

Weekly Devotional  
April 22, 2020

*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28 ESV)*

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We are now into our sixth week of not being able to gather with each other. After a month-and-a-half of sheltering in place, are you beginning to feel tired of not being able to see the friends you love... *in person*? Just today, I ran into a beloved friend at our local grocery store. And while I was overjoyed to see my friend face-to-face, I was saddened that I could not extend a hug. I could not even see their smile, hidden behind their face mask! I walked away thinking, "I'm tired of COVID-19!"

Perhaps you, too, have felt similar feelings. At this point, you may have even felt sadness, despair, or depression. And it is wearing you down. Like the Jews of Jesus' day who were oppressed by the burden of religious legalism, our pandemic has oppressed you with the burden of solitude, not necessarily because you are physically alone, but because you have been forced—for everyone's sake—to stay away from friends, classmates, teammates, and church family.

*Are you weary?*

This week be comforted by Jesus, who gently invites you to approach him and reassures you with his promise of rest. Turn to him; give him your troubled heart (1 Peter 5:7); let him be your stronghold (Psalm 9:9), for in the comfort of his presence there is true rest. Ultimately, the day will come when God's people will be in his heavenly presence and the blessing of eternal rest will be realized. But in the meantime, his spiritual presence today assures you of rest from the effects of this pandemic and from the brokenness of this world. *Go to him.*

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Questions:

- In what ways has this pandemic weighed on you?
- How does the presence of God comfort you and give you rest from the burdens you might feel?
- What are ways you could seek Jesus this week?
- Read Psalm 34:17-18. Spend some time in prayer thanking the Lord for his nearness.