Snow White call her pet egg?

CHILD 3: She called it DOPEY. You and your dopey chicken jokes!

CHILD 2: No, she called it Egg White. Get it? Snow White and Egg White!

CHILD 1: Snow White/Egg White! Hahahaha!

(Exit CHICKEN.)

CHILD 4: *(exasperated)* So you really don't CARE what Jesus was talking about, do you?

CHILD 1: Actually I do. I know that Jesus said that His burden is light, and we will find rest for our souls. But…

CHILD 3: But what?

CHILD 2: But that shoulder yoke thing sounds heavy to me. And I think being a Christian sounds extremely hard, and no fun at all.

CHILD 1: Right! Just a lot of rules and restrictions. Don't do this, don't do that…

CHILD 3: Wait. Jesus says, “Let me teach you… for my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

CHILD 2: I still say that thing looks too heavy.

CHILD 4: As we learn from Him, we begin to understand what it means to follow Him.

CHILD 1: That’s what I’m talking about! All those rules and regulations! Like, “Be respectful to your father and your mother”—

(VOLUNTEER 2 drops a weight in the buckets for each commandment. VOLUNTEER 1 staggers under each one.)

CHILD 3: “Always tell the truth”

CHILD 2: “Love your neighbor as yourself”

CHILD 4: “Do not kill”

CHILD 1: “Love your enemies”

CHILD 3: “Never steal”

CHILD 2: “Don’t be greedy”

CHILD 4: “Don’t cuss”

CHILD 1: And on and on! “Go to church”

CHILD 2: “Share with those in need”

CHILD 1: “Worship only God…”

CHILD 3: And the hardest one of all—“Be perfect.”

(VOLUNTEER 1 falls to the knees under the weight.)

CHILD 2: Now, how can you tell me that Jesus’s yoke is easy and that His burden is light?

CHILD 1: Yeah, try wearing that thing around all day!

CHILD 4: The Bible says that all we have to do is ask God for help.

CHILD 3: And the Holy Spirit will help us in our weakness.

CHILD 2: The Holy Spirit?

CHILD 3: Right. Jesus knows we can’t please Him all on our own!

CHILD 1: Hey, Volunteer! Ask the Holy Spirit to help you!

VOLUNTEER 1: *(ad-lib, asks for help)* Lord, help! I can’t hold this up! It’s too hard to do all these things!

(VOLUNTEER 1 looks surprised, then stands and smiles.)

VOLUNTEER 1: *(and exits)* Thanks, Lord!

CHILD 2: Now I understand. God never intended for me to try to please Him on my own.

CHILD 1: So as He fills us with His Holy Spirit, the burden becomes light?

CHILD 2: Now I get it. I remember my pastor said something about that. He said God told Paul, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.”

CHILD 4: That’s in Second Corinthians.

CHILD 1: So, I just need to ask God for help? And then the burden is light?

CHILD 3: That’s right. Hey, I have a question for YOU, now!

(CHICKEN appears around the fringes and clucks during the remainder of the play.)

CHILD 1 AND 2: What?

CHILD 3: Why did the chicken lay an egg on the roof?

CHILD 2: I know! She wanted to see an EGGROLL!

(ALL groan.)

CHILD 3: Aw, you knew that one. Well, then, why did the chicken cross the sea?

CHILD 1: To get to the other TIDE!

CHILD 4: Oh you knew that one too! OK, why did the chicken cross the basketball court?

CHILD 1 AND 2: Why?

CHILD 4: Because the referee called a FOWL! Get it?

CHILD 2: Yeah! Called a fowl! Here, chicken, chicken! Now my turn! Why did the chicken cross the playground?

CHILD 3: To get to the other SLIDE!

CHILD 1: Why did the RUBBER chicken cross the road?

CHILD 4: To stretch her legs!

(ALL groan. If you have a rubber chicken, throw it.)

CHILD 3: Why did the chicken stop in the MIDDLE of the road?

CHILD 2: To lay it on the line! OK, last one. Why did the chicken cross the CONSTRUCTION site?

CHILD 3 AND 4: Why?

CHILD 2: She wanted to see somebody lay a BRICK!

(ALL groan.)

ALL: And that’s all for today! You can read more about the Holy Spirit in the Bible!

(ALL bow.)

THE END

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Discussion Questions

1. Why did CHILD 2 think being a Christian sounded “extremely hard, and no fun at all”?
2. What changed the joke-tellers' minds about the yoke being too heavy?
3. What does it mean that God’s “power works best in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9)?
4. Have you ever tried to do the right thing all on your own, without asking God for help? How did that go?
5. What's one “weight” in your own life you could ask the Holy Spirit to help carry?

Related Bible Passages

Primary Text: Matthew 11:28–30 — Jesus invites the weary to come to Him and promises that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Additional Scripture:

- 2 Corinthians 12:9 — “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” (NLT)

Song Suggestions

- “Cares Chorus” — Kelly Willard — https://open.spotify.com/track/7oYF1sq69iKD7hQMyuBSIh
- “Trust and Obey” — St. John's Children's Choir — https://open.spotify.com/track/7BRPpDUcNCZdzRcC1LAA3f
- “Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me” — CityAlight — https://open.spotify.com/track/7sxPwx9sBZVD6LR4oEwnc6

Ministry Context

This play works well for a series on grace, the Holy Spirit, or what it means to follow Jesus—it's a light, joke-heavy opener that lands on a real point about relying on God's strength instead of our own willpower. This four-voice version gives more children a speaking part; for a smaller group, use the two-voice One Yoke, Over Easy. Consider pairing with a short reading of Matthew 11:28–30.