

Come, All Who are Weary

Matthew 11:2-6, 25-30

² When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

⁴ Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

²⁷ “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

1. Rest in Reflecting on What God is Doing (vv. 2-6)

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- John the Baptist has been imprisoned by Herod Antipas, because John confronted Herod for seducing and marrying his brother’s wife. While in prison, John sends his disciples to ask Jesus whether he was the Messiah that they were waiting for, or should they be expecting someone else.
- During the baptism of Jesus, John had testified that Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. The Spirit of God had revealed to John that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, God’s chosen one.
- But, as he was in prison, John started to become weary, and doubts arose. He had been doing God’s work, calling people to repentance, and preaching about the kingdom of God. But, it doesn’t seem like anything has changed. He had expected that Jesus would bring restoration to Israel, that Jesus would bring judgment towards the wicked, those who do not repent. Yet, here he was in prison, and the unrepentant wicked people were still in power. John was weary and heavy laden.
- Jesus answered John’s disciples by asking them to report to John what they hear and see: ⁵ *The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.*

- These were things that the Old Testament prophets had prophesied about the Messiah. But as John was weary and discouraged by his circumstances, he needed some assurance, and Jesus pointed him to see that Jesus was ministering to the needs of the people, and this was evidence that the kingdom of God is here through Jesus.
- In pointing John to see what Jesus was doing, Jesus was also realigning John to his heart: his compassion and love for the people who are in need. That is what the kingdom of God is about: God caring for his people.
- All of us have been weary and heavy laden, some of us are weary and heavy laden now. Many times, we can be too overwhelmed with our circumstances, by what is happening to us, or by our expectations on how we think things should be, that our vision is blurred, we are unsure of the promises of God, we are unsure of his calling on our lives. We all need to be reassured in times of discouragement. God invites us to meditate on who he is and reflect on what he is doing.
- Reflections are necessary for us to process through what we are going through, help us process our thoughts and feelings, and help us face and work out our issues that is causing us to be weary and burdened. Prayerful reflections force us to slow down, to think, to feel, and to allow God to speak.
- Prayerful reflections and the meditation of God's word help us to address the issue, and it realigns us to God. We receive clarity for our blurred vision. As we prayerfully reflect, God often reminds us to focus on what he is doing, in our lives, and in the lives of people around us. God's work continues. He knows the challenges that we go through, he knows how overwhelmed we are, yet he points us to reflect on his work. He assures us that he's got this, that we can count on him.

2. Rest That is Available to All (vv. 25-27)

- In the middle part of Matthew chapter 11, Jesus spoke about:
 - (i) John: commending him for the work he did.
 - (ii) The people who had rejected both John and Jesus: compared them to children who were not satisfied with anything.
 - (iii) The judgment that awaits the unrepentant cities.
 - Jesus praised John and affirmed that there will be judgment on the wicked.
 - Jesus continued to offer life and rest to those who would receive him.

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- The revelation of who God is revealed to those who would come to God with childlike faith, to those who would depend on and put their trust in God.
- The Pharisees, the teachers of the law were regarded as blessed and holy because they knew the law very well. They were learned and considered wise. But, Jesus contradicts the culture of that time, and even the culture of our time. The knowledge of God does not

depend on human wisdom or education. Anyone who is interested and willing to come to Jesus to learn will receive the revelation of who God is.

- In fact, those who consider themselves wise and clever often put their trust in their own wisdom and abilities that it is harder for them to learn to trust in the Lord. There were many who were given the opportunity to know God through Christ, but they rejected him, out of pride and arrogance.
- There is really no special secret to knowing God. One doesn't need to be extraordinarily wise or a highly educated person in order to know God. The only way to know God is to through Jesus, to speak to him and to listen what he says. Everyone is given the same opportunity to know God, and how much we know God depends on us how much do we want to know him.
- God's rest is available for us through the person of Jesus. It is not our head knowledge of scriptures that would give us rest. It is being in the presence of God and the intimacy with Christ that gives us rest that comes from God, and it is completely available to all of us because of the direct access that Christ has purchased for us through his blood.

3. Rest in Exchanging Our Burden for His Yoke (vv. 28-30)

²⁸ *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

- When we think of the word “rest”, we often think of the cessation of work. We want to be completely relieved of all labour and burden. But that is not what Jesus is offering. Jesus offers us his yoke that is easy and light, in exchange of our weariness and burden, so that we will find rest in our souls.
- The word “yoke” is a metaphor from carrying or ploughing. In the Old Testament, it was also a mark of servitude to a conqueror. In the New Testament, “yoke” is always used metaphorically to signify bondage or submission to authority of some kind.
- The Jewish people were under the heavy yoke of the Romans. On top of that, the religious leaders made faith another heavy yoke. There was a common phrase that all Jews will know: “the yoke of the law,” which meant obedience to the law. The yoke was not meant to be oppressive, but the arbitrary demands placed by the religious leaders had cause the yoke of the law to be a burden to the common people. The people had enough burden on their own and their leaders were supposed to care for them and help them, but they added more load to their existing burden.

Matthew 23:4, ⁴ *They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.*

- Jesus offers a yoke that is easy and light. In calling us to come to him, Jesus is inviting us to enter into a relationship with him to learn from him, to come under his rule, his leadership and authority. The world has distorted the original definition and purpose of leadership. We are surrounded by so much of bad leadership that any kind of authority

sounds like bad news to us. But we need to understand that God is a different kind of King. He is not like the religious leaders who only adds burden to the people. He is not like many of our leaders who are selfish and only pushing their own agenda. He is gentle and humble in heart. He is not arrogant and oppressive. He is one who had given up his throne to be a slave to serve us.

- Jesus invites us to himself so we can learn to rest by coming under his leadership and authority, by trusting his rule, depending on him for strength and guidance.
- However, it does not mean that we will be relieved of all labour and work. In fact, in inviting us to carry his yoke is to invite us to join his in his work. He does give us work. But, we can be assured that he is not a tyrant master who enslaves us with all his demands and expectations. He does not expect us to make our way to him. He made a way to us. His yoke is easy and light, and he wants to exchange it with our heavy burdens.
- Work and rest do not necessarily contradicts one another. The rest that Jesus offers is for our soul, the rest that we will experience at the centre of our most inner being. A rest that is not weary or worry of the circumstances around us; a rest that is assured by the presence of God who is constantly guiding and helping us as we go to him. A rest that empowers us to do the work that he entrusts us.

Not having all the answers

- We often look for rest by knowing how and when our burdensome problems will be addressed. But Jesus does not provide those details. Jesus does not want our souls resting on the how and when, rather he wants our souls resting on the assurance that he will keep his promise to us in the best way at the best time.

1 Peter 5:6-7, *⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

Proverbs 3:5-8

*⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;*

*⁶ in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.*

*⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD and shun evil.*

*⁸ This will bring health to your body
and nourishment to your bones.*

Temptation to rest in the things of the world

- We are also tempted to find rest in other things, instead of God. Sin creates a lie in our hearts that in our restlessness, we think that we can find satisfaction and relief in the

things of this world. It then becomes a restless pursuit of satisfaction, fulfilment, and happiness outside of God.

- When we truthfully answer these questions, we will find out where find our rest from.
 - o *Where or who or what do you go to when you are disappointed, hurt, or frustrated?*
 - o *How does it help you?*
- The things of the world cannot give us the rest that we need and desire. In our pursuit after them, we may receive temporary relief in the form of a distraction, but we often end up being more enslaved, more heavily laden, and more unsatisfied. These things never really lighten our burden.
- The only place our burdened souls could truly find rest is in God.

Psalm 62:5-8

⁵ *Yes, my soul, find rest in God;
my hope comes from him.*

⁶ *Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.*

⁷ *My salvation and my honor depend on God;
he is my mighty rock, my refuge.*

⁸ *Trust in him at all times, you people;
pour out your hearts to him,
for God is our refuge.*

Time with God

- It is not always easy to shake off the weariness and the worries, and it is easy to spiral down into the dark pit. Perhaps our weariness is so deep and heavy because we are not spending enough time going to God, learning from him, exchanging our burden with him.
- We sometimes think that sending our prayer requests to him is enough, but how can we learn to receive his rest if we are not with him? It's like having bites of a protein bar here and there, which is good for us but not enough to sustain long term like good healthy meals.
- Rest can only be found in our time with the Lord. Not only do we recharge our soul, but we also learn to physically slow down and rest.

We need other people

- We all get weary, in different ways, for different reasons, at different times. But when we are weary, we are easily discouraged. In those moments, we are often not in the best position to remind ourselves about going to God. We need others to speak truth to us and help us go to God.

Hebrews 10:23-25, ²³ *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.* ²⁴ *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good*

deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 3:12-13, ¹² See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

Reflection

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

- What is God asking you to exchange with him?
- How can his kingship bring you rest?
- How can his love, care and goodness bring you rest?

Prayer

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Church

- We will hunger for God, through prayer and the meditation of God’s word.
- Transformative work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.
- We will be faithful to care for and minister to all the people that God sends.
- We will be a place of healing, restoration and reconciliation.
- Unity based on God’s love and truth: breaking barriers between people from different groups.
- Workplaces: we will respond to our calling in the harvest field, representing Christ to those around us.
- Compassion and wisdom to help those who are in need.
- Salvation for our loved ones.
- Ministry:
 - Life Explorer, Redeeming Roses, Sunday School, Lifeline Youth, Cell Groups

Expecting Parents

1. Alex & Santhana
2. Paul & Yee Leng
3. Eliezer & Pricilla

Covid-19

- Those who are sick, those who have lost loved ones
- Government: wisdom and compassion
- Economy
- Mental health
- Church: to bring hope with the Gospel

Malaysia

- Leadership: righteousness, integrity, compassion for the people
- Unity: between all people group
- Justice and mercy: care for the marginalized (the poor, oppressed, widows, orphans, foreigners)
- Church: instruments of love and unity, prophetic voice to the nation
- Salvation

