

From Wrath to Rest

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Date: 20 July 2025

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[0 : 00] Right now, two congregations under the name Crossway, one in Mannheim, Pennsylvania, the other one in Millersville, Pennsylvania, have prayed for us, have prayed for you, have asked the Lord to bless our week, and I bring affection and love from both congregations in the name of our Lord.

So if you would turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 11, we're going to be looking at the verses 20 through 30, and such appreciation for what the Lord is doing here in the Bahamas.

And Brother Cedric, so grateful for your friendship as well, brother. And for all those who are going to be pitching in the week ahead, you're going to be a part of this camp if you're a volunteer, or if you just poke your head in a door, it'll be such a blessing to see you.

It'll be such a blessing to link arms with you and to serve together. So we're going to turn our attention to the word of the Lord here. And my title to my message is entitled, From Wrath to Rest.

And in this section of Jesus' teaching and his words, we're going to be introduced to two, I think, very seemingly disparate extremes of our Lord's teaching.

[1 : 18] And it's going to be interesting, and it's going to be interesting, and it's going to puzzle us, likely, to how the Lord can talk at the same time about the most severe judgment, and then in the next moment, to, in the most tender grace, invite people to come to him, that they might receive his gentleness, his lowliness of heart.

So it can be disconcerting, can be difficult for us to put these two seemingly, again, seemingly disparate extremes of our Savior, that he can both be a shepherd and also a lion that roars in the same paragraph.

How does this work out? But we must not shrink back from our Lord's teachings. We must not shrink back at all. It might be more pleasant to focus on the comforting parts of the Bible or what Jesus is about to say here, particularly if you look at chapter 11, verses 29, take my yoke upon you.

Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart. We want to, and we are naturally and appropriately drawn to sections of Scripture that are comforting, that bring assurance, immediate direct assurance to our souls.

But it's easy for us also to walk around the harder places of Scripture, the harder moments of our Savior's teaching, the moments that represent the bearing of his teeth, the moments that represent sharpness of a sword of judgment.

[2 : 42] It could be our temptation to go around those sections. But when we do that, if that becomes our habit to, when we're reading through the Old Testament or reading through parts of what Jesus' ministry is teaching, and we choose to avoid these sections because they seem too sharp, or there's judgment, or uncomfortable things that are being said.

If it's our habit to rush through so we can get to the easier parts, the more comforting parts, that will do harm to our soul. It will. Because we're not going to receive the full nourishment that God's Word is meant to be in the sharper moments, as well as in the sweet, comforting moments, because it's all put together.

As we just sang, these are the words of eternal life. Every word of our Lord Jesus Christ, every word of Scripture is the words of God for our eternal life, for our comfort, for our spiritual nourishment.

And that includes the sharp swords and the sweet comforts of what we're going to see here in Matthew chapter 11. So we dare not cut the Lord's pills in half and take only the sweeter portion of the pill.

By the grace of God this morning, we're going to swallow the whole pill, the whole medicine of what Jesus has to say in this text. So let's go ahead and read what Jesus says.

[4 : 04] This is Matthew 11, verses 20 through 30. Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had 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 tolerable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to 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 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.

At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and the understanding, have revealed them to little children.

[5 : 07] 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.

These are the words of our Lord, and we are grateful for them. Here's, I believe, what captures the theme for this text. And we'll be going through this theme in three points.

Rest under Christ who rescues us from His wrath. Rest under Christ who rescues us from His wrath. And who desires rest?

[6 : 08] Rest. We all do. We all live in this world. There's never a shortage of weariness and heaviness in this world. So, in our desire, in our search to find true rest, we have to start with unbelief.

That's the first stop here. Verses 20 to 24. If we're going to rest under Christ, we have to start here. Inexcusable unbelief. Because Jesus is going to call out unbelief.

If we're going to truly rest in the deep spiritual rest that Jesus alone brings, we have to start with His medicine. We have to start with the bitter end of the pill, if it were.

And we start with the sobering part. Because if we're going to know and obtain His sweet rest, we have to first understand His terrible wrath. If we're going to know rest, we must know wrath.

We must understand and appreciate and tremble under the holy wrath, the judgment of God. If we're going to know and truly enjoy the sweetness of salvation and the great heights of the grace of God and the peace that comes through our Lord Jesus Christ, who was atoning sacrifice for our sin.

[7 : 18] Those things are connected. We cannot disconnect them. So, by God's grace, we will know His peace and His rest through first understanding His terrible wrath.

Because there is real cause for Jesus' wrath. Matthew tells us in verse 20 that these regions where Jesus and the disciples are located, they are regions that Saul, according to Matthew, they had seen many, most of His mighty works.

Jesus had done most of His works, His miracles, His healings, casting out of demons, His teachings. All those things were more or less predominantly majority of them were happening here in the northern shores of Galilee, around this area, this region called Galilee.

So, these regions around the northern shores were given the best seats in the house, the best seats to see the Lord Jesus Christ, to view His Messiah, to view His power, His glory, His unprecedented ministry to the world.

They saw Him. They lived down the street from Him. They knew Him. And they were granted one miracle after another that attested to the greatness of the Son of God.

[8 : 32] Yet, what did they do with that? What did they do with these visions that they saw of the Savior, the grandeur, the glory, the power of Christ? What did they do? They ignored it.

They did nothing. They did not believe. And nor did they repent of their sin. And their unbelief was inexcusable. All unbelief, as you know, is inexcusable.

God's revelation to us is as plain as the nose on your face. It's as plain as the beauty of the oceans and the mountains all around us. Right? It's as plain as everything that God has created.

God has made it in such a way, as Paul would tell us in Romans 1, that we, all humans, are without excuse. God has made it clear that He is the true and the living God, that He has made all things.

And therefore, unbelief to not put two and two together, to not connect the dots between creation to the great and holy Creator, that is inexcusable.

[9 : 34] Paul tells us in Romans 1. And Jesus is showing us here that even further, even further, it's more inexcusable that we would miss the Son of God, that these regions would miss the Son of God, that He visibly appeared and demonstrated His salvation with power among the peoples around Galilee, and they missed it.

They did not make the connection that this is the very Son of God sent into the world to save sinners. They didn't see it. They missed it. And it was inexcusable.

And starting with the towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida, Jesus calls them out, calls them out in a very severe way for inexcusable unbelief. And He declared that the regions of Tyre and Sidon will have a better day on the judgment than they will.

And this is quite serious considering what Tyre and Sidon was. They were ancient pagan cities that worshipped Baal. These were on the coastal region far north of Jerusalem, on the coast of the Mediterranean.

Tyre and Sidon was a Phoenician ancient pagan culture. And they gave themselves to the worship of false deities. And Tyre and Sidon was singled out at least three different times in the Old Testament by the prophets, warning them of the coming judgment.

[10 : 53] And Jesus speaks here. He knows, He knew that if He had appeared and walked among the regions of Tyre and Sidon, if He had walked among their neighborhoods and showed the great mighty works that He had done in the region of Galilee, He knows that they would have repented in dust, sackcloth, deep sorrow over their sins, they would have turned from the terrible outcome.

Just like the people of Nineveh. Think about the book of Jonah. Jonah going through the wicked pagan city of Nineveh, and he cries out, and yet in 40 days, and the city will be overturned.

And what do they do? From king to cattle, they repent. They turn from their sin. They show sorrow to some measure, to some degree, over their sin.

And God relents the disaster, the upturning of Nineveh. But that did not happen here in the region of North Galilee, the north of Galilee. So next, Jesus talks about the city of Capernaum, which was very, very much of the very center.

So if the region of North Galilee represents the best seats in the house, this Capernaum represents the best of the best of the best seats in the house.

[12 : 11] You could not have a better view to the Lord Jesus Christ, to his power, to his person, to his character, to his, you could not hear more clearly his teachings and have a better seat than this town, than the neighbors who lived in and around Capernaum.

They had the most exposure to the Lord Jesus Christ and the most opportunity to repent and to believe the gospel. But what did they do? They did nothing. Therefore, Jesus tells us, in the final judgment, the citizens of the town of Capernaum shall receive the most severe punishments.

They will be cast deeper into hell than most unbelievers will have to experience because their rejection was so inexcusable. So inexcusable. And to clarify just how severe their punishments would be, Jesus told them that Sodom, which is by far the most notorious, the most famous example in the Old Testament of a wicked town where God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah by the pouring out of fire from heaven for their godlessness, Sodom and Gomorrah, according to Jesus, will have it easier on the final judgment than Capernaum.

Just to put things in perspective. And this certainly is a difficult and a bitter pill to swallow concerning judgment, isn't it? This is a hard word. These are hard things to think about for us as sinners, to think about that there is a coming judgment and there is a real place called hell, which God created for Satan and the angels and for all those who distrust or turn from Christ, who do not receive him and repent.

This is a very sobering word. It's a difficult pill to swallow. But yet our soul's true rest hangs on it.

[14 : 05] Whether you know peace with God, whether you have peace with Jesus Christ and true deep, deep rest down deep inside, the kind of rest we crave and long for, the kind of comfort that only comes from God, if we would have that comfort, it must hang, hang entirely upon the truth of the coming judgment and that that coming judgment also has a Savior, that we have that Savior in Christ our Lord.

Hell is real and so is the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ. So the people here in Capernaum and Chorazin, Bethsaida, they're not the only ones that Jesus identifies and speaks to.

Because I know, as you do, that his words go beyond the regions of Galilee into all the world. What Jesus has to say here very much applies here this morning in Nassau, as much as it did thousands of years ago on the shores of Galilee, to the disciples, to the crowds, that gathered that morning, that heard what Jesus was saying, that heard Jesus' audible voice echoing in the countryside.

It very much echoes to today right here, right now, in this very place. Jesus' concerns are very much focused on us as well. Because we also are people just like the people of Capernaum.

We also have addresses. We also pay our taxes. We also believe ourselves to be faithful to Yahweh. And we do good things. And we're our average and friendly neighbor, right?

[15 : 44] We're all living in among these kind of people. And you may be that way yourself. But their unbelief, Jesus says, was inexcusable in the face of the most obvious thing possible, the spectacle of the Son of God that had come into the world to take on the sins of mankind, to demonstrate His power, His divinity, through miracles and by His teaching of authority.

He dwelt among them. And that warning now goes out to people who sing, religiously sing, hymns and praises, who listen to sermons, who read their Bibles from time to time, who do nice things for their neighbors.

The true test of faith, if you'll pay attention, if you note here in this text, the true test of faith is meted out. It's made visible through the fruits of repentance. That's the key here.

So do I see my sin? Do I understand the judgment of God to come? Then I will humble myself before God. I will beg for His mercy and His forgiveness that are freely offered through Jesus Christ.

If I get it, if I get it like Tyre and Saddam would have if Jesus walked among them, if, do I get it? Then I will repent. Do I claim to be a Christian? Then I will take up my only hope as Jesus Christ to face the final day.

[17 : 04] I will walk a faithful and an enduring road of grateful and ongoing sorrowful repentance. Repentance is not just one point on the map where a Christian begins his life as a Christian, as a disciple.

We are to continue bearing the fruits of repentance. Every true disciple of Jesus fears God, notes and understands the depth of their own depravity, and then continues to bear repentance, the fruits of repentance going forward.

So if our Christianity leaves us unchanged and unmoved, stuck on day one, it might be that we are not responding to the true light of Jesus Christ, the Son, and that Jesus would have similar concerns for you or for I if we are as Capernaum or Chorazin that might claim to be faithful to Yahweh, but yet refuse to turn from sin, refuse to repent.

So, but for many of us this morning, we have believed, you have believed, and you continue to trust the Lord, and you continue to bear the fruits of repentance as the Lord reveals, and isn't He so faithful to reveal your sin?

Isn't He so faithful to deal with the spiritual cancers that continue to corrode our souls? Isn't He so good to us? To discipline the ones whom He loves, that He shows you your sin because He loves you, and He wants you to grow, and He leads you day after day to pray just as Jesus taught us to pray, to forgive us our debts.

[18 : 41] Oh Lord, forgive me. Help me to grow. Is that your prayer this morning? I trust it is if you are, and if you have trusted in Jesus Christ, because we are becoming a profoundly different people than we once were all because of the gospel's life-altering power.

You are a different person if you are a Christian today than you were many years ago. You're different. And why is that? Because Jesus Christ has invaded your life and brought about life-altering power.

So rest unto Christ who rescues us from His wrath. So in our longing for deep rest, we have to start here. We've got to start with this unbelief and shallow repentance, and now we're going to move on to the fulcrum of Jesus' promise of rest.

That brings us to verses 25-27 and God's gracious intervention. So, I think a natural question should arise for us if the people of the northern shores of Galilee who had the best seats to Jesus Christ.

They saw the Messiah clear and plain as day. They were neighbors with Him. They rubbed shoulders with His disciples. They were there. They saw it firsthand. And if they couldn't get it, if they couldn't turn from their sin and believe, if they missed the major point that tops all other points, the biggest point of all, if they missed the point, living right there with the point, who then can be saved?

[20 : 15] Who then can believe? If they couldn't get it, what makes you or I someone on the other side of the world who's never seen Jesus Christ? We have never possibly seen a miracle to the degree that Jesus Christ or His original disciples would have carried forth.

Right? So, who are we? If they couldn't believe and they saw the point when the point was walking on earth and performing miracles, how could we then, how could anyone be saved?

They saw His mighty works. But Jesus doesn't despair. That's an important note to make here in verses 25 through 26. Jesus does not despair because the people did not make the point.

They didn't make the connection. They didn't see Him for who He was. He doesn't despair. What does He do? In verses 25 and 26, look again. At that time, so this is in the midst of their unbelief, at that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father.

Let's pause there for a moment. That is not what I would envision the first words of our Lord and King to be when faced with human unbelief, when faced with the northern shores of Galilee rejecting Him, missing the whole point of Christ.

[21 : 29] That's not the words I would anticipate or think that would come out of our Savior's mouth. Yet that's exactly what Jesus does. He takes this moment as a springboard to give thanks and praise to His Father.

For what has the Father done? He says, 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. So He takes this, and it might surprise us that the unbelief of Galilee and the coming judgment caused Jesus to rejoice over the Father's sovereign authority.

Jesus rejoiced. His heart leaps up from within Him when He considers the Father's great power and the Father's great prerogative and His authority over salvation.

Salvation is a sovereign affair. It requires a king who makes decrees, who carries out and executes those decrees on behalf of those who do not deserve it.

[22 : 35] It is nothing less than that. And Jesus is rejoicing in that truth. This royal rejoicing in His Father's sovereign authority. And this must be the Christian's response as well, that we would tremble.

We would rejoice in the greatness of God and salvation because Jesus then takes us to verse 27, to the very edge of the Pacific Ocean, the deepest point of that ocean.

And He makes us look in deep, deep down where we can't see any further. We can only imagine how deep this goes. And even then, we run out of imagination. Verse 27, let's read the Mariana Trench in the Pacific Ocean.

He says, 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.

Wow. This is Jesus opening a truth before us like a heavenly portal, that we're getting a glimpse of things that we really don't fully understand, and it makes our hearts to become full, become awed of the greatness of God and His authority.

[23 : 49] So what is Jesus saying here? Jesus is saying that all things have been handed over to Him, that He's been delegated authority by the Father. And the Son, therefore, Jesus says, has infallible power and authority.

It has been given to Him by the Father to grant salvation to whomever He wills. Whomever Jesus decides to save, Jesus is telling us, the Father delegated that authority to Him.

And further, He says there's this secret. The secret of the Son is only known to the Father. And the only one who knows the Father is the Son. So who of us is worthy to enter into that secret knowledge that the Son has of the Father and that the Father has the Son?

None of us are worthy. None of us can rise to such heights. None of us have what it takes, certainly in our sin nature, even further, just being created, being a part of the creation.

We do not have what it takes to stand between the Father and the Son to know this secret knowledge that only the Father and the Son can share. There's no human way that any of us can enter this knowledge, whether here or in Capernaum or Chorazin or Bethsaida.

[25 : 02] None of us can grasp it. It's too beyond us. Our natural state is that of darkness and unbelief. It's at such a depth, it's at such a depth that causes us that nothing within us gives us the grace to be able to believe or to repent.

It's beyond us. We don't have this knowledge. So we have to cast off any high-minded thinking that people have the ability in themselves to receive Jesus Christ. They cannot.

Jesus made that plain. They cannot. This notion should be waved away by what Jesus had to say. But, however, what is impossible with any human to receive the Son of God?

We also read Jesus telling us that God the Father has made a way that the Father would be known through the Son. The Father would reveal His love, His greatness, His goodness through the Son's power and through the Son's prerogative.

So the eternal, the invisible Father sent His Son embodied in the world. We will know Him and we have loved Him and we desire Him now. And Jesus was sent into the world, body and soul, to enact the Father's holy plan of impossible salvation for mankind.

[26 : 18] Therefore, the fact that Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, anywhere else in the world that rejects Jesus Christ outright, it does not reflect poorly on God's power to save.

Let's not make that mistake. Are there unbelievers in your family? That does not reflect poorly on God's ability to save. No.

Jesus would rejoice and He would say, rather, in His estimation, to His delight, human unbelief only illustrates further that it's the Father's gracious will that the Son is revealed only to a select group of people.

And who are these people? Well, Jesus tells us. He says, little children. That little children will be recipients of that high and holy knowledge between the Son and the Father.

Secrets that mankind should not know. That we don't deserve to know. Yet Jesus just told us there's a group, a select group, who are little children. Those little children that spout nonsense, that skin their knees, that get scared at dark.

[27 : 24] Those little ones that are irrational, that make a lot of mistakes, that frustrate you, moms and dads. They don't listen for the thousandth time, right?

Those little ones. Those little children are the ones that the Father has declared that the Son will reveal. They're the ones, the select group, that get this secret knowledge of salvation in Jesus Christ.

What a thought. These little children are clueless. They're helpless beings, right? They don't have resources. They don't have power. And they know that. Their philosophy is simple.

The world's big and most of the stuff in the world is way beyond me, right? That's how a child approaches the world. So therefore, when it's pitch black, they cry out. They're not ashamed to admit they're scared of the dark.

How many adults have you met who are willing to concede that? Not many. Because they're ashamed, right? Of their children. They will scream when the lights go off and let you know, could you please leave the door open just to crack, right?

[28 : 26] Or if they fall down and they skin their knee or they're on their bike or something happens, they will let you know. You don't have to wonder whether a child hurt themselves. You will hear it.

And they're not ashamed to let every, not just you, everyone know. Like a siren, like a wailing siren from a fire truck. They will let you know in the entire world that they have hurt themselves in a terrible way.

And they demand your immediate attention because they don't know what else to do except die. Right? That's a child. They perceive their need.

They perceive their desperation. They perceive their weakness, their fragility. And so, in spite of themselves, unembarrassed by their plight, they cry out.

And Jesus contrasts little children with the wise and the understanding. It's the can-do spirit. The can-do spirit of the world that permeates those who are wise and those who are understanding.

[29 : 27] In contrast, the pitiable, weak and fragile, needy little children, the wise and the understanding are those who would trust in themselves. And they trust in their own spiritual and moral ability and goodness to save them.

They trust, right, themselves. The wise and the understanding, they have confidence. They've got their experts. They've dialed up. They know online those experts that they can listen to. They've gathered for themselves people who tell them what they want to hear, how they can fix their problems, what's wrong with them, what's wrong with their world and their situation, how they can make it better, how they can find comfort and relief and to satisfy and to placate their deepest longings, right?

The wise and the understanding have a direction and they're going for it. They have their passion, their treasure, and they're running and they're convinced this is the way. They have confidence. And it's by the wisdom of the world that they falsely conceive of ways to seek wholeness, to seek happiness and relief apart from the gospel of Jesus.

And it's just as Christ instructed, it's the Father's gracious will that only little children get to open this gift. Not the wise, not the understanding.

Only little children, in other words, ruined and humbled sinners, those who are like little children, who are running, who are fleeing from the wrath that is to come.

[30 : 47] They get it. They understand the nature of Jesus Christ, just how desperately you and I need Jesus. They get it. Little children, we understand.

And brothers and sisters, we must remain like little children if we are to live in the good of the Father's gracious will. We've got to be ourselves little children.

If we're going to enjoy the gospel and take in all of its life-giving rich resources and blessings, we have to remain fixed on Jesus Christ.

Like a child in a frightening situation. Have you ever been around a child during a terrible thunderstorm? How that child will naturally be drawn to your side where you would protect them, where you tell them it's going to be okay.

We're under it. We're under a house, a roof. We're fine. That's how we need to be with Jesus, brothers and sisters. You must be clinging to the leg of Jesus Christ just like a child in the midst of a thunderstorm clings to the leg of their mother, to their father.

[31 : 56] We must be that close. We must feel it this way. And as we do so, Jesus will reveal to us the Father's gracious will because we are acting like little children.

This is one of those times where yes, you should act like a little child. The rest of life, be responsible. Get a job. Don't be like a child. Don't think like a child. But here, Jesus makes it plain to us.

Be like children. So by God's grace, we will do that. We will turn from our sin. We will cling to Jesus Christ and rest under the Christ who rescues us from his wrath.

This brings us to our final and the incredible invitation, the point of incredible invitation to enter Jesus's rest. Verses 28 through 30. So these final words, we are taking the second part of the medicine.

The first part of the medicine was the bitter part, right? The sobering reality, the judgment's coming. The second part here is the sweet, the tender invitation of our Savior. And it's now, only now, that we've heard the first part, that we understand the wrath that is to come and the Father's gracious will, that his intervention, that's working, that's making us to be like children, to humble ourselves.

- [33 : 12] It's only there that we now can hear the words of Jesus in verses 28 through 30 and understand what he's meaning. So let's look and read what he says. He says, Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, 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.

So Jesus, right there, makes a very exclusive claim. And it's important for we note this. In what Jesus spoke and how he spoke, the pronouns he used, the possessive pronouns, he's saying, he is making it super clear to every person who would hear that to have comfort, to have rest, to have peace means we've got to come to him on his terms, on his turf, in his way.

We've got to take on his yoke. We've got to take on his way. We've got to learn from him. It's all about him.

We come to him. And if we do so, it's there that we will have that light yoke, that easy burden. So Christ commands us to come. And this Savior speaks these words to people where weariness abounds.

- [34 : 33] And I'm right with you. I think all of us could probably say that we're living a life, we're in the middle of what we would describe as a wearisome or tiresome life. This is a hard, hard life to live, isn't it?

But I don't think I've met, I've never met, I'll just say this, I've never met someone who said life's a breeze. It's daisies, roses, it's amazing. And I just skip through it like tulips, right?

I've never met someone who could raise their hand, say my life has been so easy from day one. I've never had problems. It's been great. It's just been on the up and up. That's not how this world works.

You know that. You feel it. The burdens. We do come day by day with the realization that we are burdened. We are weary. There is a wearisome, a tiresomeness about the world we live in.

It's like living in the acid rain. The world around us, it burns away on our spiritual soul. It burns away. It's hard. It's an uphill battle. We're commanded to carry a cross.

- [35 : 36] This is not tulips and roses or daisies. So to hear Jesus say the words, come to me and I will give you rest, it might come across to you as puzzling.

It doesn't make sense because you have come. You have, for many of you, you have believed in Jesus Christ and you're trying to make the connection. Well, I have come to Jesus, but it's still hard.

It's still wearisome. I'm still exhausted. What's the connection? What am I missing? In other words, and we could summarize the struggle this way. Lord, I have loved and followed you, but I have yet to experience the easy yoke and the light burden.

It seems anything but light or easy. Anything but light or easy. And the sources of our weariness are legion. For some of us, it's a physical condition.

You've suffered terribly. Physical problems. For others, it's the hard questions that those physical sufferings can create. For others, it's the sins or the consequences of sins from our past or things that we're struggling with right now, the consequences of those things.

[36 : 44] For others, it might be a breaking marriage or a broken marriage or broken relationships that weigh upon us with impossible weight. But Jesus doesn't go into details about the source of weariness.

He simply says, for us to come. Because the answer is the same. Regardless of the circumstance, regardless of why you're weary, regardless of how your weariness came to be, the same prescription fits all.

One size fits all. Jesus says, come to me. Learn from me. Take my yoke upon you and you will have rest.

He commands these things and he persuades us. I love this about what Jesus says in these verses. Jesus persuades us because he anticipates our responses in these moments.

He anticipates that you are weary and you're not making the connections as deep as you ought to. You're not seeing how point A to point B works out. How you picked up your cross to follow Jesus and you're still waiting for the light and the easy burden, the easy yoke, that rest to your soul possibly.

[37 : 54] He knew that very well in our flesh and the world and the devil would conspire to have us believe that the yoke is not working for us. It maybe works for others, but it's not working for me.

That could be our temptation. But Jesus anticipates this. He destroys those lies. He stomps right on them. He says, I am gentle. I am lowly of heart.

That's what he says. So he makes a call for us to come and then he persuades us further. He says, I am gentle and I am lowly. Jesus is gentle, which means that the many hardships that we meet with are not the result of an unfeeling providence, as though God is just pressing things haphazardly on your life to make you miserable.

That's not what's going on. No, Jesus treats us with all gentleness in his sovereign care. Yes, as providence might confuse us, we may not be able to understand.

Right? We're not going to fall prey to what the old hymn puts it, that we should not judge the Lord by feeble sense. We should not do that. We should not judge the Lord by what our eyes see or what our flesh feels.

[39 : 08] We should not judge the Lord by whether we're having a good day or a bad day or a good life or a bad life. We should not. We must not judge the Lord by our experience or feelings.

No. Just say no. Just say no. But rather take up what Jesus is showing us here and be persuaded by the Savior himself that he is gentle and that he is lowly, which means he associates with those who are in low condition.

He associates with little children, those who are vulnerable, those who are weak, those who are dependent and needy, who offer him nothing in return for his love and care, who can offer nothing of meat or substance compared to what he brings.

Your endless need for forgiveness, your endless need for strength and for resources, it doesn't tire Jesus out. He's not a wearisome Savior.

He's not like you. He's not like me. He is Almighty God. He is the Savior. His resources and blessings are endless. Upon him, the establishing of the government is upon his shoulders.

[40 : 20] Jesus has all might and all authority. Therefore, your weakness, your sin, your need, your desperation, go to him. You're not tiring him out.

And that needs to be said. It needs to be said many times over. Because how often might we feel that the Lord has strict limits to the number of prayers or the number of needs that we feel that we bring before him.

But rather, Jesus actually puts it the other way. If anything else, your sense of just how needy you are, your sense of your depravity and sin, your sense of those realities actually better positions you to know the Lord Jesus Christ and all of his grace and power.

Because you're not going to be wise in understanding, having it all together. No! You're going to be weak. You're going to be needy. You're going to be a little child. And you're going to look to him with faith, with grace.

And you're going to know that as 1 Peter 5, 7 tells us, that as we cast our burdens upon him, we do so because he cares for us. So the Lord is glorified.

[41 : 30] I love this. He's glorified and he's showing us this, that he's glorified by associating with little children, by associating with those who are sin and weakness make them to be a constant source and a drain on his grace.

But his grace cannot be drained. It is a drainless grace, if that was such a word. It is a drainless grace, what the Lord gives to us. There is no bottom, there is no shore to it, it is endless.

This is the gentle, the lowly, hearted Savior. Savior. So Jesus anticipates and he then persuades us to come to him, that we would know his grace.

So are we heavy laden? Are we weary? Well, what's the prescription that Jesus would give us here? How do we make the connection? Well, I would urge you that as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you would become very stubborn on this.

That you would refuse to give ear to the devil. You would just say no to judging the Lord by your sense and what you can see, by judging the Lord by how you feel, whether you're having a good day, bad day, good life or bad life, that you would refuse those things.

[42 : 39] And further, you would become stubborn in your giving praise and honor and glory to Jesus with the life that he gave you. He gave you the life, the breath that's in your lungs this very moment.

He gives it to you. So what will we do with it? We will praise him. Whether he slay us, blessed be the name of the Lord. Whether he gives to us, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Whether he takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord. We become stubborn on this, become like a donkey, like a mule on this point. So you're supposed to be like a little child and you're supposed to be like a donkey this morning.

This is not very flattering. I apologize. But it makes the point. Have you ever tried to pull a donkey? They will not go. I've never tried it, but I've watched it. I have, I'm smart enough to know not to mess with farm animals.

Watch enough YouTube videos to know that a lot of people get hurt that way. So when and if you try to pull on a stubborn donkey, it will not move. That's where they get their stereotype from.

[43 : 43] So the Lord commands us to be stubborn on this, that you would stay put. You would stay put in your praise, in your gratitude, in your thanksgiving to Jesus Christ. You would stay put in your faith to trust Him that though your life might be wearisome and hard, He is working by the Spirit and He will sweeten and lighten the load by the Holy Spirit in your heart that you would know His grace even where you are standing here today.

Whatever confines, whatever burdens, whatever wearisomeness you have to carry right now, the Lord will sweeten it by His Spirit and by His grace. And you should trust Him for that.

You must trust Him for that. Be stubborn. So I call you, I urge you this morning to be stubborn. And in and as you do that and trusting Him, do you long to see Him more clearly?

Do you long to walk under His yoke with joy? Then we must remain yoked to Christ, to His purpose, to transform us and to discipline us for our good.

That's what's going on here. So are we weary? That we do not move, but we recommit ourselves to the Savior's oak so we can receive His sweet rest. So rest under Christ who rescues us from His wrath.

[45 : 02] Would you pray with me? Our Father in heaven, we are grateful for Your truth and for Your promise. Lord, You have promised to Your people, to every one of Your disciples, that we would know rest, that we would know peace.

And for many of us this morning, Lord, it is a fleeting thing to know that peace and to have that rest of soul. And we know, Lord, that's not Your fault.

Lord, that is not as though You're withholding any good thing from Your people. But Lord, it's our sense of it. And we ask You to deliver us, God. Help us, Jesus, to know Your faithfulness.

And Lord, help us to become so loyal, so stubborn in our commitment of faith to serve You and to love You wherever You lead us. That You would cause us to take up our cross, to trust You and to not judge You with a feeble sense.

Would You bless Your people? Would You build us up in love? In Jesus' name, Amen.