

SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

WEEK 7

Jesus promises rest

Matthew 11:20-30



DAY 1

Jesus condemns those who refuse to repent • Matthew 11:20-24

READ

Matthew 11:20-30

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 11:20-24

“Woe!” That is not a word you want to hear! It is a curse, declaring *great sadness or trouble*. In this passage Jesus says it to Chorazin and Bethsaida. Jesus said these two Jewish towns were worse than Tyre and Sidon, two Gentile cities known for their idolatry. Jesus also cursed Capernaum, the town where He did most of His miracles and teaching. He said it was worse than Sodom (Gen 19:1-11)! But how could these three small Jewish towns be that bad? While these towns had not done the same sinful actions as Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, they were guilty of the same root sin: *pride* (Ezek 16:49-50; 28:12, 17). In fact, their pride was even more hateful to God because they had seen miracles that the other cities had not. Yet despite all they had seen, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum refused to believe because they *thought they were good enough*. They were more guilty because they had heard God’s Word many times and yet still rejected the truth (Luke 12:47-48). That is how wicked the sin of pride is.

ASK

1. Which towns did Jesus condemn?
Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, three towns in Galilee where Jesus did most of His ministry.
2. When the Jews saw Jesus’ miracles, did they repent?
No.
3. What did Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum have in common?
They were very proud.
4. How were Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum worse than the Gentile cities?
If the Gentile cities had seen Jesus’ miracles, they would have believed. But the Jews did not.

DISCUSS

1. Are you good enough to earn salvation (Isa 64:6; Rom 3:10-23; Jas 2:10)?
2. Why is it impossible to be proud and to have faith in Jesus at the same time?

DAY 2

Jesus reveals the Father to those who are dependent •
Matthew 11:25–27

READ

Matthew 11:20–30

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 11:25–27

What are little babies like? Infants can't do anything for themselves. They are totally dependent on others to provide everything for them. This is the kind of person God saves. He does not save people like the Jews in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. They trusted in their own wisdom and understanding. Wisdom is not bad, but trusting in human wisdom is bad, because human wisdom cannot understand spiritual things (1 Cor 2:14). This kind of person is unwilling to listen to God, because he thinks he already knows. He thinks he can control his own salvation. In response, Jesus called God "Lord of heaven and earth" to remind the Jews that God controls all things, including salvation. And God has chosen to show Himself only to the humble so that no human will boast in himself, but only in the Lord (1 Cor 1:28–31). The Father has also given control of all things—even salvation—to His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus and the Father are one. So to know God, you must know His Son, for "no one comes to the Father except through [Him]" (John 14:6).

ASK

1. What is wrong with the wisdom of man?
The wisdom of man cannot understand spiritual things.
2. Who is in charge of revealing the truth about Christ and salvation?
God the Father.
3. To what kind of people does God reveal Christ and salvation?
To dependent, humble people, not to the proud.
4. Who is the only one who can make you know God?
Jesus, the Son of God.

DISCUSS

1. What is an infant like? Why does God choose to reveal Himself to those who are like infants? Was there a time when you felt how weak you are, and how dependent you are on God?
2. Why is it foolish to believe there are many ways to God?

DAY 3

Come to Jesus • Matthew 11:28a

READ

Matthew 11:20–30

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 11:28a

If you think you have to earn your own way to heaven, you will likely end up worn out and feeling like a failure. The Jews' self-righteousness was a heavy burden to bear, and perhaps some of the people listening to Jesus were tired of carrying this burden. So He gives an invitation to all those who are exhausted from trying to find God on

their own, who are worn out from endless searching for the truth through human wisdom, who are weary from trying to earn salvation, and who despair of achieving God's standard by their own efforts. Is that you? Are you worn out? If so, then do what Jesus says: "Come to me." Coming to Him means believing in Him (John 6:35). It means coming to a person, not to a law, a church, a tradition, or an idea, but to Jesus Himself. Come to Jesus: enter into a real, personal relationship with Him. Love Him with all your heart, soul, and might (Deut 6:5). Come to Him, and He will freely provide (Isa 55:1).

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. Who does Jesus invite to come to Him?
Everyone who is weary and burdened by trying to get to God his own way.
2. What does Jesus say first?
"Come to me" (Matt 11:28a).
3. What does coming to Jesus mean?
Believing in Jesus. Having a real, personal relationship with Him. Loving Him with all your heart, soul, and might.

DISCUSS 

1. Why is it exhausting to try to find God on our own? Have you come to the end of your own strength?
2. Do you have a growing relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ? What does a growing relationship with God look like?

DAY 4*Take Jesus' yoke upon you • Matthew 11:29a, 30***READ** 

Matthew 11:20–30

EXPLAIN **The truth of Matthew 11:29a, 30**

How can a yoke be easy and light? A **yoke** is a wooden harness that goes over oxen so that they can pull the farmer's plow. Oxen carrying a yoke go where the farmer wants them to go and do what the farmer wants them to do. So when Jesus said, "Take My yoke," He was saying that we should submit to His authority and obey His will. But yokes are for work! How can Jesus say that His yoke is not heavy? First of all, it is light compared to the yoke of Israel's religious leaders. They weighed the people down with man-made laws and expectations. Second, Jesus' commands are not burdensome (1 John 5:3), because they are perfectly designed to help us live the life we were made for. Third, His yoke is light because He helps us carry it. When we take His yoke, we also receive the power of His Spirit to walk according to His commands (Gal 5:16). So His yoke really is easy and light. We should stop chafing against it and instead rejoice to live the way Jesus teaches us to live.

ASK 

1. What does it mean to take Jesus' yoke?
It means submitting to Him, obeying His commands, doing His will.
2. What is a yoke?
A wooden harness that goes over oxen so that they can pull the farmer's plow.
3. How does a yoke picture submission?
It allows the farmer to control and guide his animal.
4. Is Jesus' yoke heavy?
No. His commands are not a burden.

DISCUSS 

1. Why do some people resist Jesus' yoke? Why should we not fear submitting to Jesus' commands?
2. Think of some times this week when you resisted Jesus' yoke. Did it make your life more enjoyable or more miserable (Prov 3:5–6)?

DAY 5

Learn from Jesus • Matthew 11:28b, 29b

READ

Matthew 11:20–30

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 11:28b, 29b

Even when you submit to Jesus, you will still have many flaws. So Jesus says, “Learn from me.” That is a good thing, because He is the best teacher ever. He is so patient and gentle. He does not expect you to be perfect, but He does expect you to be growing. All He asks is that you be willing to learn. To help you learn, He gives you His Word (1 Pet 2:2), His people (Col 3:16), and His Spirit (1 John 2:27). If you let Him teach you, He promises to give you “rest.” That does not mean life will be easy. Expect life as a Christian to be hard. What Jesus promises is rest for your soul. No matter what storms of life rage around you, you will be able to say, “It is well with my soul.” Instead of resisting and struggling, you will have peace with God (Rom 5:1). Instead of worrying and striving by your own strength, you will have confidence in Christ to do His work in you (Phil 1:6; 4:13). Then one day, you will enjoy perfect rest with Him in heaven forever (Rev 14:13).

ASK

1. What kind of a teacher is Jesus?
He is gentle and patient. He knows it will take you time to learn to live His way.
2. If you come to Jesus, what will He give you?
Jesus will give me rest.
3. Does that mean life as a Christian will be easy?
No. Expect life as a Christian to be hard. What Jesus promises is rest for your soul.
4. When will Christians enjoy perfect, complete rest?
In heaven when they are in the presence of Jesus forever.

DISCUSS

1. What can you do to learn from Jesus? How do you respond to what He teaches you in the Bible? How do you respond when other Christians correct you?
2. Does there ever come a time in this life when a Christian is finished growing and learning (2 Cor 3:18)? What is something you need to work on learning now?

NEXT WEEK

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees

Matthew 12:22–37

