

I Will Give You Rest

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[0:00] Please turn with me to Matthew chapter 11, Gospel of Matthew, the 11th chapter. Who here needs rest?

I'm not talking about a nap because you just had lunch, although I know most of us need that. I'm talking about a different sort of rest.

The fast-paced world that we live in contributes to frequent stress. And burnout and tiredness. The pressures of the workplace can lead to such pressure that when you finally do have a chance to sleep, sleep doesn't come.

And your burden is the greater the next day because of it. And the difficulty in your home and raising and training your children may leave you with a feeling that there's no rest for the weary. Maybe your schoolwork or preparing for finals this week has left you with a burden that you believe is beyond your ability to bear. It's not right that any teacher should do this to me.

[1:09] It is right. And you'll get over it. Maybe trying to maintain relationships with all of your friends and family.

Trying to keep each one happy. Each one feeling special. Drains you emotionally and physically. On top of all this, maybe you wrongly feel a pressure to be perfect. God won't accept me if I fail. God won't accept me if I stumble and fall. Perhaps you're bearing the weight of the guilt of your sin. You know that it's wrong, but you're attached to it.

You love it. You don't want to give it up. You're unwilling to seek forgiveness. And yet you know it's wrong in your heart of hearts. And it's so hard to let go, but you think on it.

And the guilt is almost overwhelming such that you cannot bear it. But you add all of these things together and there's the potential for you to be a weary, heavy laden person.

[2:11] Are you weary today? Are you burdened? I can't help you. I can't give you rest. Much as I would like to take your burdens and shoulder them myself.

Much as I would like to be able to relieve each of you of the particular stresses and pressures you face each day. I can't do that. Much as I would like to take away your sin. I can't do that.

But I know one who can. And I want to tell you about him this afternoon. I know a merciful Savior who is gentle and loving and can deliver you.

I know a Savior who said in Matthew 11, verses 28-30, Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Do you know this Savior? Do you know what it is to have found rest in the arms of this Savior?

[3:24] To have His loving, gentle yoke upon your shoulders? If you don't, come and learn of Him this afternoon. And if you do, come and be reminded afresh of the great privilege that is ours in coming to Christ and casting ourselves at His feet.

And so, finding rest. And a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light. On these Sunday afternoons, we've looked at various words of our Lord, sayings of the Savior, and there have been some hard words for us in Matthew 11.

We've learned that the Christian life is going to be difficult. That it's violent even. That it's warfare. And it won't be easy walking the path that leads to glory and to life.

We've learned that there's great danger with great privilege and light. You've received clear teaching. And you know the truth. And so, your responsibility is great.

Just like it was for Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum. And I've been promising, as we've looked at these messages, to get to the end of the chapter, where Jesus gives us truth that balances these others.

[4:38] Yes, the Christian life is difficult and one of warfare, but when you're walking it with Christ, you can find true and genuine rest for your soul. Yes, there's great responsibility that comes with great privilege and light and great danger, should you reject it, but there's great peace should you run to the Savior.

And rest in His arms. And so, we arrive at these verses tonight, or this afternoon, verses 28 through 30. And there's three simple things that we want to see here.

There's a problem, and there's a solution, and there's a promise. A problem, a solution, and a promise. And the problem, there's two of them. One is that we are tired.

There are people in the world who are weary and burdened. And the second is that there are people who are ignorant. People who need teaching. And let's talk about the first first. The first problem.

Being weary and heavy laden. There's two different kinds of weariness here. There's the weariness that comes from your labor. That's the word weary. And then there's a burden that someone else places on you.

[5:47] That's being heavy laden. Weariness. Some translations translate it labor. Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden. And the word means both.

It's the labor that you do and the weariness that comes from doing that labor. Maybe you were out yesterday in your yard working. And you worked hard. You labored hard in between the rain.

And then at the end of the day, you were weary because of all your labor. And that's what Jesus, the word that he uses here, has in mind. The problem isn't that we need to be done with labor.

Say, well, if laboring makes me weary, then I'm going to stop laboring. I'm going to stop working.

Because Jesus, after he promises rest, he turns around and he puts a yoke back on our neck. And we're going to have to work.

The problem is doing the wrong kind of labor. Laboring for the wrong master. Or perhaps even laboring for the right master for the wrong reasons.

[6:47] And the wrong motives. And we'll consider both. Laboring for the wrong master, first of all, is wearisome. It is toilsome. If your master today is not Jesus, then it is the devil.

It's Satan. And we've spoken before of how deceptive he is. And how he tries to make his service look appealing. And he'll say, my yoke is easy. My burden is light.

Come serve under me. But the reality is that he's a taskmaster. But he will try to deceive. I love how J.C. Ryle puts it. He says, young men. Women as well.

But he says, young men, run into sin. And then they say, I did not think about it. It did not look like sin. Sin, not look like sin. What would you expect? Sin will not come to you saying, I am sin.

It would do little harm if it did. Sin always seems good and pleasant and desirable at the time of commission. And so Satan says, my yoke is easy. My burden is light.

[7:45] Come serve under me. But you'll find that it's wearisome work. You'll find that he'll ensnare you and enslave you. And once you've started down that path, you can't set yourself free from it.

You've enjoyed the little bit of pleasure that there was. And now you'd like to be done with it. But Satan is a taskmaster and he's got his chains on you. And he won't let you go. And so the pleasure is long worn off.

But here you still trudge along in your sin. Serving the wrong master is toilsome. It will make you weary. It's labor that gives you no return. Though you may think there's some pleasure, some good in it.

It's weary. And so, if you're weary of serving the wrong master today, Jesus has a word for you. But sometimes it can be doing the right thing for the wrong motive.

You know, even in the service of Jesus, you can be heavy laden sometimes if you're serving him for the wrong reasons. If you're doing it all for your own comfort. When we do what God has called us to, only for our benefit, we're missing the point.

[8:54] Whether you're a breadwinner or a housewife, mother or a student. If you're in it for your own benefit, I'm just trying to make a living and have a comfortable life for my family.

If that's it, then you're missing it. I'm just trying to raise my kids and have them be good and quiet kids so that they stay out of my hair and out of my way so that I can have a normal life.

Once you have kids, life is never... Well, normal changes. But if your goal is to just have them be good enough so that your life can be normal, so that you can be comfortable, you're missing the point.

If you're doing your schoolwork, just so you can get good grades, just so you can go to college, just so you can get a diploma, just so you can get a good job and make a lot of money and have a good life for yourself, then you're missing it.

There's something far greater in all of these callings. God has called you to these things. It's His work that you're doing. You're not doing it for yourself. What is the chief end of man? Say it together.

[9 : 57] The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Not to enjoy yourself forever. To enjoy Him forever.

And so whatever it is that He's called you to do, do it for His glory. Do it for the furtherance of His kingdom. A self-centered life is a wearisome life.

You will never satisfy yourself. There will be always something more that you want. Always something more that you think you need. And working to that end will wear you out.

But laboring for the glory of God. Laboring to see His kingdom extended in the world. But there's something that won't bear you down. So doing it for your own comfort, that's wearisome work.

Doing it for the praise of men, that's wearisome work. So that others will be pleased with you. Just trying to think about how to keep everybody in your circle of family and friends happy.

[10 : 53] And happy with you especially. Can be wearisome. Trying to make sure everybody thinks you're something special. That's tiresome work.

Think of exactly the right things to say. Exactly the right things to wear. Exactly the right things to do so that everyone will think you're wonderful. That's wearisome.

The Lord doesn't tell us to work for the eyes of men, but rather for His eye upon us. Well, I just want everybody to know what a godly person I am so that I have a chance to witness to them.

It's not about you. It's about the Lord who's called you. And so, serving the wrong master, or even serving the right master for the wrong reasons is tiresome work.

It'll wear you out. Are you weary today for that reason? But then there can be burdens placed on you by others. Heavy laden. The Pharisees were experts at this in a couple of ways.

[11 : 52] Sometimes they went beyond God's law and added laws to it. Laws that God had not made, the Pharisees made, and they kept them themselves and they expected other people to keep them.

And so they placed a great burden on all that they taught. It seems to be what Jesus is talking about in Matthew 23 when He says, they tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Everything they do is done for men to see. But even if the Pharisees were teaching the keeping of God's law, not extra laws, when they were teaching to keep God's law, they were placing an undue burden on men because they were teaching that that was the way of salvation.

That they could be saved by such by keeping these laws. Placing the eternal destiny squarely on our own shoulders. And that's a burden that no man can bear. So if you today are bearing that sort of burden, here we seek to keep from placing that kind of burden on you.

We aim to preach only what's contained in the Scriptures and we preach a salvation of free grace because it's what the Bible teaches. Something that our works can add nothing to.

[13 : 07] It's by grace alone that we've been saved through faith alone and Christ alone. Pray that God would make us faithful teachers of His Gospel, of His truth. And so don't listen to teaching to lies that would add to God's requirements or make your salvation dependent on your own work.

If somebody teaches you that, they're putting a burden on you that you need not bear. Because you cannot save yourself. And you'll never get out from under that load. And if they're adding to God's law, then still it seems they're making that same burden of saving yourself.

Well, if you just do a little bit more. If you just do this. If you just do this. A little bit more. It's a burden that we can't bear. Go back and listen to the two Sunday School lessons from the past two weeks on legalism and understand that your righteous standing before God is in Christ alone who is the solution to our problem with sin.

And so one problem that Jesus is speaking of today that you might have today is for those who are weary. Those who are heavy laden. Burdened. Unduly.

But a second problem is ignorance. You notice He says, take My yoke upon you in verse 29 and learn from Me. There's a problem of ignorance or a lack of teaching at least.

[14:29] Here were Jesus' own countrymen who were needlessly weary and heavy laden because they were poorly taught. And Jesus' command comes to them to learn from Him.

That indicates they were listening to the wrong teachers. And you see how closely related these things are. People are listening to the wrong teachers. They're listening to the Pharisees that say you need to do all these things outside the law and you need to do these things in the law in order to be right with God.

And so you can see then how they were listening to the wrong teaching and that led to their being heavy laden. The two are connected. The problem of weariness and heavy laden. Being overburdened.

And the question comes to us. Who are you listening to? Who are your teachers? Are your teachers ones that are filling your mind with things that are making you ignorant as Jesus, the ones Jesus was speaking to here are?

Are they those that are telling you you need to be concerned with the opinions of men? You need to be concerned with your appearance and with all of these things. You know they're laying a burden on you that's just going to weigh you down?

[15:39] There's a legion of teachers who would seek to instruct you in entertainment. There's music in TV and movies and magazines and the internet.

What are you learning from them? What are you learning? Are you learning how to follow sin and Satan and your own fleshly desires?

What are you learning from your friends who teach you? What are you learning from your teachers at school? If anything that you're learning doesn't stack up with what the Bible says, then you have a problem if you're listening to it, heeding it.

And you need to listen to the right teacher. The only safe teacher is the Word of God or someone who's faithfully teaching the Word of God. And so you listen to this Word rather than all the other voices that are out there seeking to teach you.

You listen to your parents as they instruct you in this Word. Listen to your pastors. Listen to your Sunday school teachers. Listen to the Word of God. Listen to the voice of Jesus. Because if you don't, you're doomed for a life of ignorance and weariness and being heavy laden.

[16:49] You're young now and you think you can bear the burden. You're doing pretty good. Keeping everybody happy. Keeping everybody pleased. with you. You'll get tired of it soon. It'll weigh you down. It'll be a burden that you can't bear any longer.

So give it up now while there's still time. But Jesus doesn't just diagnose our problem. He offers the solution. And what a sweet solution it is.

The first words out of His mouth in these verses, come to Me. Come to Me. What a sweet command. J.C. Ryle says, all who feel a load on their heart.

You've got a load on your heart today. All who feel a load on their heart of which they would fain get free. A load of sin or a load of sorrow or a load of anxiety or a load of remorse. All. Whosoever they may be.

Whosoever they may be. And whatsoever their past lives. All such are invited to come to Christ. No one excluded there. Every person here today hear the call of Jesus.

[17:50] Come to Me. Come to Me. And He will receive you. And notice that it's a command. Come to Me. It's not something optional.

And so if you don't come, you're disobeying. And you're adding to your own judgment. But friends, this isn't a difficult command to keep. Did you hear about the gentle Savior this morning?

Gentle Jesus who was so willing to receive those that came unto Him when He walked on this earth? He hasn't changed. Today, He sits in heaven as gentle and willing to receive you as when He walked on this earth.

You're not coming to a harsh Master. You're coming to one who is gentle. He says it of Himself, I am gentle and humble. Lowly in heart. You're not going to be greeted with a cold stare, a haughty gaze.

He won't turn His back to you. He'll receive you with open arms. Come to Me. He wouldn't say, come to Me, if He didn't want you to come. If He wouldn't receive you when you do come.

[18:55] Come to Me, He says. He says, again in the Gospels, even as we saw this morning, we see His gentle touch, His loving care. That's who you're approaching. You're not coming to Mount Sinai.

You're coming to Mount Calvary. A gentle Savior. And His solution for you is to give you a new burden. A new yoke to bear.

You're not now, when you come to Christ, free to do whatever you want. Ah, I can live however I want. You're free to live according to His truth. You're free to walk in His paths.

And following Him, you can't even really call it a burden. Because we read in 1 John 5.3, this is love for God to obey His commands. And His commands are not burdensome.

And so it's a new yoke, but it's not really a burden at all. It's a joy. And you'll find it will give you a new heart that makes you long to obey Him. Instead of that heavy service, that wearisome service, to say, freedom to serve your Savior, Christ.

[20:02] Matthew Henry says, the yoke of Christ's commands is an easy yoke. Gracious. It is sweet and pleasant. Nothing to hurt us. But on the contrary, much to refresh us.

It is a yoke that is lined with love. And so, now we walk free from guilt. I love the picture in Pilgrim's Progress when Christian loses his burden at the cross.

Oh, if you've never looked at the illustrated version, Dangerous Journey, his burden is marvelously illustrated. He's bent over with the weight of his burden. And some of you are carrying that burden of sin and guilt today.

So much that you can't even stand up straight. It weighs you down. It's too much for you to bear, but you come to Jesus. Come to Me, He says. You come to the cross, and you find that the burden is released.

And there's no more guilt. Because Jesus has taken the punishment you deserve. And so we walk not worried about what others think now. No longer consumed with that burden of the opinion of man.

[21:07] But only thinking of our Father's eye upon us. Eager to honor Him and to love the One who's shown us such great love. This time, listen to the words of John Newton. One who knew something about slavery and being set free.

He says, From these things, I hope it will appear that the yoke of Christ is easy. His people serve Him because they love Him. They love His ways. He is their strength. He comforts them now.

And will be their portion forever. There's great delight in following Christ. We need a new burden. We need a new yoke. A new Master. That is not wearisome, says our Savior.

And we need a new teacher as well. That's part of His solution. Someone to point us to the truth.

You know, Jesus both points us to the solution and He is the solution. He points us to the way and He is the way, the truth, and the life.

He is the deliverance from our burden of sin and guilt. He's our glorious, gentle Master. We must listen to Him and live as His glad servants, obeying all that He has commanded us.

[22:12] Come unto Me, all you who are weary and heavy laden. And He'll give us a new yoke. He places an easy yoke upon us. A light burden. And then comes the promise.

Sweet words of the Savior, I will give you rest. I will give you rest and you will find rest for your souls. Again, Ryle says, there is rest in Christ.

Rest of conscience and rest of heart. Rest built on pardon of all sin. Rest flowing from peace with God. There is no rest like this rest. There is no peace like this peace.

Even as we've seen in Philippians, a peace that passes understanding. You know, no massage could ever make you feel this good.

No full, complete night of sleep could ever leave you feeling this refreshed. This rested. No pill could ease your burdens like this.

[23:13] This perfect rest. Rest from the burden of sin and guilt and slavery. Rest from living for the wrong reasons. Rest from trying to earn favor with God. In Christ, you won't find a life without trouble.

We've seen that right here in Matthew 11. But you can find a life without worry in the midst of that trouble because Jesus is our help and strength.

Come to me, He says. When we come by faith, when He calls, we find certain peace and rest.

Whatever He calls us to is far better than that to which the world and the flesh and the devil call us.

So you come to Jesus today and you find rest in Him. Rest in this life in the midst of all these trials.

You might say, it doesn't feel very restful right now. Has God sustained you through the midst of it?

Are you bearing that burden alone? You're not, even though sometimes we forget. Aren't we silly?

You know, we heard about the Red Sea for just a moment this afternoon.

[24:17] The Israelites, this great deliverance. And then, a few days later, on the other side of the Red Sea, there's no food. We're going to starve. And they had forgotten.

The rest that they found just days earlier crossing the Red Sea. And aren't we like that? We think, Jesus promised me rest, but man, this isn't very restful. I'm in the midst of a trial here.

I could use some help, Lord. Oh, He is helping you. And if He wasn't, you wouldn't even be able to call out to Him like that. You wouldn't be able to shake your fist at Him like you do in those moments were He not sustaining you and giving you help.

And so don't forget, in the midst of your trial, don't think that God isn't helping you and giving you aid along the way. He is. And pray that He would continue to sustain you. It's not a life free from trouble.

But it is a life of rest in the midst of that trouble. And so there's rest for us in this life. But there's a greater rest waiting for us. Then I heard a voice from Heaven write, Blessed are the dead who die and the Lord from now on.

[25:21] Yes, says the Spirit, they will rest from their labor for their deeds will follow them and there in glory in Heaven will be perfect rest. No more sin. No more temptation to sin.

No more struggling with it. No more pain. No more suffering. No more trouble. No more trials. No more turmoil. No more weight on our shoulders.

Perfect rest when we arrive in glory. All of this Jesus holds out to you. Rest in the midst of your trials here. Rest with no trials when we arrive in glory.

Weary. Overburdened today? Weary? Weary of trying to do it on your own? Weary of trusting in yourself you come to Jesus today?

Weary of following Christ today maybe? Take a look and check your motives. See if you're following Him for the right reasons, whether for your own comfort or for His glory. The work God has called us to is glorious work.

[26:27] Are you physically beaten down? Worn to the very end of your strength? And William Hendrickson makes a connection, and I think rightly so, between resting in Christ and our physical well-being.

And he says, the physical strength, or excuse me, the authoritative advice Jesus gives is not only good for the soul when he did, it also greatly benefits the body.

The rest, peace of heart and mind, which Jesus here provides, is the very opposite of the aggravated mental stress that sends so many people to doctors, hospitals, and death.

Absence of peace may lead to ulcers, colitis, high blood pressure, heart attacks, etc. The teachings of Christ, if taken to heart, have a curative effect on the entire person, soul, and body.

He is a complete Savior. That's not to say if you're sick, it's because you're not resting in Jesus, but there is a connection here between resting in Him and physical well-being.

[27:35] Do you know this complete Savior today? Are you resting in Christ today? In His arms? Resting in His work alone? Resting in His strength to see you through. He holds out His arms to you today and He says, Come.

Come to Me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden. And I will give you rest. And you know what happens if you come? All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.

Or I will never drive away. And so when Jesus says, Come, He means it. When He says, Come, He won't turn you away. Whenever He says, Come in the Gospel, it's a gracious invitation.

It's come to the wedding feast. Come, partake in the Kingdom. Come, be fishers of men. Come to Me, and I will give you rest. Why wouldn't you come? Come. It's a sweet promise that's held out.

Rest. No more turmoil in your mind. No more struggling. No more pain. Eternal rest even to come. It's a gracious come. Won't you come to Jesus before He comes again in His power to judge the earth?

[28:44] And at that time, it will be too late for you to come. And so come now. Come now while there is yet time, while there is yet hope for you. And you will most certainly find rest.

We want to conclude today by singing Hymn 139. It speaks of our resting in this glorious Savior. Hymn 139, Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art.

Jesus says, Come. If you've come to Him, you praise God today that you're resting in Jesus. If you haven't, you come to God right now by faith and say, God, forgive me.

Give me grace to trust in Jesus. I do trust you, Savior. And He will save you. And you too can sing, I am resting in Jesus. And have that perfect rest that only comes from Him.

Father, we thank You that there is rest to be found in Christ. We thank You that we need not walk through this world weary and heavy laden. We thank You that we have a glorious Savior who has bid us come.

[29 : 50] We thank You that You have drawn many here to Yourself, enabled them to come and so to find that sweet rest. And we confess that we find day by day more and more of the greatness of His loving heart.

As mercies afresh are showered on us each day. As we find grace and strength to face each day. Something we know we couldn't do in our own strength. So we give You thanks for who Jesus is and what He has done for us.

Reveal Him in all His glory to lost sinners in our midst this day that they might come to Him. That they might have the burden of sin and guilt lifted from their shoulders and find sweet rest.

What a promise that You will give us rest. That we will find rest for our souls in coming to Christ. Give us then to be resting in Him. To be trusting in Him and Him alone.

Give us help even in the coming week to remember that our help and our strength is in Him. Not to seek to face this world alone in our own strength but to go from here encouraged and ready to live before a sinful world in Your strength.

[31 : 01] Seeking to bring You honor and glory. How we give You thanks and praise for this glorious Savior. Draw more to Him this day we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.