

PM Matthew 11:25-30 Take my Yoke and Learn from Me

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Preacher: Rev David White

- [0 : 00] At times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the Lord. Let the humble hear and be glad.
- O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.
- This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps round those who fear him, and delivers them.
- O taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. O fear the Lord, you his saints.
- For those who fear him lack nothing, have no lack. Let's pray together. Matthew chapter 11, verses 25 to 30.
- [1 : 13] Matthew chapter 11, verses 25 to 30.
- Those things are in your own Bible. And if you borrow a Bible, it's just never quite in the same place. Let's read God's word together. At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to little children.
- Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
- Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.
- [2 : 54] We're going to sing together one of my favorite psalms. It's taken from the text. It's take my yoke, and learn from me.
- Take my yoke, and learn from me. This morning, we considered verses 25 and 28 of this amazing Bible passage, and noted that J.C. Ryle, the former Bishop of Liverpool, wrote, that there are few passages in the four Gospels more important than this one.
- There are few which contain, in so short a compass, meaning so few verses, so many precious truths. May God give us the eyes to see, and hearts to feel their value.
- And let us learn the excellence of childlike faith, which he described as a teachable mind, and spirit. And we thought about that this morning. We were thinking about childlike faith, this morning.
- We reflected on the truth, evident in verses 25 to 27, that God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, are one. Jesus said in John 14, verse 9, whoever has seen me, has seen the Father.

[4 : 21] Speaking to God the Father, in verses 25 following, the Lord Jesus states, that the secret of the kingdom of heaven, have been hidden from those, who consider themselves, wise and learned, and have been revealed, to little children.

I just think the way that's written there, yes Father, said Jesus, for such was your gracious will. Verse 26. I'm conscious that I'm recapping a little from this morning.

But because some people are wise in their own eyes, they don't see their need of a saviour, compared with those who are humble, and childlike, and willing to learn.

Those who have childlike humility, know that they are sinners, in need of God's grace, and forgiveness. Truth is that pride in our own goodness, the next brother in line to me, I'm the eldest of five brothers, and the next brother in line to me, can't see the need of a saviour.

And when I speak to him about the things of God, his response always is, but I'm a good person. And I say, it's not about whether you're a good person, or a bad person.

[5 : 45] It's about your relationship, with a holy God. And one day, you'll need to stand before him. And will that be enough, to say on that day, that I'm a good person?

Because none of us are good, is the truth of the matter. All of us sin. All of us fall short of the glory of God. We can be so full of our own importance, and so blinded by our current beliefs, that we fail to acknowledge, who Jesus really is.

And the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' time, took pride in their religiosity. Beware of that. They considered themselves better than other people, and sought to impose, not only the Ten Commandments, which were given to Moses' spy god on Mount Sinai, but also sought to impose, over 600 other rules and regulations, which were largely man-made.

This meant that the majority of ordinary people, felt burdened and oppressed, because of this legalistic view of God.

The message of the Pharisees, was that your salvation, your relationship with God, depends on what you do. Your salvation depends on how good a person you are, and whether you've kept all the requirements of the law.

[7 : 09] Friends, it's impossible, in our own strength, to meet this high expectation. And these religious leaders, when you read through the Gospels, never lifted a finger, to help those who were struggling, those who found life challenging, to say the least.

And so we begin to think about this yoke. What does take my yoke upon you mean? As Paula and I left Tanzan, which is in Nepal, in 2016, for the first time in my life, I saw a man using oxen to plough his ground.

The yoke fitted these oxen perfectly. The oxen wasn't struggling. The oxen were working with the man, to plough the ground.

The term yoke, is a metaphor, for one person, is also a metaphor, for one person's submission to another. And was a common metaphor, in Judaism, for the law.

Submission to the law, with this extensive list of prescriptions, which we've already established, has become a crushing burden for people. With Jesus, the burden of doing his will, is not a heavy one.

[8 : 37] Jesus said, that he didn't come to do away with the law, but to fulfill the law. Because he, the sinless son of God, is the only person who ever lived, who fulfilled every aspect, of the law.

Jesus said, Matthew 5, 17, do not think that I've come to abolish the law, or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. And in 1 John, chapter 5, verse 3, we read, that his commandments, are not burdensome.

God's love for his people, for us, gives us a desire, to please him, once we've come to a saving faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we're eager to keep his commandments, not out of duty, but out of a heart, that loves God. Not in a legalistic way, seeking to earn our way to heaven, but through a change of heart, through a heart, that is totally committed, to Jesus.

The question I ask myself, and you this evening, are we disciples of Jesus? Are we yoked, to the Saviour?

[9 : 57] Amen. Amen. In contrast to the, scribes and Pharisees, Jesus simply issued, an invitation, to people, to come to me, all who labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

I'm sorry, I've got slightly confused here. Might as well admit it. I've got my papers, slightly mixed up. So bear with me. So the question is, are you and I, disciples of Jesus, this evening?

I think it's a question, that's worth asking. Because in many ways, discipleship is in my view, neglected in our day. As evangelical Christians, we're rightly enthusiastic, to see people come, to a saving faith in Christ.

There is no better, thing to do, than to give your life, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. And it's right, and it's an absolute privilege, to preach the gospel, of salvation, in and through, the Lord Jesus.

And each time, I have opportunity, to do so, I pray, that God will move, by his spirit, in the hearts, and minds, of those who hear, and who as yet, do not know, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[11 : 24] But what about, discipleship? We, I, can't save anyone.

Only God, can convict a person, of sin, and their need, of a saviour. But once a soul, comes to a saving faith, in Christ, our job as believers, is clear, and it's given to us, in the words of the Lord Jesus, in what we refer to, as the great commission, Matthew 28, 19.

Jesus said, go therefore, and make disciples, of all nations, baptizing them, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them, to observe, all that I, have commanded you.

Sadly, all too often, in my experience, souls with little, or no church background, and that's most people, these days. By the way, most people, 45 and under, do not have, do not have, the same kind, of background, that we older people, have had.

I was brought up, going to church, so I was brought up, in the faith, and I believe, I had a faith, a simple faith, as a child, in God, but then I left home, when I was 16, and I went my own way, and I'm grateful, to God, that when I was 34, he brought me back, and showed me, for sure, that he loves me, and that Jesus died, for me.

[12 : 57] But there are many people, these days, who are coming to a saving knowledge, of the Lord Jesus Christ, they're moved, by the preacher, or the service, or the, whatever it is, that's happening, and they make, a profession of faith, faith, but sadly, that is often, not followed up.

Quickly, the worries, and cares, of this life, can cause some, to fall away. Therefore, encouraging, new born believers, to become integrated, into a loving, Christian fellowship, is essential.

And discipleship, is a full time job, which should be placed, before all other priorities, and responsibilities. Because you're bringing, a soul into full, fellowship and communion, with the risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

I don't know about you, when you first came to faith, I remember, in the 1980s, there was a program, for disciples, called New Directions.

Does anyone remember, New Directions? It was excellent, and why it's, gone out of print, I have absolutely, no idea, because for new believers, it was just, an excellent vehicle, to help people, to understand, what it is, to be a disciple, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[14 : 22] And it happened, in small groups, and it involved, a lot of, remembering Bible verses, and becoming, more familiar, with the scriptures, and encouraging, one another, and praying together, and, I had a real hunger, for the word, when I came to faith, I still got a real hunger, for the word, but that's the kind of thing, to encourage, in people, who are coming, to a saving faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And Christian discipleship, as we know, involves both devotion, and obedience. Disciples of Jesus, voluntarily accept, Jesus as their Lord, and Master, and his teachings, as their commands.

To be a disciple, of Jesus Christ, is to serve God, and other people. In kingdom terms, earthly position, and power, don't make a person great.

Service, makes, a person great. Jesus came, not to be served, but to serve, even, to dying, on a cross.

Therefore, Jesus said, in verse 29b, learn from me, I am gentle, and lowly. The Greek word, translated here, as gentle, only occurs, three other times, in the New Testament.

[15 : 54] In Matthew 5, 5, the first beatitude, the meek, will inherit, the earth. It's another translation, of gentle. Matthew 21, 5, quoting Zechariah, 9b, which we use, on Palm Sunday.

See, your king, comes to you, righteous, and having salvation, gentle, and riding, on a donkey. And then, when Peter 3, 4, Peter's given, instructions to wives, to nurture, the hidden person, of the heart, with the, unperishable beauty, of a gentle, and quiet spirit.

And that's where, this word occurs. And Jesus, describes himself, as, gentle, and lowly. I brought this little book along, this evening.

I don't know if you get to read, a lot of Christian commentators, but this is a chap called, Dane Ortland. He's written a number, of books. But the, the last two, that I am aware of, are exceptionally good.

It's entitled, Gentle and Lowly, and it's taken from this passage, in Matthew. And it's, The Heart of Christ, for Sinners, and Sufferers, is the subtitle.

[17 : 17] The Heart of Christ, for Sinners, and Sufferers. And if you were to enjoy this book, there's another book, called Deeper, which takes us deeper, into the word, in relation to, the Lord, Jesus Christ.

So I recommend, this book to you. In fact, there's a copy here, and if anyone would like to borrow it, please ask me, and they can borrow it, after the service. It really is an excellent, an excellent read.

Jesus describes himself, as gentle, and lowly. Paul uses the word, lowly, when he tells us, that we're not to be haughty, but to associate, with the lowly.

In Romans 12, 16, do not be proud, but be willing to associate, with people of low position. Do not be conceited. The word, lowly, overlaps, with that of gentle, and they're generally, translated, as humble.

So in James, chapter 4, verse 6, we read, God opposes the proud, but gives grace, to the humble. Verse 29, of this evening's passage, is the only place, in scripture, where Jesus, describes, the very essence, of who, he is.

[18 : 29] he opens up, and shares, his very heart, with us. I am gentle, and lowly.

The biblical, understanding of heart, is not just, our emotional life, but the animating, center, of all that we are, and all that we do. Our heart, is what defines, and directs us.

And two passages, of scripture, come to mind, which demonstrate, the humble, humility of Christ. You can think of others. But the first one, that comes to mind, is Philippians, Philippians 2.

Philippians 2, verse 5, the apostle Paul writes, have this mind, among you, which is yours, in Christ Jesus. In other words, imitate, the mind, of Christ.

And then he goes on, to write about Jesus. Although he was, in the form of God, he did not count, equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form, of a servant, being born, in likeness of a man, and being found, in human form, he humbled himself, by becoming obedient, to the point of death, even death, on a cross.

[19 : 54] Jesus, the Lord of glory, emptied himself, not by subtraction, of his divine attributes, but by assumption, of human nature.

And, he humbled himself, and became obedient, to the point of death. He was, Emmanuel, truly God, with us, fully God, and yet, fully man.

And I just think, it's totally amazing, that the Son of God, should humble himself, to become a servant, who in obedience, to the Father, in naked shame, and condemnation, gave his life, on the cross, to redeem sinners, like ourselves.

I think that's just, extraordinary. And the other great example, of humility, and service, which Jesus gave, to his disciples, was for him, to take a towel, and to tie it, around his waist, and then to wash, his disciples feet.

John 13, verses 14, and 15. When I was at college, Baptist College, in Paisley, we, had a day away, and it was a day, to learn about being, a disciple, of Jesus, and we were split, into groups, and each group, had to choose, an example, of discipleship, to share, with their classmates.

[21 : 33] And one of these groups, got bowls of water, and towels, and stuff to put on feet, and proposed, washing, our feet.

I have to say, at that time, my reaction, was less than gracious. I thought, they're not washing, my feet. And then I heard, Peter's voice, you're not washing, my feet, Lord.

And it occurred to me, in that moment, just how far, I had to go, to get rid, of the old man, in me. And these, friends, washed, our feet.

And it was the most, one of the most beautiful things, that I've ever had done for me, ever. And it was a lesson, that will stay with me, forever. Gentle, and lowly.

Am I gentle, and lowly? Gentle, and lowly, when referred to Jesus, means that he's accessible. Gentle, and lowly, is who, Jesus is.

[22 : 54] He's open, he's welcoming, he's accommodating, he's understanding, he's willing to accept, even the vilest offender, who truly believes, that moment from Jesus, a pardon, receives.

One commentator wrote, concerning the earthly ministry, of Jesus, he wrote these words, for all his resplendent glory, and dazzling holiness, his supreme uniqueness, and otherness, no one in human history, has ever been, more approachable, than Jesus Christ.

No impression, was left, by the life manifestation, of Jesus, more deeply imprinted, on the consciousnesses, of his followers, than that, of noble, a noble humility, of his bearing.

Gentle, and lowly. Gentle, and lowly, though, does not mean soft, and without substance.

The paragraph, before our reading, this evening, in Matthew 20, verses 29, sorry, 24 to 29, it's not 24 to 29, at all, it's 20 to 24, verses 20 to 24, we read these words, this is Jesus response, to those who think, they're beyond, that they're good enough, superior, religious, but not, believers.

[24 : 30] Then he began, to denounce the cities, where most of the mighty works, had been done, most of his mighty works, have been done, because they did not repent. Woe to you, Chorazin, woe to you, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works, done in you, had been done in Tyre, and Sidon, they would have repented, long ago, in sackcloth, and ashes.

But I tell you, it will be more bearable, on the day of judgment, for Tyre, and Sidon, than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted, in heaven?

You will be brought, down to Hades. For if the mighty works, done in you, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained, sorry, it would have remained, until this day.

But I tell you that, it will be more tolerable, on the day of judgment, for the land of Sodom, than for you. Those who refuse to repent, the arrogant, the proud, and those who are, spiritually blind, he challenges, Jesus challenges, those who see themselves, as wise, who are full of pride, and their own, perceived importance.

But in this passage, it's clear, that he welcomes, the needy, those who are sick, the blind, the crippled, lepers, outcast, the hungry, in fact, all who labour, and are heavy laden.

[26 : 02] The beauty of what Jesus is saying, in today's passage, is you don't need, to unburden yourself, and then come to Jesus. The very fact, that you're burdened, is what qualifies you to come.

There's no payment required. You can't earn, God's forgiveness, because it's a free gift, of grace. This is who Jesus is, to those who come to him.

He's a loving saviour, and a friend. Gentle, and lowly. Unlike others, will never leave you, or forsake you, and one day, will take you home, to glory.

Doesn't that warm your heart? What a saviour, we worship this evening. So let's bring these thoughts, to a conclusion. Jesus issued, an invitation to come, and now for those, who have responded in faith, he issues, two further invitations.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me. 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.

[27 : 17] For my yoke is easy, and my burden, is light. Jesus' invitation, in this passage today, is come, take, and learn, from him, so that we might be assured, of our salvation, through his sacrificial death, for us.

And so that we might, model our lives on his. I have a friend, who came to speak, at a Scottish Christian, walking club meeting, a guy called Howard Kelly, some of you might remember him, he used to teach, here in the town.

And he took us his text, for our meeting, Jesus works to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus said, come follow me, and I will make you, become fishers, of men.

And I remember, how it shared, in those couple of days, that once we commit, our lives, and humble ourselves, in service of Jesus, he can make, and mold us, into whatever, he wants us to be.

For the disciples, he wanted them, to be fishers of men. For each person, it could be something different, we're not all preachers, we're not all evangelists, but God has a role, for each one of us.

[28 : 31] I will make you, into what I, would have you be, if you'll humble yourself, and come, and serve me. The yoke of, Pact's discipleship, is not burdensome, it's an enormous privilege.

All the things, that used to make, me feel guilty, and worried, and anxious, have through faith, been dealt with, and paid for, by Jesus' sacrifice.

I'm not saying, I don't get anxious, because I do. But I remember, Paul's words, do not be anxious, about anything, but in everything, with thanksgiving, present your requests, to God.

We will inevitably, do things, which the Holy Spirit, convicts us of, and which we need, to confess. And we've already, shared the verse, in 1 John 1, 8 and 9.

But if we confess, our sins, God is faithful, and will forgive us, our sins, and cleanse us, from all, unrighteousness. Someone sent to me, some years ago, not long, after I was baptized, and came into the church, immediately, the other side, the evil one, was having a go.

[29 : 41] Finding every way, possible, to seek, to condemn, me again. And someone said to me, it's the devil, that condemns, the Holy Spirit convicts.

If you're convicted, take it to God. It's the devil, that condemns, the Holy Spirit convicts. So let us learn, from Jesus.

Let us humbly submit, to his will and ways, in obedience, let's be obedient, to all that he taught, and muddled. If we do this, we will find rest, for our souls.

And that rest, comes in two forms, and I'd like to say, to share two, Bible passages with you, as we close this evening. Firstly, when we come, in faith, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and humbly submit, to his will and his way, firstly, we find peace, peace with God, which the Apostle Paul, writes about, in Romans, chapter 5, verse 1.

He writes, therefore, since we've been justified, through faith, we have peace, with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. Through him, we have also obtained, access by faith, into this grace, in which we now stand, and we rejoice, in the hope, and glory of God.

[31 : 01] And secondly, we're recipients, of the peace of God. So, we have peace with God, and we're recipients, of the peace of God. The Apostle Paul, also wrote, do not be anxious, about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests, be known to God, and the peace of God, which passes, all understanding, will guard your heart, and your mind, in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4, 6 and 7. Peace, with the God, who created each one of us, and who loves us, with an everlasting love, is a precious thing.

Do you have, the assurance of peace, with God? In this life, and in the life to come, the certain hope, of eternal life, because peace with God, and the gifts, that come with it, are amazing gifts, and they're inheritance, of all who come to Jesus, in humble, childlike faith, and trust.

I just pray, that this may be, our personal experience, as we go on, with the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.