

Jesus Christ – King of the Jews #30

Invitation to Comfort

Matt 11:28-30

Introduction:

1. We saw last week that Jesus referred to His generation as a childish generation
 - a. It was a critical generation with many fault-finders who could not be pleased
 - b. He said that it was a generation that was indifferent to Him
 - c. Jesus called His generation a blind generation
2. And yet, Jesus invites that generation to come to Himself
3. It is that invitation that we examine tonight
4. This invitation spoke to everybody, and it speaks to anyone today who wants to hear
 - a. It speaks to people of any color – belief - circumstance
 - b. It speaks to those addicted to drugs or alcohol or gambling
 - c. It speaks to people who go to church every Sunday
5. Paul Harvey tells a modern day parable about a religious skeptic →

I. Two Kinds of People Invited

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden...

- The Master addresses those facing *extreme weariness*.
- He also addresses those facing *extreme pressure*.

A. Those Who Labor

1. Labor is wearisome toil, work to the point of exhaustion
2. Weary is present tense – continual weariness
3. In Jesus' day, rabbinical teachings had become so massive, demanding and all-encompassing that they prescribed standards and formulas for virtually every human activity
 - a) *It was impossible to learn all the traditions, let alone keep them*
 - b) *To keep from breaking the Sabbath, Rabbis came up with 1521 things not permissible on Sabbath*
 - (1) Jews could not rescue a drowning person on the Sabbath day
 - (2) Knots could be untied but only if it took one hand, if it took two hands that was work and was not permitted
 - (3) If a man's ox fell into a ditch, he could get him out. If a man fell into a ditch, he had to stay there
 - (4) You could put vinegar on food on the Sabbath, but one could not put vinegar on an aching tooth on the Sabbath
 - (5) Taylors were not allowed to take their needles home on Friday as a precaution and scribes could not take home their pens on
 - (6) A woman was forbidden to look in a mirror on the Sabbath lest she see a gray hair and pluck it out for this would be "shearing" or work.
 - (7) One class of work which was forbidden was the carrying of a burden but what was a "burden?" Well, they conceded that a man could lift his child on the Sabbath but not if his child had a stone in his pocket because then he would indeed be bearing a burden.
 - (8) The Essenes, that very conservative sect of Jews who lived in the desert and wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls, would not go to the bathroom on the Sabbath.
 - (9) Even healing was forbidden. In fact, if someone got ill or injured, steps could be taken to keep the man from getting worse, but it was not permitted to do something that would cure him or make him better.
4. Here is another person who has been trying his best to please God by his works but he can't
 - a) *He is doing the best that he can*
 - b) *He is doing all that he knows to please God*
 - c) *He is trying his best to obey the Ten Commandments*
 - d) *He still messes up and breaks a commandment*
 - e) *He is weary and tired and is still not going to heaven*

Paul Harvey told a modern parable about a religious skeptic who worked as a farmer. One raw winter night the man heard an irregular thumping sound against the kitchen storm door. He went to a window and watched as tiny, shivering sparrows, attracted to the warmth inside, beat in vain against the glass.

The old farmer was touched and bundled himself up and trudged through the fresh snow to open the barn door for the struggling birds. He turned on the lights and tossed some hay in the corner. But the sparrows, which had scattered in all directions when he emerged from the house, hid in the darkness, afraid. The man tried various tactics to try to get them into the barn. He laid down a trail of saltine cracker crumbs to direct them into the barn. He tried circling behind the birds to drive them towards the barn. Nothing worked. To the birds he was a huge, alien creature and he terrified them. The birds did not understand that he only wanted to help.

The farmer went back into his house and watched the sparrows through a window. As he stared, a thought hit him like lightning from a clear blue sky: If only I could become a bird – one of them- just for a few moments. Then I wouldn't frighten them so much. I could show them the way to warmth and safety. At that moment another thought hit him. He finally grasped the very reason that Jesus was born. He became one of us to show us the way

B. Those Who are Heavy Laden

1. Heavy laden is perfect tense indicating past loading down the result of which continues to that day
2. The burden of sin weighs heavily on people
 - a) *Here is one who is burdened with his sin*
 - b) *He does the best that he can but he is still a sinner*
 - c) *This brings about a sense of fear, anxiety, doubts and hopelessness*
3. Here is one loaded down with heavy and painful experiences which we all, sooner or later, have to carry

II. Two Invitations

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

A. Invitation to Salvation - "Come unto me"

1. Some of the first words that we heard were...
 - a) *"Come here!"*
 - b) *"Come to daddy or mommy!"*
 - c) *I see a parent dangling a shiny baby toy and saying to that toddler, "Come on, come to mommy!"*
2. Are you trusting in something other than Christ to get you to heaven? Then you need to come.
 - a) *Trusting in your works and deeds*
 - b) *Trusting in your church membership*
 - c) *Trusting in your baptism*
 - d) *Trusting in keeping the ten commandments*
3. He said "Come unto me"
 - a) *Not "come to my teaching" or "come to my miracles"*
 - b) *Not come to a creed, a church, a ritual, a pastor, a priest, or any other human means*
4. Jesus' call to come to Him implies that He is accessible
 - a) *He would not invite you if He was not accessible*
 - b) *It is your responsibility to call upon the Lord, to ask His forgiveness, to repent of sins, to come to Him*
5. Jesus' words here are different from the words of religion.
 - a) *Religion says do, try, hope, work*
 - b) *But Jesus says come.*
6. Jesus calls to Himself all those who are weary from trying to find God and please God in their own resources
7. Jesus calls those who are exhausted from trying to save themselves
8. Jesus' call to come to Him implies that people are away from Him – "Come" is seen all through the Bible
 - a) *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).*
 - b) *"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1).*
 - c) *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).*
9. If you are saved today, then there was once a time when you had not come

BYZ **Matthew 11:28** Δεῦτε πρὸς με πάντες οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι, καὶ γὰρ ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς.

Come unto me (deute pros me). Matthew 11:28-30 is not in Luke and are among the special treasures of Matthew's Gospel. No sublimer words exist than this call of Jesus to the toiling and the burdened (pephortismenoi, perfect passive participle, state of weariness) to come to him. He towers above all men as he challenges us. "I will refresh you" (k'ago anapausō hūmas). Far more than mere rest, rejuvenation. The English slang expression "rest up" is close to the idea of the Greek compound ana-pauō. It is causative active voice.

BYZ **Matthew 11:29** Ἄρατε τὸν ζυγὸν μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ μάθετε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, ὅτι πρᾶός εἰμι καὶ ταπεινὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ· καὶ εὐρήσετε ἀνάπαυσιν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν.

B. Invitation to Service - "Take my yoke upon you"

1. This is a result of practical faith
2. This is the call given only to those who have obeyed the first invitation
3. A **yoke** was made of wood, hand-hewn to fit the neck and shoulders of the particular animal that was to wear it in order to prevent chafing.
4. The **yoke** was part of the harness used to pull a cart, plow or mill beam and was the means by which the animal's master kept it under control and guided it in useful work.
5. A yoke is for service
6. His yoke involves...
 - a) *His will*
 - b) *His rule*
 - c) *His discipline*

BYZ **Matthew 11:30** Ὁ γὰρ ζυγός μου
χρηστός, καὶ τὸ φορτίον μου
ἐλαφρόν ἐστιν.

III. Two Rests

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

A. A Given Rest - "I will give you rest"

1. This is the rest we find after trusting Christ
 - a) *This is the rest of faith and pardon*
 - b) *This is the rest of a quieted conscience*
 - c) *A woman opened her refrigerator and saw a rabbit sitting in it. She asked the rabbit why he was sitting in her refrigerator. The rabbit replied, "This refrigerator is a Westinghouse, isn't it?" The woman answered that it was. "That's what I am doing. I'm 'westing.'"*
2. Spiritually man is always in a state of unrest until he comes to rest in Jesus
 - a) *He might be trying to work his way to heaven*
 - b) *He is burdened by continual works*
3. Jesus offers us rest in salvation
 - a) *Rest is cessation from action, motion, labor or exertion - we stop trying to earn our salvation*
 - b) *Rest is freedom from that which worries or disturbs - as God gives us freedom from cares and burdens that rob us of peace and joy*
 - c) *Rest is fixed and settled and to be in Christ is to rest, secure in our eternal destiny in Christ. We rest from the uncertainty of running from philosophy to philosophy, from religion to religion, from guru to guru hoping to discover truth, peace, happiness and eternal life*
4. This rest is a resting up
 - a) *This rest is not a sit back and take it easy kind of rest*
 - b) *It is resting for renewed service, it is rejuvenation*
5. This rest is a promised rest
 - a) *No king or president can offer it*
 - b) *No engineer can manufacture it*
 - c) *No billionaire can purchase it*
6. Jesus, who cannot lie, says, "I'll give it to you."
 - a) *Not, "I'll show you rest."*
 - b) *Not, "I'll tell you about this rest."*
 - c) *Not, "Rest that you can earn if you work hard enough"*
7. John and Charles Wesley →

John and Charles Wesley were very religious young men. They attended every worship service, fasted Wednesdays and Fridays, had morning and evening devotions and prayer times. During one period of time John even sold his shoes and went barefoot so he could give to the poor. John Wesley was a missionary to the colonies and worked for a year or so in Savannah, Georgia. However, John was not at rest with God. It was several months after returning from the colonies that he was saved while reading a commentary by Martin Luther on the book of Romans. John Wesley had to lay down his labors and the burden of self-righteousness to come to Jesus to obtain this given rest.

B. A Found Rest - "Ye shall Find rest for your soul"

1. This is more the result of practical obedience
2. Given vs Found
 - a) *Given rest is given in pardon - found rest is found in the new yoke / burden*
 - b) *Given rest is given through the work of Christ; found rest is copying His life*
 - c) *Given rest is from Christ coming to us; found rest is from Christ going out of us*
 - d) *Given rest is from our coming to Him; found rest is our going with Him*
 - e) *Given rest is immediate and eternal; found rest is progressive and temporary*
3. Load of service - "Take my yoke upon you"
 - a) *The yoke is a harness put on oxen or other farm animals to enable them to pull some farm implement*
 - b) *As a worker in the carpenter shop, Jesus probably fashioned yokes for use by farmers*
 - c) *The yoke is a load, and it also attaches the laborer to the load*
 - d) *Taking the yoke not only involves a load, but it also involves commitment*
 - e) *In NT times, a pupil who submitted himself to the guidance of a teacher was described as taking on the yoke of that teacher. Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you"*
 - f) *This yoke is the yoke of service for Christ - every Christian is given a yoke of service*
 - g) *What a privilege to serve with Christ and to serve Christ*
 - h) *Getting under the yoke involves submission*
 - i) *Once the yoke is upon you then the commitment begins*
 - j) *You will not serve Christ very well if you are not willing to carry a load and if you are not willing to be tied down to a task*
 - k) *Satan says that this yoke is too heavy and burdensome*
 - l) *The yoke of sin is the most burdensome yoke of all*
4. Learning in service - "and learn of me"
 - a) *One of the compensations of serving Christ is to learn spiritually*
 - b) *We learn of Jesus by walking with Him day by day*
 - c) *We learn of Jesus by hungering for His Word*
 - d) *"Learn" here is very close to the word for disciple - a disciple is a learner*
 - e) *We must learn Christ before we can share Him with a lost and dying world*
 - f) *A new Sunday School teacher commented to her pastor, that since she had been teaching, she had learned so much more about her Bible*
 - g) *Spiritual ignorance is the lot of those who refuse to serve*
5. Lowliness in service - "I am meek and lowly in heart"
 - a) *In our rough and tough world, following someone who is meek and lowly is not very desirable*
 - b) *Jesus was not harsh or overbearing like the Pharisees*
 - c) *Jesus was not oppressive like the Pharisees*
 - d) *A gentle horse does not imply weakness or the absence of power or lack of ability. A gentle horse is still very powerful, it is just under control. Just because Jesus is meek and lowly does not mean that He is weak but that His power is under control .*
 - e) *If we would serve Christ then we must be like Him, meek and lowly*
 - f) *This means humility and submission to God*
 - g) *Many do not serve because they cannot humbly take orders*
 - h) *They are too proud to take orders*
 - i) *Others will not serve unless the service is prestigious or in the spotlight*

One lady said, "I realized one day that I had everything I wanted and I wasn't happy. Something was missing. No matter how much I got in material goodies, nothing was going to fill the gap. I became ill and I had pain everywhere. For one year I was in the hospital more than once per month. I thought I had a brain tumor or cancer. I had everything. I just did not have God. But now, she says, "Everything had changed." She obtained the rest that is found in salvation.

Conclusion:

1. As Jesus invited people to come to him 2000 yrs ago, I invite you to come to Him today
2. If you are weary trying to get to heaven and burdened with the load of sin and guilt, then come to Him today
3. He can give you rest
4. You are saved – have you taken up the yoke of service?
5. You must come
6. You must take

The Hindu religion is one of works, sacrifice and great self-discipline. One day a devout Hindu priest purchased some saffron powder to dye his robes for the coming days of festival. When he undid the package he found some words hand written on the wrapping paper. The words said, "Come unto me... and I will give you rest!" Again and again those words rang through the priest's mind. Was that not what he was looking for all these years? He asked everywhere he went if anyone knew who had spoken those words, but no one seemed to know. He finally gave the wrapping paper to another man who was determined to find out who had spoken or written these words. This man came across a group of Christians holding an open air evangelistic service. In the course of this service the evangelist shared the words of Jesus, "Come unto me... and I will give you rest." The young man investigated further and acknowledged Jesus as his Lord. He went away leaving his great search and burden behind. He went away with a new peace to tell others about the message he had learned. If you are searching to this rest you can have it today.