

Rest for the Weary

Matthew 11:25-30

January 14th, 2018

Big idea: Rest for your weary soul is found in Jesus, who alone reveals the Father.

Intro –

Today we come to one of Jesus' most famous invitations. It's an invitation that ripples down through history to us because it is still an open invitation. It's an invitation that we resonate with because it hits a need that is universal to humanity.

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

Throughout the Word God is inviting people to come.

Isaiah 45:22 "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.

Isaiah 55:1-3 "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost. ² "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance. ³ "Incline your ear and come to Me.

Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

Parallel of coming and believing

Let the one who is thirsty come, let the one who is hungry come, let the one who is weary come and I will give him rest.

He is a pursuing God. He is an inviting God. He puts a finger on the need in our souls that He alone can satisfy.

We will look at this passage in three parts:

The Father's pleasure in saving, extending rest to humble, dependant people.

The Son's role in revealing truth as He wills.

The invitation for those who are weary and heavy-laden to come and find rest.

Our emphasis will be on the third part.

1. It pleases the Father to save **humble**, dependant people. (11:25-26)
 - a. "At this time" – loosely refers to the same time period, more specifically connects the themes.
 - i. The previous section describes "this generation" and the cities that rejected Jesus in the face of evidence.
 - ii. They rejected John and Jesus for opposite reasons (John was too serious and distant, wouldn't eat or drink with them. Jesus was eating and drinking with sinners), indicating the problem was internal. The cities rejecting Jesus even after many miracles in their presence. They liked the miracles, didn't want to bow the knee though.

- iii. So who can come to Him? Who will respond to Him? Why will they respond? If miracles don't do it, what will?
 - 1. If it isn't enough for him to touch an eye and the cornea regenerates, the pupil clears, and sight returns, what would it take?
 - 2. It would take God. He must open their spiritual eyes.
 - 3. **Acts 16:14** A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.
- b. What Jesus is about to say is reason to praise God – this is good that God operates this way, this is reason to be glad. So what does He praise God for?
 - i. God has hidden Jesus' message from one group and revealed it to another.
 - ii. Why is that reason to praise?
- c. The "wise and intelligent" often reject Jesus' simple message.
 - i. Not an indictment of wisdom, intelligence, or education. The Bible encourages wisdom – there's a whole book about it!
 - 1. There is much that can be learned through a good education. Intelligent people can be a blessing to society in their contribution.
 - 2. His point is that their education and intelligence will not open the door to heaven for them. They can't rely on their superior knowledge.
 - ii. Those who pride themselves on the knowledge and wisdom were often the ones who couldn't see Jesus for who He really was.
 - iii. Doesn't mean that none who are "wise and intelligent" will come to Christ.
 - iv. **1 Corinthians 1:26-27, 29** For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷ but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. . . ²⁹ so that no man may boast before God.
 - v. It means that if they come it will be on the same basis as the lowest come – humility, simple trust – not on the basis of their superior intellect so that they have something to boast about.
 - vi. Not an act of injustice but of judgment (Carson)
- d. The humble and dependant see their need and respond to Jesus.
 - i. "infants" is a good literal translation – it refers to babies that are completely dependent. They can do nothing on their own. He is using it as a contrast to the wise and intelligent.
 - 1. **Matthew 18:3-4** "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
 - ii. God plans things this way. He never intended access to the kingdom to be only for those who are super smart.

1. What would happen if there were an IQ test to become a Christian? To understand what Jesus is teaching?
 2. Arrogance! Superiority! Pride! Looking down on non-Christians because they aren't "smart enough" to respond to the gospel. It would only inflate man-centered ego.
 - iii. On the other hand, if the offer is extended to all but God must open the eyes for people to respond and it requires humility, then there is no place for arrogance, pride, and superiority.
 - iv. Illustration of King Louis XIV of France
 1. Died after a reign of 72 years. He had called himself "the Great," and was the King who made the famous statement, "I am the state!" His palace at Versailles was the most magnificent in Europe, and his funeral was equally spectacular. As his body lay in a golden coffin, orders were given that the cathedral should be very dimly lit with only a special candle set above his coffin, to dramatize his greatness. At the memorial, thousands waited in hushed silence. Then Bishop Massillon began to speak; slowly reaching down, he snuffed out the candle and said, "Only God is great."
 2. Because the initiative comes from God not the wisdom or intelligence of men, the gospel makes clear that only God is great.
 - v. God opens the eyes of those He chooses in a way that pleases Him, and Jesus finds this reason to praise God.
2. Jesus reveals truth to those whom He wills. (11:27)
- a. "All things" = all knowledge in this passage
 - i. Although he does have all authority after His resurrection (Matt. 28:18)
 - ii. **Colossians 1:16** all things have been created through Him and for Him.
 - b. Insight into the interaction of the Father and Son in Trinitarian relationship
 - i. The Father handed over all things to the Son
 - ii. The Father has exclusive knowledge of the Son
 - iii. The Son has exclusive knowledge of the Father
 1. We can know some things about God but the level of knowledge by the Son is a different category and degree – but this seems to go even stronger than that.
 2. Jews in OT knew some about God, but this revelation and knowledge that Jesus has is far superior and intimate.
 - c. The initiative in these verses is coming from God.
 - i. God is revealing/concealing as He wills, as pleases Him.
 - ii. The next section flips the coin over and says to people, "Come! All of you!"
3. All who are weary and heavy-laden can find rest in Him. (11:28-30)
- a. Continues the thought that it is Jesus alone that has access to the Father.
 - b. How do we come? What type of weariness does He have in mind? What rest does He offer?
 - c. The invitation

- i. He says, “Come to ME”
 - 1. We can deal directly with Jesus, we must deal directly with Jesus. The command is simple.
 - a. What you are looking for is here!
 - 2. Notice it is come to Jesus, not come to church. If you think you will find rest at church, you’ll be disappointed. I’m not that great. I’m not a priest, you don’t need a spiritual mediator. But Jesus can give rest.
 - 3. **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus,
- ii. **John 6:35** Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.
 - 1. Parallel of coming and believing
- d. The condition
 - i. It is for the weary and heavy-laden – ALL who are weary and heavy-laden.
 - ii. Not the wise, learned, self-sufficient, or self-righteous
 - iii. There are different kinds of weariness.
 - 1. Weariness from a long day at a hard job that you love and are good at. Different kind of weariness from a long day at a job you are failing at.
 - 2. Weariness from staying up late with a newborn daughter. There is a different kind of weariness from staying up late worrying about the growing lump in your child’s abdomen.
 - iv. Weary with life’s burden.
 - 1. **1 Peter 5:7** casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.
 - v. Weary with shame over past and present failure.
 - 1. Regret over way you have parented, college freshmen who already feel like they have blown it first semester, person wracked with guilt over a divorce that happened 10 years ago
 - vi. Weary with fear and anxiety that they can’t even pinpoint or explain away. They just find themselves trapped in a fog of worry.
 - vii. Weary because they are heavy-laden with the demands of the religious leaders.
 - 1. **Matthew 23:4** "They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.
 - 2. This is what man-made religion does. It heaps expectations on people and either leads to pride if they follow the expectations or shame and discouragement if they can’t live up to it.
 - 3. The person who is weary who says, “I just can’t be good enough!”
 - 4. That’s who the invitation is for.
- e. The Promise – I will give you rest
 - i. In this passage I love 2 things – whom He invites and what He invites them to.

1. Whom – not the great, powerful, wise, but the weary and heavy-laden.
 - a. The invitation is open to all, but it is exclusive to those who see their need. They are the only ones who will come.
 - b. The self-righteous and proud will not come.
 2. To what – rest!
 - a. But not vacation, sleeping in, armchair rest. We can think of rest as doing nothing . . . but that's leads to use feeling restless.
 - b. It's rest that comes from being a servant and a student of Jesus.
 - c. Rest from endless fear about the future, rest from striving to please others, rest from wondering if you have done enough for God to accept you.
- f. The rest comes with a yoke
- i. Yoke – instrument for work that made a load or burden easier to carry
 - ii. He doesn't promise escape but he promises the right equipment
 1. Like backpacking with a pack that fits right vs. one that is overpacked, top heavy, and poorly set up.
 - iii. There is a yoke of legalism that becomes heavy to bear.
 1. **Acts 15:10-11** "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹ "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are."
 2. **Galatians 5:1** It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.
 3. When rules are added to scripture, the expectations can suffocate and confuse people.
 - a. Don't drink this, don't eat that, don't dress this way
 - iv. His yoke is discipleship and discipleship is characterized by learning from Him.
 1. As winter sets in, there are plenty of adds for cruise ships to warm places, vacations on the beach – that seems like rest! As one man said, "if you're young, fit, slim, and happy."
 - a. You know what goes with you on your vacations when you try to rest – your problems! You know what is waiting for you when you return – your problems!
 2. Rest in Him is not found by casting off all expectations and morality. That only makes a person a slave to their own desires.
 3. But when rightly understood and applied, His ways are easy and light.
 4. You can't conclude that Jesus has no expectations of His disciples if you read through the Sermon on the Mount.
- g. Rest does not mean freedom from exertion or effort.

- i. **Colossians 1:28-29** We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. ²⁹ For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.
- ii. **Philippians 1:27** Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;
- h. You might say, “but I’m a Christian. Why do I feel so weary and heavy-laden?”
 - i. Are you working for acceptance or from acceptance?
 - 1. Do you need to circle back around to the gospel and remind yourself that the bedrock upon which you stand is marked “Christ?”
 - ii. Are you adding man-made expectations that exceed God-given rules?
 - iii. Responsibility/concern chart
- i. The invitation requires a response – come to me, take My yoke



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2. Jesus reveals truth to those whom He wills. (11:27)

1 John 2:23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

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1 Timothy 4:7-8 On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; ⁸ for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.

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