



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to Matthew 11:28-30

Title: The Christian's Rest

Theme: Relief from Life's Greatest Burdens

Series: Living in the Aroma of God's Grace

Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you 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." Pray!

Introduction: *It has been well said that "Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay and cost you more than you want to pay."* It is imperative that we understand that Christ came to redeem mankind from a sin-cursed world. Coming to Christ enables the child of God to overcome that spirit of religiosity and learn the joy of walking in step with the Holy Spirit who produces a purer and more spiritual way of worship to God and Christ. The key truth to today's text concerns the salvation of mankind's soul and how those who are heavy burdened with sin are to come to Christ for His yoke is light.

Propositions: *I would propose to you that sinners who find the rest which is promised through having Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, have the Lord's rest because they have responded to the Holy Spirit's convincing influence with a right heart of repentance.* He has convinced them of the righteousness of God and the fact there is a coming final Judgment. (John 16:8)

Repentant sinners live in the aroma of God's grace because they became aware of their sinful condition without Christ. They grew sick and tired of service to the sinful nature, the world's draw and the lies of the devil. They understand the dangers of living a life bound to the sinful nature.

Christians who find relief from life's greatest burdens are those who express the heart of Ephraim who expressed godly sorrow for his sins. He prayed, "After I strayed, I repented; after I came to understand, I beat my breast. I was ashamed and humiliated because I bore the disgrace of my youth." (Jeremiah 31:19) They are like the prodigal who came to his senses and confessed, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men." (Luke 15:17) They approach God like the tax collector who prayed, "...God, have mercy on me, a sinner." (Luke 18:13) They are responsive to the preaching of God's messages and say, "...Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) These are the heart attitudes of Christians who enjoy the full grace of God in their lives.

Interrogative Sentence: *Just what are the blessings of living in the aroma of God's grace?*

Transitional Sentence: *The first step to enjoying these blessings is to have an understanding of what is meant by saying the Lord's yoke is easy.* Jesus says, "For My yoke is easy and my burden is light." The Greek word for "easy" (*chrestos*) means to furnish what is needed, it can mean well-fitting or able to be used. The yoke that Christ puts on the child of God is not harsh or galling. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: William Barclay; Vines)

The great Christian historian William Barclay gives a little history about the Palestine ox-yokes. He tells us they were made of wood and the ox was brought to the carpenter and measurements were taken. The yoke was then roughed out and the ox was brought back to have the yoke tried on. Then the yoke was carefully adjusted, so that it would fit well, and not gall the neck of the patient beast. The yoke was literally tailor-made to fit the ox so he could give the best performance possible.

In those days, as now, shops had signs above the door; and it has been suggested that Christ may have made some of these oxen yokes. No doubt He was a great carpenter. (Mark 6:3) Many signs like today had nice short slogans. It has been suggested that a slogan on a sign above the door were Jesus worked as a young man could say, "My yokes fit well." I am not saying that Jesus had such a sign, only that the slogan would describe His ability to make yokes that would fit the oxen perfectly.

Christians who put on the yoke Christ has made for them for service with Him, find that the same Holy Spirit who raised Christ from the dead, indwells them with the power of God to achieve all that God has called them to do.

Transitional Sentence: *Living in the aroma of God's grace requires that a sinner in repentance put on the life of Christ. He then can find rest from the burden of sin that he had yoked himself to in his youth.* The greatest burden that faces mankind is sin. Through Jesus Christ being both Savior and Lord repentant sinners find relief from that burden. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) The Psalmist writes, "Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD'--and you forgave the guilt of my sin." (Psalm 32:5) The Book of Proverbs tells us this, "He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)

The Holy Spirit of Christ proclaims a wonderful truth through the writings of the beloved John. Upon our confession of sin to Him, Christians receive forgiveness. Their standing before God is not guilty because of the ultimate price paid by Jesus upon the Cross of Calvary. To forgive us our sins means to forgive the guilt of sin. (The Preacher's Outline Bible) The word "forgiveness" (*aphiemi*) gives the idea of the cancellation of all debts or the dismissal of charges. In reality it is our sins that put Christ on the Cross, yet because of the shed blood of Christ, all charges against us are dropped.

Abraham Lincoln was at a slave auction where he saw a beautiful black slave woman standing on an auction block to be sold. Men were bidding like crazy to purchase this beautiful black woman and it was clear that their intentions were to make her a plaything to feed their lust. Mr. Lincoln was bound and determined to become her redeemer and friend. He made it quite clear he was going to pay the highest price regardless. He won the bid. After purchasing her, Mr. Lincoln told the slave woman that she was free to go. However, of her own free will she chose to stay and serve Mr. Lincoln.

Just as those slave traders lusted after that beautiful woman, the pleasure of the flesh, the lures of the world, and the lies of the devil feed the sinful nature. Mankind's soul is in bondage to sin. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." (John 8:34)

Transitional Sentence: *The greatest burden of life, sin, finds relief in having Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.* The second greatest burden in a sin-stricken world is protecting and feeding the spiritual heart. Jesus said, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4) Jesus' instructions are "Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me..."

We sing a song that has this chorus "Jesus be Jesus in me." It is a great song and we should take to heart what the Bible teaches on how Jesus kept His relationship with God our Father alive and well as He walked in this sin-stricken world.

In most Bibles today you will find headings and after those headings there will be a number on Scriptures. These headings are called pericopes and they give you a brief description of a key truth found in those passages of Scripture. Today's key Scriptures are found under the heading "The Temptation of Jesus."

The great news is that Jesus Christ defeated Satan and purchased victory for the children of God. Jesus said, "...the prince of this world... Has no hold on Me. (John 14:30) Matthew 4:3 says, "The tempter came to [Jesus]." Jesus was attacked along three lines and He shows Christians how to find relief from the temptation of the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eyes.

Just as Jesus is the Son of God and has full authority over everything, Christians have Holy Spirit given gifts not to be used outside of God's perfect will. When Spiritual gifts are used to satisfy self or gain glory to oneself, sin abounds, but when used in accordance to God's will, they bring glory to Christ.

Just as the Lord Jesus knew what His purpose and calling was, Christians, by prayerfully reading and studying the Word of God, may know what God's will is for them. They are freed from the burden of being tempted to compromise God's will by staying obedient to what the Lord has revealed to them. Christians can literally overcome Satan's lie that says you can satisfy the lust of the eye by worshiping the things created and not give your worship only to the Creator.

Christians are now walking victories over pornography, the desire to get revenge, and chasing the world and the things in it. They have been relieved from the burden of the lust of the eye and have trained their eyes to look for the things of God, for the coming of Christ, and for God's guiding and protecting hand every day.

In Closing: *Christians find God's rest and relief from life's greatest burdens by going to Christ and taking on the yoke He has made for them.* They learn from Him because He paid the ultimate price so they are free from the burden of sin. When the accuser begins bringing up the past life before Christ, they do not become burdened down, they claim the precious blood of Christ that makes the worst sinner clean.

The burden of maintaining that live vibrant relationship with the Lord is made easy because they feed themselves the written Word of God and pray in Holy Spirit revelation and illumination so they may know and be empowered to overcome the lust of the flesh, the pride of life and the lust of the eyes.

Let us Pray!