

Rest

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[0:00] Would you find in your Bibles the Gospel of Matthew and find chapter 11. Cast your care on Jesus, that song said.

! Matthew chapter 11. Our Bible is a big book. It's a collection of 66 books. And really, some of those books, like the book of the Psalms, that's a collection of five separate books. And that could be said of the Proverbs as well. That was combined, a few other separate writings put together. And this Bible has been broken down, thankfully, into chapters. And those chapters divided into verses. And that's a wonderful system that allows us to locate a passage or locate a statement of Scripture with ease to where we can all go and find it quite quickly. Else you would still be looking and saying, well, where exactly does the 11th chapter of Matthew begin? We would never know. We'd be searching and searching and searching for a particular passage or verse.

[1:07] And so this breakdown of chapter and verse has caused us to isolate a verse or a passage or something, a statement that is important to us or very meaningful to us in our lives.

And individuals have life verses. They have things like that. And that was never in the original writing of Matthew or Isaiah or anybody. It was just a continuous, in many cases, just paragraph after paragraph after paragraph like a book.

And now having it broken down, it sure is helpful and much easier. And when we come to the 11th chapter of Matthew, verses being isolated from the chapter is quite a, well, here's a case in point. The last three verses seem to stand alone within the chapter. I want to read them with you. I think they're familiar to you. Matthew 11, verses 28 through 30.

The Bible says, We know these are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[2:22] These words are familiar. They've captured the attention of men for hundreds and hundreds of years now. They've stilled troubled hearts. They've comforted weary souls.

In a chapter that deals with such things as accusations of guilt, and it deals with rebuke, and it deals with judgment, the last three verses of Matthew chapter 11 change everything.

And I want to isolate these verses this morning with you. And I want to look at them and shine some light upon them. Or maybe the better way to say it is have these verses shine some light unto us.

The passage we read is a passage where Jesus Christ offers rest. He offers rest to somebody who's burdened down, somebody who's carrying a load, and it's hard to bear.

All ye that labor and are heavy laden. The picture is him sitting, if we could say it in one way, by the wayside and seeing people coming and going, carrying their burdens through life.

[3:24] Carrying things that causes them to stumble, that has them hunched over, that they're trying to get to a destination, but they're never going to get there. They're never going to get there to where they can unload this.

And the Lord Jesus Christ calls to them to come to Him. And for us in this life, this burden may be a burden of sin. A burden of sin that you, as a sinner against God, carry with you all of your life.

And there's no way to get rid of this sin. You can't get it off of you. It just weighs on your spirit and on your heart. And you know in your heart of hearts, you're guilty before God. And yet there's nothing that you can do about it.

This burden that some carry may be pain that you've experienced in your life. Pain that you can't escape, that you can't forget. Something that happened to you as a child and you just can't let it go.

Or it's just contaminated your mind. It's conformed your thinking and your relationships with others. And it's a heavy load upon a man or a woman to carry in life.

[4:28] For others, it may be some kind of burden that others cannot see on the outside. But on the inside, you're filled with fears or you're filled with insecurities about yourself or about what you should be doing or can doing.

You don't have any confidence to do something for God because you think you'll mess it up or you think you don't have the skills or the talents or the ability. And for some, they carry the burden of sin. Others, the burden of pain. Others, inwardly, the burdens of fear and insecurities. And it holds them back. But in all of this, the Lord Jesus Christ offers to ease your burden.

He offers in this passage to lighten the load that you carry with you every day of your life. He'll take it upon himself and he'll walk with you going forward.

And life is so much more manageable, all of it, with the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not going to say that life is easy. I would never say that, but he certainly can make a difference.

[5:33] And that just, before I even get into the passage, causes me to just want to say there's nobody like Jesus Christ. There's nobody ever that would care for your soul.

And if you're carrying something today, maybe I didn't even bring it up or hint at it, but if you feel that you're heavy laden and it's causing you to labor more and more in this life to experience joy and to find fulfillment and to walk with God in a clear and the right relationship, please consider that this morning he's calling out to you when he says, come unto me.

So let's pray together and ask God to help us with this. Father, these are your words that we're reading and studying. These are the words of you, the Son of Man, as you walked, as we walk and where we walk.

And you know the burdens we bear. You're very familiar with the feelings of our infirmities. And Lord, may we humble ourselves this morning and be honest and be open to you and fear no man and fear no outcome, but completely and wholly trust you and surrender ourselves to what you're calling us to.

And may some get victory and some get relief and some find joy and pleasure that is with you. And may you do a work and help your people this morning.

[6:59] We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I want to point out four things from this passage, just an outline that I'm going to use to carry through this passage. And from Matthew chapter 12 and verse 28, the first thing I see here is the invitation of Christ.

The invitation where he says, come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. Do you know that Jesus is not just barking out these words to the air?

And he's not just throwing it out there, but he sees you. He's speaking to a person, to people. He sees you carrying that load through your life.

He sees your struggle with that burden, whether it's carrying your sins or carrying your griefs or carrying your heartaches. The Lord Jesus Christ sees how hard it is for you to keep going on, to keep getting up, to keep facing it every day, to keep trying to put it behind you.

And he says, come unto me. I can help you with that. The Lord Jesus Christ calls out to you. And then the invitation is for you to come to him.

[8:13] But why would the Son of God, the Holy Son of God invite us to come to him? When did we become worthy of his attention?

Why would he, of whom the whole heavens lift up and praise and glorify, why would he care that we're burdened down with some things that we shouldn't even be holding on to?

Why does he care? Why does he even take notice of us? There's no banker in this city that would say, come unto me and give me all your debt and I'll pay it in full.

There's no doctor or dentist that says, come unto me and I'll fix all your problems physically for no charge at all. Nobody does that in this life. So why is it that the Lord Jesus Christ is calling us to come to him?

And how is it that he offers to take us in and relieve us of these cares, these things that have laid heavy upon our burden, our shoulders? There must be something different about the Lord Jesus Christ.

[9:18] There must be something different, something that is selfless, something that is compassionate, something that can't be found anywhere else in the world. There has to be something different for this invitation.

It's so attractive. You'll give me rest. You'll help me. You'll take my burdens and you're not going to demand anything from me. The invitation of Christ.

But I want you to know before we continue that Jesus Christ is not the only one that invites men to come to him. He's not. Man-made religions all over the face of this earth have been calling men, inviting men to come to them.

They say, look at my prestige. Look at my chapels and my sanctuaries. Look at my range of influence. Look at your mother and father. They've come to me.

Your grandparents have come to me. Their parents have come to me. You too should come to me. Man-made religions call men to come to them.

[10:19] Other things like substances, like drugs and alcohol, pills and things of that nature, call men to come to them. Say, we'll ease your pain.

We'll lighten your load. It won't be so hard if you'll just indulge with us. We'll take the edge off. But what they don't tell you is, we'll leave you worse off than we found you.

We'll destroy you. We actually can't help you at all. But we deceive you. We claim to. I don't know if you've been around any of these kind of offers of substances or of religions or just vain promises of men.

But if you've ever tried any of them, then you've likely found that they cannot and never will give you rest. They'll never give you an ease of the burden that you carry, whether it's of your sin or of your sorrow.

The only one that can help you and the only one that cares is the one in this passage that invites you to come unto Him, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[11:23] If you've been around and tried these, you know they don't work. But this invitation here this morning, this is not restricted to good people. This is not restricted to only those people who promise me they're going to follow through with their commitments.

Jesus Christ doesn't invite just the good people or just the dependable people, just the ones that have some character about them or some value that they can offer Him.

No, this invitation of Jesus Christ is for the one that's in need, for the one that's carrying a burden and they can't get it off of their shoulders, for those that are carrying the sins, for those that are carrying the guilt, for those that have been burdened and held back by the cares and the troubles of this life.

This invitation is for you. Come unto me, He says, He sees you. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. And secondly, we see in this passage the affirmation of Christ, meaning what it is that Jesus Christ declares about Himself or that He announces to that one that He calls, He invites.

He says at the end of verse 28, I will give you rest. What those religions that I mentioned cannot and will not offer you is rest.

[12:40] Because in reality, they don't have any rest to offer you. What they'll offer you is something different, something that looks appealing enough to cause you to consider it, to cause you to come to it, to cause you to give it a try, but it cannot and will not offer you rest.

One thing that religions will offer you is they'll offer you accomplishment. They'll make you feel like you've done something good and now you're probably a good person because you've come to us and we've told you what to go do and how to live your life and now you feel better about yourself, don't you?

And yet, that accomplishment does nothing about your sin. It does nothing about your burden. It just distracts your focus to start looking about what you've done and yet that can't heal anything.

Religions offer you acceptance. Religions say, you come and you fit in with all of these masses of all these fine people. There's doctors here. There's presidents here.

There's lawyers here. There's wealthy men and successful men and women and good, good people. They've lived better lives than you. They've done more than you've done.

[13:52] Come to us. Religion says, you'll fit in with these people. We're all going to the same place. Yeah. We're all striving for the same thing and yet they don't know and they don't disclose that they're doing it on what the Bible calls the broad road that leadeth to destruction.

Religion calls men but they don't offer rest. All the religions offer is rewards for your works. But Jesus Christ offers you rest from your works.

Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I'll give you rest. So what does Jesus Christ have then that the others don't? What kind of power, what kind of authority does he possess that he can claim that I can take away your burdens?

I can take away your guilt. Is he trying to pull my leg? Is he trying to deceive me? Is he just trying to get my money? Trying to get me to do some things for him?

I will give you rest, he claims. Well, a claim is only as good as the one making the claim. And I could claim to all of you this morning, come unto me, bring all of your debt, all of your financial records, bring all the money you owe, your mortgage, your cars, your credit cards, bring them to me and I will give you rest.

[15:18] I'll give you all relief and you could show up next Sunday with all the papers and I'd say, yeah, I was just talking. I can't help you with that.

I've got my own burden. I can't help you with yours. I could never promise you rest. And so a claim is only as good as the one making it and I, in this case, I don't have the means to take care of your problems.

So then, what is it about Jesus Christ? What does he possess? Let's just, let's look into him for a second. Let's investigate this man that's making this claim that I can give you rest.

What kind of credentials does he actually have? Well, he walked on water. You say, really?

Yeah, really. He walked on water. I don't know anybody that's walked on water in the 47, almost 48 years of my life.

[16:21] I've never witnessed it. You might think, well, that must be a magic trick. No. It was real. It was a stormy sea and he came walking out across the Sea of Galilee.

And you say, that's true? He really did? Yes, he really did that. He's unlike any other man. And you say, okay, okay, you got my attention, but what else has he done?

Because that could have been something weird. Okay, well, he raised the dead. You say, what? Come on.

No, really. Yeah, he raised the dead. He spoke with his words and he raised the dead man out of a tomb. And he came back to life.

He even did it with his own life. You think, can he really raise the dead? The answer is, yes, he can.

[17:20] He did. And he's going to do it again. That's who he is. This man has healed too many people to count. This man has fed masses, thousands of men and women with just a few things in his hand.

Gave them so much to eat, there was too much left over afterwards. Never a man spake like this man, they said. Never a man loved like this man.

This man, even in this passage, is meek and lowly in heart. This man's so humble and full of compassion, yet he's mighty and fearless and holy and harmless and undefiled.

There's a song in, I found it here in this book. It's called, He Giveth More Grace. The words read, He giveth more grace when our burdens grow greater.

He sendeth more strength as the labors increase. To added afflictions, afflictions, he addeth his mercy. To multiplied trials, he multiplies peace.

[18:28] When we've exhausted our store of endurance, when our strength has failed, ere the day is half done, when we reach the end of our hoarded resources, our Father's full giving is only begun.

Fear not that thy need shall exceed his provision. Our God ever yearns his resources to share. lean hard on the arm, everlasting, unavailing.

The Father both thee and thy load will upbear. His love has no limit. His grace has no measure. His power has no boundary known unto men.

For out of his infinite riches in Jesus, he giveth and giveth and giveth again. If this man claims to be able to give me rest from my burdens based on his credentials, based upon his word, I'd say he can do it.

There's an invitation of Christ for all to come unto him with their burdens. Those that are laboring, they're heavy laden. There's the affirmation of Christ that he says, I will give you rest.

[19:35] And based upon these few quick things I've given you, I think he knows what he's talking about. I think he's quite able to do it. And then thirdly, in this passage, in verse 29, there's the education of Christ where he says, take my yoke upon you and learn of me.

And learn of me. Christ offers the invitation and with that, he offers an education. Learn of me. Now he's not saying learn about me, but rather he's saying learn from me.

To be my disciple. Come unto me. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. You're going to spend time with me. Why is that?

Because the picture is you're getting yoked up. You're getting like a pair of oxen to go out and plow a field. You're getting into the yoke with Jesus Christ at your side. And wherever you go, you're going with him.

You're together, one on one, side by side, no longer alone, but with him going forward in life. And as you follow his lead, as you walk with him, you learn.

[20:42] You pick up things along the way. Now what is it that he would impart to you that would help you in this life with these burdens and with these cares? I want to just say a few things about this.

You can keep your place, but flip over to the next gospel to the right. Find Mark chapter 6. Mark chapter 6. One thing you're going to learn by being yoked up with the Lord Jesus Christ that has to do with these burdens, you're going to learn how to pray.

You say, oh, you talked about that last week. We don't need to hear that again. Well, you're going to. It's going to help you. Mark chapter 6 and verses 45 through 51.

Take a look at what happens here. This is after he fed a multitude of people. And in verse 45, straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, he alone on the land. He saw them toiling and rowing for the wind was contrary unto them.

[21:56] And about the fourth watch of the night, he cometh unto them walking on the sea and would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking on the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit and cried out for they all saw him and were troubled.

And immediately he talked with them and saith unto them, be of good cheer, as I be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship and the wind ceased. And they were sore, amazed in themselves beyond measure and wondered.

Now, what is the point here? Well, if you were yoked up with the Lord Jesus Christ, you wouldn't have been down there on the sea toiling against an enemy that you don't have the power to defeat. But rather, you would have been up there on the mountain learning how to pray. If you were yoked up with him where he goes, you go. And this is what he did.

He said, you go there. I'm going to send them away. But I'm going to go to prayer. And if you're yoked with Jesus Christ, then I guess I'm going to prayer with him. Instead of going out there to fight some battles that I'm not prepared and don't have it in me to do, I'm going to go to prayer with him.

[23:04] Do you know that the Lord Jesus Christ, in the greatest trial of his life before he faced Calvary, spent hours in prayer? And it wasn't an act of desperation. It was commonplace.

This is the way he dealt with situations. This is the practice that he stepped right into every time he faced something. He went to God in prayer.

That's what you'll learn if you're yoked up with Jesus Christ. You'll learn to pray. You'll learn not to quit when things go wrong. Boy, don't Christians quit when the life that they offer to God doesn't

turn out the way they thought it would.

And when things start to go bad, they quit. But you'll learn from Jesus Christ that I won't quit when things go wrong. When people turn against me, when people betray me, my own familiar friend betrays me, I'm not going to quit.

What you'll learn from being yoked in Jesus Christ is when the burdens grow greater, you learn to trust God and believe his word. When you're yoked up with the Lord Jesus Christ, you get an education.

[24:12] You learn to exercise faith rather than yield to your own fears and things in your mind and the experiences of others. You learn if God wants you to do this, you submit to him.

You learn to go forward in the will of God. Even when the path says it's a lonely path, Jesus Christ takes you in the yoke and says this way.

You learn to go forward in the will of God even if it looks like there's going to be some suffering ahead. Even if it means death. Would you keep your place in Matthew still but flip over and find the book of 1 Peter toward the back of your Bible.

1 Peter chapter 4. I want to give you a verse that backs up these statements because a real part of the will of God for some of his children is loneliness and is suffering and is even ultimately death. And I know that doesn't resonate with us. We think if we're saved and we obey God it's all good. He's going to keep us and protect us and preserve us. But sometimes he has something else.

[25:19] And history bears this out. Many men, many women have faced cruel treatment and torture and death for their faith in Jesus Christ. But let's look at this.

But they were yoked up with Jesus Christ. And that's why they went right into it. That's why they didn't recant. That's why they didn't deny him. Because they were yoked up with him.

In 1 Peter chapter 4 after Peter talks a good bit about suffering for Jesus Christ in verse number 19 the last verse of the chapter he says Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful creator.

With being yoked up with the Lord Jesus Christ you learn to surrender to the will of God no matter what that brings. Am I going to get cast out from my family?

Are my friends going to turn their backs on me and mock me and revel against me? Yeah, maybe they will. Are they going to speak evil against me? Yeah, maybe they will. You learn from Jesus Christ and being yoked with him to go forward in the will of God despite all of that.

[26:32] Despite suffering as a Christian you commit the keeping of your soul to him and if he calls it home then glory be to God.

I know we don't think that way but from the word of God we need to change our thinking and we need to agree with the scripture and learn how to submit ourselves to the will of God. When you're yoked up with Jesus Christ you will learn surrender.

When he said not my will but thine be done you learn that one. You learn how to put yourself down and surrender to the will of God. This is the only place you're going to learn it is being yoked up with Jesus Christ.

You get an education is what I'm saying. There's much that you would think that doesn't match what he'll teach you. You need to learn some things. And he'll take it easy. He won't just throw you into the wolves and put you in the den of lions.

No, he'll incrementally work you to where if it means that one of your friends starts to make fun of you and he gives you the courage to stand up against them and it causes division there's something that you don't like about that but inwardly there's joy that you did what was right for Jesus who shed his blood for your sins.

[27:46] You gain boldness. You mature as an individual as a discipline or as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Being yoked up with him there's an education.

But then finally this morning back in our chapter in Matthew chapter 11 the best part of all of this is the salvation of Christ. He says at the end of verse 29 ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For those who have received this salvation it is without question the best part of all of this. When it comes to carrying your sins or it comes to carrying guilt with you throughout your life the Lord Jesus Christ offers to help with that.

What he does is he removes the condemnation from the sinner and he puts his personal righteousness his holy life in its place. What an amazing deal. You lose your sins and you get his righteousness. The Lord Jesus Christ can help you with that. He can create in you a clean heart replacing your guilt.

[28:58] No priest could do that. No pope could do that. No president can do that. No program of any church can do that.

So there's salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ when you come unto him. He can wash away your sins with his blood and you find rest.

The salvation of Christ though church it doesn't always refer to somebody's soul and to somebody's sins that they've committed. The salvation that Jesus Christ offers is a salvation of your life from destruction.

salvation. Jesus Christ can save you from living in fear. He can save you or deliver you from carrying your griefs and from laboring in your own strength.

He can save you from burning out and getting frustrated and just saying enough of this. I can't do this anymore. Jesus Christ can save you from yourself.

[30:03] He can save you from your pride that lifts you up and looks down at other Christians in the church that aren't doing things the way you're doing them. That aren't as faithful as you are. That don't have the gifts and abilities that you have.

That just they're just not what I am. And the Lord Jesus Christ can save you from your pride. He can knock you down where you belong to where you'll look up and say thank you Lord.

I should have never been up there in the first place. Christ can save us from our foolish thinking.

From our devising of how we're going to make this work and figure this out.

He can save you from your fleshly lusts. He can save you from your indifference toward others on this planet. From your co-workers, from your family, from their sinfulness. He can save you from your laziness or from your irresponsibility.

He says take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest under your souls. you'll find the rest that you long for.

[31:07] You'll find the inner peace that you want and deserve if you come to Him. I was a saved but rebellious child of God in my youth and as a young man I didn't really care what God wanted, what the will of God for my life.

I didn't care what He wanted. I received His salvation. I received the gift of God, eternal life. I received the pardon for my sins. I'll never go to hell.

But I didn't have any interest in what His will for me was. I had no surrender in me at all. And by the grace of God, by His patient long-suffering, He saved me from a life of regret, a life of ruin, a life of destruction, a life of running from Him.

That's His grace toward me. And I forever, the thing that trips my trigger is the mercy of God.

Because you have your own stories, I have mine.

And the one that does it for me is that He was so merciful to me when I told Him I don't give a rip about you. And He didn't condemn me. And He didn't punish me in the moment.

[32:22] He didn't strike me down. I'm healthy, I'm married, I have children and grandchildren and an opportunity to minister to Him and to give myself completely to Him.

I don't deserve that. I took the eternal life, that free gift, but after that I deserve to just be a vegetable. Or worse yet, nothing left of me.

So Jesus Christ's salvation, it's not just about your soul and keeping you out of hell. He can deliver you from yourself, from the road that you want to go on.

He can deliver you, you got questions and decisions to make, He can deliver you from messing that up if you come to Him. If you come to Him.

Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Jesus Christ sees you.

[33:28] Jesus Christ is calling out to you this morning. And surely in this room there are some that have things they carried, it could be minor, it could be major, and they don't match and they're different and

it's in your own spirit, it's in your own heart, it's in your own mind of how it's been for you.

But would you hear His voice call to you this morning? He sees you, He knows the burden you carry, and He's calling to you.

Come unto me. And if you're stubborn, you say, no, I'm fine. I don't need that. It's because you don't want to bow the knee.

You don't want to come to Him. You want to make your own way. A family and I were watching a show the other day and this one individual on the show, it was a competition and one person earned and won something.

And the person looked on the others that did not and then their desperation offered to give their reward to the other person, the person on the other team. And that person's response was no, no, can't take it.

[34:43] And he said, why? Why can't you do this? And the response was, well, I like to earn it. I want to earn it for myself. I can't take somebody else's charity because I didn't earn that.

And I just thought, in hearing that, I thought, there it is. There it is right there. That is in the heart of every man. Some won't come to Christ for salvation because they want to earn it.

They want to deserve it. They don't want to humble themselves and receive anyone else's gift.

Others don't want to lay their burdens because they don't want to admit they have a problem. They don't want to come back to Jesus Christ and say, I need help with this one.

This one is wearing me out and I just can't seem to get the victory. He says, come unto me. So what is it that's going to keep you from coming to him?

The invitation this morning is not only for sinners in need of forgiveness, but it's just as much for the child of God that has a burden and needs to bring it to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[35:47] We sang, burdens are lifted at Calvary. Not just cast your sin upon him, but cast your care upon him too. You need rest this morning?

Is there something that's weighing you down? Why would you not come to Jesus Christ? Listen, he will not condemn you. He's not going to say, oh, it's you. No, he sees you and he's calling you to him.

Is it your pride? Is it your stubbornness? Is it your reputation that would keep you from bowing the knee? Don't you want that fellowship?

Don't you want that education? Don't you want to learn some things that can give you the victory and give you the peace? There's nobody like Jesus Christ, so don't reject him and don't deny him. He sees you, hear him, acknowledge him, come to him. Father, this morning I pray that this passage, as it's been a help and a consolation to many a sinner and to many a soul that has struggled with their burdens, their guilts, and their cares in this life and troubles.

[37:05] Lord, I pray that it could speak the same thing in our hearts this morning, that it could be powerful to those burdens that we carry with us.

God, as you have extended the invitation, may each have the courage to heed the invitation and to come. Lord, thank you for calling me back to your side.

thank you for taking away my sin and my shame, my foolishness. Thank you for loving me.

Thank you for loving your people here this morning and for how real you are and personal you are.

Lord, be real to us and then let some get that relationship established or get that help they need.

We lean upon your grace and upon your mercy. Please lighten some loads this morning and educate us as we seek to walk with you.

[38:11] We pray this in Jesus' name. Some have come. If you need to come and talk to the Lord, He won't judge you and neither will I. He won't condemn you and nobody else will.

There's peace and there's liberty when you come to Jesus Christ. Cast your burden upon the Lord. He'll sustain you. He'll lift you up.

He'll heal you. This word of God is to you today. So respond as He calls. Let's go.