



I Will Give You Rest – August 25, 2019

²⁸ Come to Me, all you 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.” (Matthew 11:28-30, NKJV).

Let us pray.

Sandy and I have just returned from vacation and we had a wonderful time. We went up into the mountains. We visited family. We ate together and played cards together. I *should* be quite rested. I am rested in some ways, but in others I am very weary.

You know, being a pastor is not an easy job. It is especially difficult when I try to do it alone without the Lord's help. I am a doer. I am an achiever. For most of my life if I put myself wholly into something I can get the result that I want to get. When I began my ministry here at Union Grove, I confessed my self-dependency to the Lord and I told Him, "Unless you build this house Lord, I will be building it in vain. It is Your work and You are responsible for what happens here."

But friends, I have a little confession. Little by little, day by day, I continually try to default back to my own efforts. I begin to blame myself if some people are not very faithful about coming to services. I wonder what I can do or say to make folks be more consecrated in their attendance. I begin to think that it is my lack of communicating clearly if someone rejects the gospel. I experience great pain as I shepherd my sheep. I never had much empathy until God called me to pastor a congregation. When you all go through hardships, I think I sometimes mistakenly believe that you might give up on God if I don't jump in to help God out. Don't get me wrong, most of all of the acts of service and kindness that I do for this congregation have been prayed over and done because I feel God wants me to do them. The error is not in doing them. The error is in believing (if only for a moment) that God really needs my help. I know this is crazy, but it is my confession and I am speaking to you from my heart. I wonder what I can do to help you know how much God loves you. I want each of you to never give up, and I want you to trust in Him and in His goodness. He has a plan for each of your lives. I keep forgetting this and I tend to shield you from the hurts of life; maybe like a parent protecting a child.

When I do this sort of thing, I become a little depressed because the burden is too heavy for me to carry. How can I carry my own burdens, the burdens of another person, or the burdens of

this whole congregation? I grow worried, weary, and worn when I do this so it is very evident to me that Jesus is talking to me in the passage I have just read in Matthew 11.

REREAD THE VERSE: ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you 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.*” (Matthew 11:28-30, NKJV).

This is a life-changing verse. It is a life-changing concept. In these words we find a secret treasure of the Lord. This is the very heart of a restful trust-filled life. This is the heart of a Jesus dependent life.

Let's take a quick pass at the verses and then we'll go deeper:

We first see the words "**Come to Me.**" This is the invitation. Jesus is inviting, but who is He inviting?

Then we read "**All You.**" That invitation is to each of us individually and separately. It is a personal invitation to me and to you. But what is the condition of whom He is inviting?

"**All you who are weary and burdened.**" Why? This sorts out exactly why he calls us to come. It qualifies who is invited.

"**And I will give you rest.**" This is what He invites us to enjoy. It is the promise that He is making.

He then couples the invitation with an odd statement. He tells us, "**Take my yoke upon you.**" That is the instruction that He gives each of us.

"**For I am gentle and humble in heart.**" This talks about how He will treat us when we come to Him, regardless of why we are this mess and are coming to Him. So what can He give us?

"**You will find rest for your souls.**" This is the promised result of our coming to Him. What benefit will we receive if we can do this?

"**My yoke is easy and my burden is light.**" This explains the great benefits of getting into harness with Him. Let's go deeper with this now.

Let's look at this with a Hebrew mind. PaRDeS is an acrostic which can take us to the deeper meanings and the mysteries of God. Level 1 (P'shat) sounds like an agricultural lesson in how to put two oxen in a yoke. But level 2 (Remez) gives us the hint that there is something way, way deeper going on here. Level three (D'rash) uncovers all the things Jesus might have been saying and could have been saying. Let's work our way to the Sud which is the 4th level of the

revelation and mysteries of God. This is the mystery of how this can apply to our lives and change what we are experiencing on earth.

So, what is Jesus really saying to us?

1 **"Come to me."** - It is a call or a shout out to people who are going through a time of weariness and difficulty. Why does Jesus call us to "come to Him?" I think because often when we're worried, weary, and worn we run to anything and everything except to Him. It is in our nature to try to fix whatever the problem is. Jesus sets the solution to our weariness in motion by saying, "come to me."

Jesus does not say come to religion. Jesus does not say come when you're all cleaned up. Jesus does not even say, "Come to church." Jesus is simply saying, "Come to Me." Did you know you can come to church and not come to Jesus? Many people have come here, listened to the sermon, fellowshiped, etc, but they leave unchanged. Why? To repeat Rabbi Daniel's message last week, all they remember is the jokes, the music, and "the wonderful tuna fish sandwiches eaten on the shores of the Sea of Galilee." They've come into this sanctuary, but they have not come to meet Jesus.

Coming to church is a wonderful thing to do, but it is not the answer of meeting your deepest need or giving rest to your weary soul. Coming to Jesus is the answer.

Come is an imperative. That means that it is an order. It is one of the few things we're told to do to get the burdens off of our own backs. It is an action that we do. We are not talking about coming to pray. We are not talking about coming to sing. We are not talking about coming to Sunday School. We are talking about coming to Jesus. Coming means to "embrace Him." It is not coming to listen. It is coming to put your life, your hopes, your desires, and your wishes into His hands. It is letting go and letting God take control of your destiny and your life. If you can change something you're worried about then change it. If you can't change what you're worried about, you will either give it to Jesus or you'll destroy yourself worrying over it.

2 **"All you"** - There's a lot of people that won't come to Jesus because they don't think the invitation is for them. They think they are not worthy. They don't feel that they deserve God's help. They feel that they are not cleaned up enough to come to Him.

Many especially feel this way when they feel they've gotten themselves into the problems and messes to start with. The thought is: "If I got myself into this then I need to get myself out of this, and I am not worthy to ask God to rescue me." This verse tells us that it doesn't matter who or what caused the problem. He says the answer is "come to me." Yes, we really do cause most of our problems, but that doesn't matter to God. If we think about what WE did to get into this shape then maybe we're thinking too much about ourselves.

The reality is that none of us deserve ANYTHING GOOD FROM GOD. We come because the invitation is made to all of us. "Come to me ALL OF YOU." And unto whom is He reaching out?

3 Those who are "heavy laden." - (That means loaded and weighed down.) That's why we come. We come when there's something on our hearts or our shoulders that we just don't have the strength to carry. It is when we are out of options. We are out of resources. We are out of steam. We grow weary when we carry things that we shouldn't be carrying. I will confess to this congregation that I am the worst one in the room about carrying things I shouldn't be carrying.

We do this all of the time. Sometimes we haul around spiritual loads on our backs. That's legalism. We become convinced or convicted that we have to do this or that to be a "good Christian" or to be accepted by God and others in the group. That kind of burden is a burden we just can't bear.

We become burdened and weary from: temptation in our lives, hardships, and difficulties. As a pastor, it becomes wearisome to me. I wish for, hope for, and pray for deliverance in not only my own life, but also in your lives. Some of us become burdened by "besetting sins." Those are the sins that just won't seem to go away. Jesus is calling us to take his yoke. That means to let Him have authority and control over us. It means to have Him be the guiding force in our lives. And to let Him lead comes with a great promise!

4 The promise is Him saying, "I will give you rest." - I have told you all that we are a three part being. We are body, soul, and spirit. We know how to rest our bodies, but we are not very good at knowing how to rest our spirits and our souls.

The soul contains our intellect and our emotions. I think that's the part that becomes the most weary and tired. It gets so worn that we begin to feel like we're just hanging on to the roller coaster of life, or better yet, we're just hanging on. We long for rest that Jesus promises, and He truly does promise rest for our souls. So what exactly is this rest that He promises?

That rest is one of the first words we ever see in the Bible in Genesis chapter 2. We are told that after the six days of creation, on the seventh day God "rested." What does it mean? We think of rest as doing nothing, but that is not God's definition of rest. Rest is true Shalom. It is when all is balanced. All is paid in full. All is taken care of. When it is finished. When the six days of creation had taken place, and when all the world was fulfilled and finished, God was contented. He was at rest.

It is the kind of rest that David speaks about in Psalm 23. 'The Lord is my shepherd. I will not be in want or in need of ANYTHING. He makes me to lie down in green pastures and He leads me beside still waters...that means He gives my soul all the spiritual nourishment that it needs. And then David says it, "HE RESTORETH MY SOUL!" Hallelujah. That is what He wants to do in each of our lives.

5 Jesus then commands us to "take His yoke upon us." - What is the yoke of Jesus? I think it is an agricultural way of saying to put ourselves into harness with Him. It is a way of

saying, "Lord, I now put myself under Your authority and under Your direction to guide me in my life." You know that some have the idea that God is the "Big bear in the air" that's going to beat up on them and hit them with a stick. However, Jesus is gentle. He is humble. He will guide us gently if we allow Him to do so. He is never harsh, and He is humble. He does not guide us by making us feel foolish, dumb, or worthless. He who is creator of the whole universe wants to guide us softly and tenderly if we will let Him. How does that happen?

It happens when we trust Him, when we come to Him. When we desire HIS DESIRE for our lives and not our own desires for our lives. We will ALWAYS BE RESTLESS if we are directing ourselves instead of having His yoke upon us. Why is this? It is because we are fallen creatures. Jesus told us last week in the Parable of the Sower how it is that we end up so burdened.

*¹⁸ Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word,
¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful." (Mark 4:18-19, NKJV).*

The thorns are the cares of this world. Those are our cars that break down, our air conditioners that go caput, our childrens' failures, our failures, or the disorder of our stuff. It's the mold on the sheetrock, the nails that were never driven in just right, or the unfinished fence. It's also the deceitfulness of riches. How are riches deceitful? They are deceitful because they give us an illusory promise of rest. They do not really bring us rest. They bring us a little superficial security, but that's about it. Unfortunately, the "desire for other things" is always there. I've laughed with some of you and spoken with you about whatever we do, accomplish, or have, and we're always telling the Lord in our hearts, "Lord, I just want one more thing." That last thing will never give us rest because only Jesus will give us rest.

The Rabbi put it this way, "Be responsible, but don't be too responsible." He was telling us to take care of things as best we can, but leave the outcome up to God.

6 Jesus says "my yoke is easy and my burden is light." - How can it be easy and light? It's easy and light because IT'S HIS AND NOT MINE! IT'S HIS AND NOT YOURS!

If I am fulfilled and I am full, I am resting. I am not working and restless. I am resting in Him. David knew what it meant to find that rest in God. God put the idea of rest into the whole of creation, but you'll never find that complete rest in this life and in this world. That is because of sin. It only increases our restlessness when we chase the things of the world. We are desperate to be filled and be complete and be restful, but instead we go into the world and we do a giant laundry list of what the world tells us to do and then there's ALWAYS SOMETHING MISSING. There always will be something missing outside of Jesus. Turn to Him today and find a peace that surpasses what the world can give. Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.