

Matthew 11:28-30: Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Intro: In Matthew 11, we've seen John the Baptist struggle with doubts & questions about Jesus.
- Jesus reported evidence to John's disciples showing **Who He is**, the Messiah, the LORD & God
- The evidences Jesus gave to John's disciples were many of the mighty works He had been doing
- Still many didn't believe but rejected Jesus! Jesus gave stern warnings to people who had seen but rejected Him
- In light of all of this, we might ask the question, "Who then will believe?!" Two weeks ago, we answered this: God has hidden the saving knowledge of Himself from some (the wise and understanding) and revealed the saving knowledge of Himself to others (the children – the humble, those who are dependent on Him): **Matthew 11:25-27:** At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children;" ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

John 3:16; Acts 13:48: when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. **So what should you do? How should you respond?**

Come to Jesus for rest! Come to Jesus for help! Come to Jesus for salvation! Come to Jesus to learn & rest in Him!

Dane Ortlund: (*Gentle And Lowly: The Heart Of Christ For Sinners And Sufferers*): This book is written for the discouraged, the frustrated, the weary, the disenchanted, the cynical, the empty. Those running on fumes . . . Those of us who find ourselves thinking: "How could I mess up that bad again?" It is for that increasing suspicion that God's patience with us is wearing thin. For those of us who know God loves us but suspect we have deeply disappointed Him. Who have told others of the love of Christ yet wonder if – as for us – He harbors mild resentment. Who wonder if we shipwrecked our lives beyond what can be repaired . . . Who have been swept off our feet by perplexing pain and are wondering how we can keep living under such numbing darkness.

1. Come To Me

Leon Morris: Come to me carries on with the thought that it is Jesus only who has access to the Father and to the resources of the Father. It is because he is the only one who knows the Father and because only those to whom he reveals the Father will have knowledge of him that it is so important to give heed to this invitation.

a. The LORD God Almighty says "Come to Me!": **Isaiah 55:1-3:** **Come**, everyone who thirsts, **come** to the waters; & he who has no money, **come**, buy & eat! **Come**, buy wine & milk without money & without price. ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, & your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, & eat what is good, & delight yourselves in rich food. ³ Incline your ear, & **come to me**; hear, that your soul may live; & I will make with you **an everlasting covenant**, my steadfast, sure love for David.

b. Jesus says "Come to Me!": **John 7:37-38:** On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him **come to me** and drink. ³⁸ **Whoever believes in me**, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (**Jesus is the LORD God Almighty who's come in the flesh!**)

1) Coming to Jesus is more than merely searching the Scriptures: **John 5:39-40:** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to **come to me** that you may have life.

2) Coming to Jesus means believing in Him, Who alone fully satisfies: **John 6:35:** Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever **comes to me** shall not hunger, and whoever **believes in me** shall never thirst."

3) Coming to Jesus is only possible through the Father's work in your heart: John 6:44: No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. & I will raise him up on the last day

John 6:45: It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me

4) Coming to Jesus to be His disciple is more important than anything else in this world: Luke 14:26: If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

5) Jesus will never turn away anyone who comes to Him: John 6:37: All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

Derek Thomas: This is the greatest invitation you will ever receive. 1) It meets your greatest need!; 2) It brings you to the greatest Person – the God-Man!; 3) It is the greatest solution to your greatest need!; **GOSPEL!**

c. How do you come to Jesus Christ?: Believe and repent: Believe: John 3:16; Acts 16:31

Repent: Acts 3:19-20: Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰ that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord

John Bunyan: But I am a great sinner, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I am an old sinner, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I am a hard-hearted sinner, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I am a backsliding sinner, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I have served Satan all my days, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I have sinned against light, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I have sinned against mercy, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

But I have no good thing to bring with me, say you. "I will never cast you out," says Christ. [Come to Me!]

2. Come To Me All Who Labor And Are Heavy Laden

a. Come All: This is an invitation to everyone! All ages, all ethnicities, all backgrounds, rich/poor, male/female-all

b. You could be burdened and heavy laden with sin and guilt: Jesus takes all your sin and guilt away!

- **Romans 8:1:** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

- **Jeremiah 31:34:** For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

- **Isaiah 38:17:** for you have cast all my sins behind your back.

- **Micah 7:19:** He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

- **Psalms 103:12:** as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

c. You could be burdened by trying to live the Christian life by works and legalism and not from faith, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in union with Christ, as a forever adopted child of the living God:

- **Luke 11:46:** And he said, "Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers."

- **Acts 15:8-11:** God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, ⁹ and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.

- **Galatians 3:2-3:** Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Dane Ortlund: There are two ways to live the Christian life. You can live it either for the heart of Christ or from the heart of Christ. You can live for the smile of God or from it. For a new identity as a son or daughter of God or from it. For your union with Christ or from it. The battle of the Christian life is to bring your own heart into alignment with Christ's, that is, getting up each morning and replacing your natural orphan mind-set with a mind-set of full and free adoption into the family of God through the work of Christ your older brother, who loved you and gave himself for you out of the overflowing fullness of his gracious heart.

d. You could be burdened by the hardships of life: The toil of school/work/ministry; toil of family; toil of sickness; toil of unbelieving family members & friends; toil of relationships; The toil of suffering, death, & loss.

Dane Ortlund: At age 20 George Matheson (1842-1906) was engaged to be married but began going blind. When he broke the news to his fiancée, she decided she could not go through life with a blind husband. She left him. Before losing his sight he had written two books of theology & some feel that if he had retained his sight he could have been the greatest leader of the church of Scotland in his day. A special providence was that George's sister offered to care for him. With her help, George left the world of academia for pastoral ministry & wound up preaching to 1500 each week, blind. The day came, however, in 1882, when his sister fell in love & prepared for marriage herself. The evening before the wedding, George's whole family had left to get ready for the next day's celebration. He was alone & facing the prospect of living the rest of his life without the one person who had come through for him. On top of this, he was doubtless reflecting on his own aborted wedding day twenty years earlier. It is not hard to imagine the fresh waves of grief washing over him that night. In the darkness of that moment George Matheson wrote this hymn. He remarked afterward that it took him five minutes & that it was the only hymn he ever wrote that required no editing. O love that will not let me go. Heartening hope for you & me:

Hymn: Oh love that will not let me go; I rest my weary soul in thee
I give thee back the life I owe; That in thine ocean depths its flow, May richer, fuller be!
- Oh light that followest all my way; I yield my flickering torch to thee
My heart restores its borrowed ray; That in thy sunshine's blaze its day, May brighter, fairer be!
- Oh joy that seekest me through pain; I cannot close my heart to thee
I trace the rainbow through the rain; And feel the promise is not vain, That morn shall tearless be!
- Oh cross that liftest up my head; I dare not ask to fly from thee
I lay in dust's life's glory dead; And from the ground there blossoms red, Life that shall endless be!

3. I Will Give You Rest

Leon Morris: To all such he says, "I will refresh you." The verb seems not to imply the rest that is the complete cessation from labor, which is made clear when Jesus goes on to speak of his "yoke" of learning, and his "burden." The rest in mind is the rest that enables the worker to go back to the task [or in the very midst of the task] with renewed vigor.

a. The LORD God Almighty gives rest: Exodus 33:14: My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.

- **2 Samuel 7:11:** I will give you rest from all your enemies.

- **Jeremiah 31:25:** For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish.

b. Jesus Christ gives rest: Jesus Christ is the LORD God Almighty come in the flesh! He alone gives true, saving, satisfying, sufficient, deep, and everlasting rest! No other religion or non-religion can give you true, saving rest!

- He gives it! It's a free gift! You can't earn it! You can't work for it! You can't do enough to get it! It's a free gift!

Dane Ortlund: Perhaps, looking at the evidence of your life, you do not know what to conclude except that this mercy of God in Christ has passed you up. Maybe you have been deeply mistreated. Misunderstood. Betrayed by

the one person you should have been able to trust. Abandoned. Taken advantage of. Perhaps you carry a pain that will never heal till you are dead. If my life is any evidence of the mercy of God in Christ, you might think, I'm not impressed. To you I say, the evidence of Christ's mercy toward you is not your life. The evidence of his mercy toward you is his [Christ's life] - [Christ was] mistreated, misunderstood, betrayed, abandoned. Eternally. In your place. If God sent his own Son to walk through the valley of condemnation, rejection, and hell, you can trust him as you walk through your own valleys on your way to heaven. Perhaps you have difficulty receiving the rich mercy of God in Christ not because of what others have done to you but because of what you've done to torpedo your life, maybe through one big, stupid decision or maybe through ten thousand little ones. You have squandered his mercy, and you know it. To you I say, do you know what Jesus does with those who squander his mercy? He pours out more mercy. God is rich in mercy. That's the whole point. That God is rich in mercy means your regions of deepest shame and regret are not hotels through which divine mercy passes but homes in which divine mercy abides. It means the things about you that make you cringe most, make him hug hardest. It means his mercy is not calculating and cautious, like ours. It is unrestrained, flood-like, sweeping, magnanimous [very kind and generous toward an enemy]. It means our haunting shame is not a problem for him, but the very thing he loves most to work with. It means on that day when we stand before him, quietly, unhurriedly, we will weep with relief, shocked at how impoverished a view of his mercy-rich heart we had.

Dane Ortlund: His [God's] power runs so deep that he is able to redeem the very worst parts of our past into the most radiant parts of our future. But we need to take those dark miseries to him.

Isaiah 40:28-31: Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ³⁰ Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹ but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

4. Take My Yoke Upon You, And Learn From Me

D. A. Carson: The “yoke”, put on animals for pulling heavy loads, is a metaphor for the discipline of discipleship . . . discipleship must be to him . . . [learn from Me means] learn from the revelation that I alone impart.

Jesus is saying come under my leadership, my direction, my teaching, my discipleship. Jesus is saying come under me & listen to me & trust me & obey me, be loyal to me above all else, & love me above all else, & imitate me!

D. Platt: Jesus is essentially saying, “Learn what it means to be My disciple, & you will find rest for your soul.”

Philippians 4:6-7: do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 4:11: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies - in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

John Piper: A.-Admit; P.-Pray; T.-Trust; A.-Act; T.-Thank – A.P.T.A.T

5. For I Am Gentle And Lowly In Heart

Dane Ortlund: My dad pointed out to me something that Charles Spurgeon pointed out to him. In the four Gospel accounts given to us in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – eighty-nine chapters of biblical text – there's only one place where Jesus tells us about his own heart.

a. Gentle: Matthew 5:5: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Shai Linne: Meekness is an expression of humility in how we relate to God and to others, which manifests itself in gentleness and strength under control for the benefit and promotion of others.

- **Matt. 21:5:** Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, **humble**, & mounted on a donkey
- **1 Peter 3:4:** let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a **gentle** and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

Dane Ortlund: Meek. Humble. Gentle. Jesus is not trigger-happy. Not harsh, reactionary, easily exasperated. He is the most understanding person in the universe. The posture most natural to him is not a pointed finger but open arms.

b. Lowly: This is a very similar meaning to being humble and gentle.

- **James 4:6:** God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the **humble**.

- **Romans 12:16:** Do not be haughty, but associate with the **lowly**.

Dane Ortlund: The point in saying that Jesus is lowly is that he is accessible. For all his resplendent glory and dazzling holiness, his supreme uniqueness and otherness, no one in human history has ever been more approachable than Jesus Christ. No prerequisites. No hoops to jump through . . . This is who he is. Tender. Open. Welcoming. Accommodating. Understanding. Willing. If we are asked to say only one thing about who Jesus is, we would be honoring Jesus's own teaching if our answer is, gentle and lowly.

Dane Ortlund: The Christian life, from one angle, is the long journey of letting our natural assumption about who God is, over many decades, fall away, being slowly replaced with God's own insistence on who he is. This is hard work. It takes a lot of sermons and a lot of suffering to believe that God's deepest heart is 'merciful and gracious, slow to anger.' The fall in Genesis 3 not only sent us into condemnation and exile. The fall also entrenched in our minds dark thoughts of God, thoughts that are only dug out over multiple exposures to the gospel over many years. Perhaps Satan's greatest victory in your life today is not the sin in which you regularly indulge but the dark thoughts of God's heart that cause you to go there in the first place and keep you cool toward him in the wake of it.

6. And You Will Find Rest For Your Souls

In Jesus you will find rest for your souls. In Jesus you are forgiven! In Jesus you are free! In Jesus you have peace with God! In Jesus you have peace, joy, happiness, & satisfaction! In Jesus who have a secure future of certain & everlasting joy! In Jesus everything works together for your good! In Jesus you are fully known & fully loved!

Jeremiah 6:16: Thus says the LORD: "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls

D. A. Carson: If this is intended to be not just an allusion but a fulfillment passage, then Jesus is saying that "the ancient paths" and "the good way" lie in taking on his yoke because he is the one to whom the OT Scriptures point. That yoke is easy (good, comfortable), and his burden is light. The rest he promises is not only for the world to come but also for this one as well.

7. For My Yoke Is Easy, And My Burden Is Light

D. A. Carson: The contrast is between the burden of submission to the OT in terms of Pharisaic regulation and the relief of coming under Jesus' tutelage as under the authority of [the] gentle Revealer to whom the OT, the ancient paths, truly pointed.

Craig Keener: Jesus' yoke is not lighter because he demands less (5:20), but because he bears more of the load with the burdened.

When you come to Jesus, Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light because His law is written on your heart! You are born again! You have the very Spirit of God dwelling in You to cause You to obey! You are united to Christ, and He helps You carry every burden, so it's light! You are a child of the living God, and He will always help His children. He will care for you, provide for you, protect you, sustain you, keep you, strengthen you, & sustain you!

Dane Ortlund: The Christian life boils down to two steps: 1. Go to Jesus; 2. See #1

Christ Jesus Says, "All Come To Me!"
And From Your Heavy Burdens Flee
Into The Arms Of Christ With Glee
He Bore God's Wrath Upon That Tree
He Died And Rose To Set You Free
And Transform You As You Should Be
Find Rest In Him And Taste And See
His Gentle Lowly Heart For Thee
Our Loving God, The One In Three
Who Gives Us Such A Gracious Plea
In Him Find Rest, He Is The Key
So Praise His Name On Bended Knee
For He's Our All Reality!