

# To the Weary and Heavy-Laden

By Don Green

sermonaudio.com

**Bible Verse:** Matthew 11:25-30  
**Preached on:** Sunday, March 22, 2020

**Truth Community Church**  
4183 Mt. Carmel Tobasco Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45255

**Website:** [truthcommunitychurch.org](http://truthcommunitychurch.org)  
**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm](http://www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm)

The theme that I've adopted for this interruption into our normal church life is familiar texts for unfamiliar times and I believe that it's important for us to go back to texts of Scripture that we know, that we've heard many times because that's going to give us a sense of stability, a sense of continuity that sustains us through the time of discontinuity and disruption that we are currently facing. It's so important for us as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to realize that in a most fundamental way nothing has changed. God is the same that he has always been. God is still on his throne. Nothing about God's eternal purpose has changed in anything that has happened. It seems different from our perspective, from our human perspective, but from God's perspective everything is unfolding according to the plan which he established before the beginning of time. It is at times like this where the prior theology and the prior Scripture that we have studied together, the prior doctrine that we have developed together becomes so essential for us to draw upon because what we find as believers in Jesus Christ, speaking more locally, what we find at Truth Community Church is that although the ground has shifted dramatically under the feet of the world, nothing about the foundation upon which we stand has changed, nothing about the foundation on which we stand has shaken; there's not even a crack that has taken place in the foundation on which we stand. We do not have to change our teaching to respond to these times, we're able to simply go back to the wells that we have always drunk from and drink again from those same wells to find that the water that refreshed us then, refreshes us now. It's the same ever-clear, ever-flowing water from God's word mediated to us, brought to us, applied to our hearts by the same Holy Spirit testifying to the same Lord Jesus Christ so that we understand that we are in a position of stability, of security, of continuity that allows us to react in a completely different way than the world to the changes around us. We are safe in Christ. We are secure in him and nothing about his purposes for us has changed in the slightest nor could it ever do so, because God is unfolding an eternal plan that was perfect and wise from the very beginning, it was perfect and wise and including this time that we are now going through, and it will be shown to be perfect and wise when it is over and all the fullness of God's purposes have been revealed at the end of time.

So we are confident in the midst of this storm. We are not asking the Lord, we're not shaking him as though the disciples in the boat saying, "Lord, do You not care that we are perishing?" We understand that we are not perishing, first of all, and we understand that the Lord does not need to be awakened. He is fully awake, he is fully aware, and he is

caring perfectly for all of his people through all of this time, and what we find as we come to this text is not only is he perfectly caring for his people but he is extending an opportunity, he is extending a call to those outside his kingdom to consider their plight, to consider the eternal outcome of their lostness, and inviting them graciously to come to him while there is still time.

That passage that I read from Matthew 11 will be our text for this morning and we see four great themes about the Gospel, four great themes about the Lord Jesus Christ in the unfolding of that text, and they all lead us directly to the person of Christ and they let us see how great, how wonderful, how majestic he is, how compassionate and how caring he is for lost sinners just like you. And so as we turn to the text, we're going to see, first of all, for those of you that are taking notes at home, and I trust that you are, that you're bright and ready to go, as the Gospel comes to mankind, we're going to see, first of all, that your need is great. Your need is great. That's the first point for this morning. The context of this passage is God's judgment upon the world and that there is a call to repentance that rings out throughout all time until God brings it to an end with the return of Jesus Christ. Jesus had just condemned the cities of his day for refusing his message.

Look at Matthew 11:24 with me. He says,

24 "Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."

They had seen the miracles of Christ, they had heard his teaching in their immediate physical presence and they had rejected him, and what Jesus is saying is that there is judgment that comes upon people like that. To hear the word of God, to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to reject it brings a greater judgment upon men, upon individuals even just like you if you're rejecting him here today, it brings a greater judgment to reject Christ, to reject the Gospel than the sin which brought fire and brimstone down upon Sodom and Gomorrah back in the book of Genesis. This is a serious matter to contemplate Christ, and so as we have this serious time that we're walking through in the world, as we walk through this serious time, what I want to encourage you to recognize is that the Gospel is more serious than any sickness that is radiating out through the world. Jesus Christ is more important and more consequential than anything that we are finding that is happening in our day and that is always true. Christ is the center point of history and your response to Christ will be the center point of your appointed day of judgment before a holy God.

So what we find as we turn to God's word is it lifts our minds out of the current crisis and places us into a realm where eternal matters are at stake and rather than feeling sorry for ourselves, we realize that there is a certain earnestness that we must apply to Christ because your need is great. And after speaking these words of judgment that Jesus alluded to in verse 24, he turns to the matter of an offer of salvation that goes out to anyone who would believe. In verse 25 we see him saying this, he says,

25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. 26 "Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight."

What's Jesus saying here? Well, notice that he says these things have been revealed to infants. One of the fundamental things about a baby, about a newborn child is that they're completely helpless. They can do nothing to take care of themselves. They have no capacity whatsoever to care for their basic needs: to be fed; to be cleansed; to be loved; to be cherished. A baby cannot do any of those things for himself and unless – watch this – unless someone comes alongside from outside and provides care to that infant, that infant will perish. It will die. It will die of its own accord because it has no ability to provide for itself and what Jesus is saying here is that God gives salvation to those who understand that they are like infants; that we are spiritually helpless; that we are not able to do anything for ourselves.

The theologians talk about a doctrine called total depravity. It has the idea that man in his own condition, man apart from Christ has no ability whatsoever to save himself. He has no ability to do anything to merit favor before God. He has no ability, even, to prepare himself to receive favor from God. Scripture says in Ephesians 2 that we are dead in our trespasses and sins. That is a spiritual condition of total helplessness and it is only to the helpless that the Gospel comes. As long as a man thinks that he is pretty good, a man thinks that he has an ability to commend himself to God, he is excluded from the Gospel because it comes only to those who are like infants, those who come to Christ only in a condition, a state of utter helplessness and confess that openly and freely before him. It's a state of confession that says, "I am a broken sinner. I am under judgment. Lord Jesus, save me or I will be forever lost!" And there's that sense of spiritual desperation, spiritual helplessness to whom the Gospel comes. And Jesus said elsewhere in Luke 5:31-32 that he did not come to call the righteous to repentance, in other words, he did not come to call those who consider themselves to be righteous, to those who are self-righteous and confident in their own ability, confident in their own goodness, Jesus said, "I didn't come to call people like that." He said, "I came to call sinners to repentance," those who are bankrupt in spirit, in the language of Matthew 5:3-4; those who are broken and mourning over their sinfulness and recognize that they have no spiritual resources of their own. Jesus says the Gospel is for them and here in the context of Matthew 11, he praises God for that because in this way God receives all of the glory for salvation. Those who think they are earning salvation are boasting in themselves. The point, the outworking of the Gospel is that boasting in man is utterly excluded. There is no way for any true Christian to boast because we realize that God saved us when we were helpless. Romans 5 speaks to that, doesn't it? While we were still helpless, while we were enemies of God, Christ Jesus died for us.

So, my friend, what this comes down to is a recognition of this: at a most fundamental level, again just in the context of the time in which we're living, to realize that we're talking about things that utterly transcend the news of the day, my friend, you have broken God's law, you have violated his character, your entire nature is twisted and it is

wrong at the very core, and you cannot fix it yourself. You are broken. You are helpless. You are like an infant writhing on the table without any ability to meet any of your needs, and in that condition, my friend, you face God's judgment. I'm speaking to those of you who do not know Christ today and appealing to you to understand what Scripture says about you. Jeremiah 17 says the heart of man is desperately wicked, desperately sick. In Ecclesiastes 9 it says the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. You see, my friend, you have a sin problem, not just that you commit wrong but the very core of your nature is sinful, twisted, dead, wrong, thoroughly diseased and you have no ability to change that. Your need, therefore, is great, and if I can state it just as plainly and as directly as this, you need outside help or you will face an eternal judgment from God. You're an infant without means of helping yourself.

Well, Jesus said these things to lay it out plainly for us. Like a doctor, like a good doctor, I should say, he lays out the diagnosis, he shows us the test results, and he says, "This is your spiritual condition. It is terminal. There is no hope for you." And you have no ability to heal yourself. Having said that, Jesus goes further and he points to himself as the one who alone is able to provide you the help that you need in that helpless condition. It brings us to our second point this morning that we see from this text is that Jesus is a great Savior. Jesus is a great Savior. Just speaking personally and I think other Christians would say the same thing, nothing gives me greater delight than to be able to say great things about Jesus. Nothing makes me happier, nothing better fulfills the purpose of our existence as Christians than when we are saying great things from Scripture about our Lord Jesus Christ, and that's what we have the opportunity to do and to see here from our text. Jesus is a great Savior.

Now just to be clear, I am under no delusion that I'm going to unfold a fraction of his greatness here in this text this morning. I'm simply relying on the Holy Spirit to communicate to you through the preaching of God's word to your heart to give you understanding, to open and expand your mind that you might grasp something about the exalted majestic nature of Jesus Christ and how he, therefore, is an answer to the great need of sinners throughout all of the world. And what is it about Jesus that we see that is so great in this text? Well, we see two aspects of his greatness here in this text and, first of all, we see this, we see that he has great authority. He has great authority. Jesus is a great Savior because he has great authority. He has the power to save.

Let's see what it says in the text here. Jesus is making an exclusive truth claim in this text in verse 27. Look at it with me. He says,

27 "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

To state it plainly, to state it simply, I guess is maybe a better way to put it, is that Jesus Christ is saying that he is the only one who knows God the Father fully, perfectly, exhaustively, and he says only God the Father fully knows the Lord Jesus exhaustively,

comprehensively, to the outermost limit, as if there were a limit to knowing him. What's Jesus saying here? He's making a statement of deity. He is claiming to be fully God. Who can understand an infinite God except an equally infinite being? And that is what Christ is claiming. He has the infinity of deity that enables him to know fully the infinity of deity.

So look at the text there again in verse 27, he says, "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; no one knows the Son except the Father," meaning that no one fully knows Christ except God the Father, and then he reverses it and implies it going the other way, "nor does anyone know the Father except the Son." And so Jesus says, "I know the Father exhaustively. He knows Me exhaustively. We are on fully equal terms and We know each other fully, equally and intimately." No one knows God fully and equally except God, for Christ to claim that is a statement of absolute deity. He is asserting that he in human flesh is God himself.

Now with that said, that gives us a whole new perspective on the great need of the earlier time. He says, "You have a great need. You're like a helpless infant," and now he comes and asserts his deity in response to that. God is able to do what man is not able to do. Man is not able to save himself and man is not able to save other men, but God is able to do what man cannot do and Jesus is God and, therefore, there is hope, there is a greatness to his saving capability that does not reside in any other being. So Jesus has great authority. He makes an exclusive truth claim about knowing God fully and exhaustively, but what's wonderful about this text, what brings us to fear him even more, to honor, to reverence him even more, to hold Christ in the highest object of our affections is this, is that Jesus is making an exclusive truth claim not only about himself vis-a-vis the Father, he's making an exclusive truth claim that he is the only one who is able to save anyone throughout all of the earth, throughout all of time.

Look at it there at the end of verse 27 with me, he says, "nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Beloved, no one comes to saving faith, no one comes to the forgiveness of their sins, no one comes to a true knowledge of God unless Jesus Christ gives it to them. Ephesians 2 says that faith is a gift of God, something that God gives to helpless, dead, unworthy sinners. No one comes to God unless Christ grants it. My friend, Jesus Christ is a great Savior because he alone has authority to give eternal life, he alone has the authority to grant forgiveness to helpless sinners just like you. What we need to see is Christ is saying, "You are totally helpless. There is nothing that you can do to save yourself." And then he comes further, he continues on and says, "The only ones that are able to come to a saving knowledge of God are the ones that I give that to." This isn't the only place that Christ has said this. He has said it in other places in even more familiar texts than this. In John 14:6 he said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." In Acts 4:12, Peter was preaching about Christ and he says in Acts 4:12, "there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name given under heaven among men by which we must be saved."

Now this should have an impact on the way that we think about Christ. We should not treat him lightly. We should not think of him lightly. We should not think of him in purely overly familiar terms because what Jesus Christ is saying is that he alone is the difference between eternal judgment in hell and eternal blessedness in heaven. He alone is the bridge between spiritual death and spiritual life and in your realm of spiritual death, in your realm of spiritual judgment, you cannot deliver yourself from that. You are in an old, musty dungeon with an iron gate closed and clanged and locked shut and there is no key for you to get out, and there is no one to call for help unless you call for Christ to come and open the gate of that dungeon and to deliver you, otherwise you are eternally lost.

So your helplessness is great and part of the dawning of new life that the Holy Spirit gives is an understanding that Jesus Christ alone is able to deliver you from that judgment. Until you come to understand the exclusivity of Christ, you come to understand that he is a great Savior. When I say he's a great Savior, what I mean is he is a GREAT Savior. He is the Great Savior, the only Savior. You start to see something of the exclusivity of Christ before there is any hope for your soul. As long as you are looking to other teachers, as long as you're looking to other religions, as long as you have any confidence in the flesh, your own flesh, that is, there is no hope for you. You are continuing in the self-imposed dungeon in which your spiritual life is playing out. Jesus Christ, therefore, is a great Savior and you must see him from that perspective before you are to have any hope. Jesus is a great Savior because he has great authority.

Now as we continue on in the text there is another aspect of this that makes Jesus a great Savior. When you think about these things in any level of seriousness, any level of depth at all, it's kind of hard to get your mind around it all. There's just so much that goes into, you know, a thorough understanding of true conversion, of saving faith and who Christ is and what he has done. It's hard to get our minds around that we can't save ourselves; that the works of our hands are meaningless; that there's a separation between us and God that we can't do anything about; that you have absolutely no ability to save yourself. That's hard to get your mind around but turning it to Christ now and thinking about Christ, you know, it's hard to get our minds around what I'm about to say because the wonder of it just goes beyond the human ability to measure the depths of it. Here is Christ, here is Christ who is full deity, here is Christ with full authority over heaven and hell, here is Christ having, the Father having given all judgment over to him, here is Christ, an offended judge with every right to condemn us all because of our guilt and our violations of his law, and yet as you continue reading on in the text, you find that Christ is not only a Savior with great authority but this is almost incomprehensible to imagine that he's a great Savior because he has great compassion. He has great compassion.

We're used to people who have authority abusing it. We've gotten used to parents abusing their authority over children, employers abusing their authority over their employees. We're used to government abusing its authority to its own benefit and to the harm of those that are under them. We're used to that. That's the world in which we live. We've gotten to a point where we just kind of assume that that's the way that it's going to be. What you have in Jesus Christ is one who is King of kings and Lord of lords, he is the

authority over all other authority and yet he is completely different from what we've become accustomed to here in this fallen world. He is God, he is fully God in human flesh, he is fully God with full authority over the eternal destinies of all men, and yet here he is a great Savior who has great compassion. He has great authority but he also has great compassion and we see this expressed in verse 28 where he says this, he says,

28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, 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."

Who could imagine this? Who could imagine that the Christ with great authority would be one of such tender compassion toward unworthy sinners? Who could imagine that he would extend a gracious offer of help to everyone who hears his word? Who could imagine that he would be like a doctor offering his healing services for free to every sick sinner that comes to him? Who could imagine that? We're used to authority being distant, remote, unkind and uncaring. Here is Christ with all authority calling out to everyone who would hear him that he will have compassion, that you come in your weary condition, you come with your burden of sin and you call upon him and you ask him for mercy and Christ says, "The one that does that I will gladly bless, I will gladly receive, I will gladly help."

As we said earlier, if you're sick, you don't wait until you're better to see the doctor. A doctor exists to make sick people well. And what Jesus says is he has all authority and yet he uses that authority to bring spiritual grace to those who know that they're spiritually sick, who know that they are helpless. What he's saying is as you call upon Christ in your weakness, as you call upon Christ under conviction of sin, Christ promises you with all the authority of God, with all of the self-awareness of deity, he says, "I promise you that I will receive you. I promise you that I will forgive you. I promise that you will find that I am gentle and compassionate toward you." So when we recognize that we are most deserving of judgment, when we most recognize that we are helpless and separated from God by our sins and we cry out to Christ, that is when there's a sense in which, you could say, that at that moment of a faith cry to Christ, "Lord, save me for I'm perishing," it is at that particular moment that the compassion of Christ is most extended to you, that it is most in operation. As the Spirit of God convicts you of sin and turns your attention to Christ and you cry out to him, your perspective should be this, "I know that I don't deserve this. I know that I'm unworthy of this. I trust the word of Christ. I trust that when He says He'll receive me in grace and compassion, that He'll do so." And so you call upon Christ trusting in his promise right here.

We've said in recent months here at Truth Community. This, my sinful friend, is your warrant for faith. This is how you can know that Jesus Christ will save you even though your need is so great and you are so helpless. It is not anything in you, it is not even your own feelings about your own guilt. It is outside of you. It is in Christ who has great authority and it is in Christ who has made this promise to all who will come to him, to all who feel anything of weariness, all who would simply come to him in repentant faith, you will find that he will receive you. It's his promise, and as we sometimes sing in the

hymn, "Because Your promise I believe. O Lamb of God, I come. Because You are God, your word is true, because You've made this particular promise to receive the weary-laden, I come. I trust in Your promise." Jesus says, "You do that and I'll give you rest." And what we find about this great Savior Jesus Christ is he's gentle. He will welcome you and he can put your sin away forever.

The events of his later life are the ground upon which he could offer such a universal, make a universal offer of forgiveness in his atoning death on the cross, in his resurrection. Christ has made a full payment of sin. The penalty of sin is death, wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23. Christ paid for the sin of everyone who would ever come to him at the cross. In his infinite deity, he made an infinite payment for sin to cover the infinite sins of his people who come to him for salvation. God put him in the grave, as it were, and raised him from the dead to show that the penalty of death for sin has forever been paid. Christ having paid the penalty, has been raised to life and the penalty no longer applies to those who are in Christ. That's the hope, that's the promise that's offered to you if you would but come to Christ.

Now I want you to see that there is a tension in what Jesus is saying here. You, on the one hand, are utterly helpless to come to Christ. You are utterly helpless in your spiritual destitution and your spiritual death, and yet you are commanded to come and that tension that should bring some sense of conviction and for some even a sense of frustration, "You mean to tell me that I'm commanded to do that which I'm unable to do?" Precisely. That is precisely what we see Christ commanding here. You are an infant that is told to come, an infant that cannot walk is told to come to him, and what you need to see is that the command of God for you to come to him is beyond your ability and it drives you to this, it drives you to a cry for mercy, "Lord, help me! This is all beyond my ability. Spiritual good is beyond my ability, the ability to come to You is beyond my ability. Have mercy on my unworthy soul! Have mercy on my helpless estate! You who are compassionate and gracious, save me by an act that is outside me! Save me and help me because I cannot do this on my own!" Your need is that great and Christ is that great of a Savior to be able to save you in your lost condition.

So we cast ourselves utterly upon this great Savior and realize that he alone is able to save us. So he's a great Savior in his compassion, in his willingness to save. You know, people, sometimes people will ask this question, "You know, I don't understand why God saved me." Well, understand that there was nothing in you that distinguished you from someone else that made God save you. That's true. God saved you because Christ is a great Savior. God saved you because he willed to save you, because he loved you before the foundation of time. And so we see that the ground of salvation, the motivation in salvation is something that is entirely in God and nothing in us. Jesus says, "I am gentle and humble in heart. You'll find rest for your souls." It's because Christ is merciful that anyone is saved.

So your need is great, point 1. Point 2, Jesus is a great Savior, point 2. And now we come to point 3, Jesus makes a great call. Jesus makes a great call and let's just stop and go back to some basics here as we, you know, spend this time in God's word together, some

basics that are sometimes a little bit easy to overlook. My friend, you cannot be a Christian simply because your parents were Christians. Salvation does not pass from generation to generation that way. It's not applied automatically to children. You, yourself, must repent of sin. You, yourself, must put your faith in Christ. You, yourself, must come to Christ for salvation. Jesus invites you to come but, friend, as I said earlier, you are responsible to come.

Look at verses 28 and 29 with me again. He says, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden." Verse 29, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me." These are commands. You are commanded to come. Jesus Christ by the full authority of deity says take his yoke upon you. He is calling you, he is commanding you to come, and what you see in that is there's, you know, to not be overly technical theologically in what we're saying, in this text you see a double warrant for you to come to Christ, a double warrant, a double reason to believe. One is that Christ has promised in the promise of Christ he says, "I will give you rest." There's another aspect to it in which by his authority he commands you to come, "Come to Me," he says, "Take My yoke upon you," he says, and so you are commanded to come and you are promised blessing if you do come.

So every possible reason is set before you for you to come to Christ in saving faith. You know, the only thing that stands between you and eternal salvation is your own sin and your own willingness to come. Jesus has made it plain here he's willing to save. Jesus has made it plain that he commands people to come. The ones who turn away are responsible for their own loss. That's so sad to think about when such a great promise of salvation is held out and such a great call is made upon sinners just like you.

Now look at verse 29 with me again. He says, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me." That word "yoke" is a little bit unfamiliar in English terms, at least in the circles in which I live and move and have my being, so let me just say this briefly. The yoke was a bar that was used by animal owners that would fit over the necks of cattle that were used to plow fields, and the yoke was the means by which the owner of the animal, the farmhand would direct them and steer them in the direction that they needed to go. Owners used the yoke to control the animals in the field and therefore the yoke came to be a symbol of ownership, a symbol of control. An animal that was under the yoke in the field was under the control of someone else. Jesus here when he tells you to take his yoke upon you, is telling you to place yourself under his control and his authority. It is a call to submit to his Lordship, to surrender all the rights of your own being to him; to come to him, as it were, and to make an unconditional surrender to him which is an implicit part of faith, to confess him as Lord, Romans 10.

So Jesus is saying here, Jesus is saying, "Put your faith in Me. Submit to My authority." And in this imperative mode in which he speaks, this command that he issues, he is telling you that you must put your own faith in Christ. You must put your own trust in him if you are to be saved from your sins, and the spirit of it is humble, the spirit of it is like a child, the spirit of it is this, it is one going to Christ saying, "Lord Jesus, I know that I'm a sinner that needs to be saved. I believe You're the only Savior and I believe that somehow Your death on the cross was for sinners just like me. Have mercy on me. Have

this compassion on me. You say that You're gentle toward sinners, I'm a sinner and I need You to exercise Your saving grace on me. I put myself in Your hands. I turn from my sins. I will follow You. I submit to You. I yield to Your Lordship." That is the spirit in which faith receives the Lord Jesus Christ, a believing, confident response to his command and to his promise that is accompanied by a personal surrender to him, a personal acceptance of him that receives him without any claim of merit or deserving for him to show any kindness to us at all. It is in the spirit of utter humble bankruptcy that a sinner finds the mercy of Christ applied to his soul. It's a wonderful thing that can be generated only by the Holy Spirit in the heart of a sinner.

Well, that brings us to a fourth and a final point here, a fourth and final question: what happens when that happens? What happens when that happens? In other words, what happens when a sinner comes to Christ on his terms, when a sinner comes to Christ and submits to him? What happens when a sinner comes to Christ and thoroughly trusts him for the gentle humble rest that he promises? Well, here's what happens, point 4 and it's our final point for this morning is that Jesus gives great rest. Jesus gives great rest and before I go to the final verse in the text here, I want you to see how we have come full circle here, said that you have a great need, said that Jesus is a great Savior, Jesus makes a great call, and the outcome of that that brings you back to the point of your great need is that Jesus gives a great rest. Jesus promises salvation to sinners who come to him.

Look at verse 29 with me again, he says,

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and  
humble in heart, and, [here's the promise] you will find rest for your souls.  
30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Here's what the promise of rest means. Jesus is talking about a spiritual rest here and let me just emphasize, let me just so that you don't miss it, he says this twice in the text. Verse 28 he says, "I will give you rest." Verse 29 he says, "you will find rest for your souls." He's obviously talking here about a spiritual rest that answers the spiritual need that prompts the cry out to him. You're weary of sin, you're heavy-laden by a guilty conscience, Jesus says, "I'll relieve that burden from you." You recognize to one degree or another that the threat of eternal judgment is upon you and that there is a casting, tossing hurricane in your soul, recognizing the threat of eternal judgment, Jesus says, "I'll give you rest from that. I will speak peace to the great waves of judgment that threaten your soul and they will be calmed. There will be rest. You will be delivered from that judgment," in other words, "as you come to Me."

This is a spiritual rest, a spiritual rest of a clear conscience that delivers you from all of the guilt and regret of your prior sins. This is a spiritual rest that is promised, a rest that delivers you from the judgment that your sins deserve, that delivers you from the penalty that your sin deserves. This is a spiritual rest that delivers you from that dominating power of sin in your life. Why is it that you can't break your bad habits? Why is it that you continue to sin even when you know it's wrong? It's because you have no power to overcome it. Jesus in his promise of salvation says, "I'll give you rest from all of that. I'll

deliver you from the penalty of sin. Eternal judgment will no longer be your destination. I'll deliver you from the power of sin. I'll place My Holy Spirit within you and He will give you a new power to live righteously and to increasingly put sin out of your life that you never knew before." And to the one who is burdened by sin and hates the sin within him, that is the greatest rest that could possibly be offered. Ultimately, ultimately Jesus promising a final rest where we are glorified with him in heaven, when we die we enter into his immediate presence and we are with him, delivered forever from sin never to be tempted by the devil again, never to sin against our better judgment again, never to feel the weight of iniquity ever again. Delivered. Given rest from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and ultimately the very presence of sin, a great blessing that we still have yet to enter into even as Christians.

So what we find in the meantime is that as we follow Christ, he refreshes our soul so that you can bear the burden that he has uniquely given you to carry in life. You know, as we've been talking about this familiar text in unfamiliar times and all of the anxiety and uncertainty that people are feeling right now, beloved, for you, whatever else happens in the world, for you there is a promise of spiritual rest from the Lord Jesus Christ as you come to him in response to these words here, so much so that even in this life, even in these uncertain times, it is a joy to serve Christ.

Look at what he says there in verse 30, he says, "My yoke is easy and My burden is light." To be under the ownership of Christ, to be under his control, to be under his Lordship is not a burdensome list of more commandments to keep, he's fulfilled the law on our behalf. He's brought us into union with himself in salvation in such a way that we are assured of his love and he's given us strength for the task at hand. Compared to life as a sinner and especially compared to eternal judgment in hell, living in this way is a light and easy life under the Lordship of Christ. He says, "Come to Me and you'll find without fail that to belong to Me is a place of blessing, a place of lightness," a place of spiritual ease because we are at rest in Christ.

So this is a great rest promised by a great Savior who has great authority all coming to you in your time of great need and, brother and sister in Christ, let me just ask you to put aside all of the chaos of the world around us today and to blow away the dust that maybe is literally on your Bible, but certainly the dust that can accumulate on our souls, and recognize the treasure that we have in Christ, to realize that such a great Savior has come and he came with an intention to save you by name, my Christian sister, my Christian brother. Christ had good intentions for you all along. Nothing's changed and as you look back at the promise of Christ that in one way or another you were implicitly trusting in when you first came to him for salvation, to recognize that this is a continuing abiding rest that he gives to us in the worst of times and in the best of times, that is independent of all of our circumstances. This great rest is promised to those who would come to Christ in the first instance for salvation and, my brother and sister in Christ, this is our present possession now in these unfamiliar times.

You say, "Well, I've heard this before. It's all familiar." Precisely. Precisely. I want you to remember this wonderful easy blessing of rest that Christ has given to us and find the

anchor for your soul in it, to find the answer to your anxieties, the answer to your troubledness, and for those that are on the other side of the spectrum, to find that which enables you to feel the frustration that you feel in this even if you are skeptical about the actual physical risk that is presented by this virus that is, you know, echoing throughout the world. Wherever you find yourself on this, it doesn't really matter, it's to look up, to see Christ and to realize that this promise of rest is the present possession of everyone who believes in Christ.

So we are grateful to Christ because he purchased spiritual rest for us with his atoning death and his resurrection. We are grateful to Christ because he ascended to heaven far beyond the passing challenges of this world, far beyond everything about this life. He abides for us, he is in the presence of God for us as our elder brother, representing us before God, interceding for us before the heavenly Father, ensuring our well-being from his position of great authority with God himself, making sure that all of the good gracious purposes of God are fully carried out in our lives. Every spiritual blessing has been given to us in Christ and that is the great rest that we have.

Christian friend, will you turn from the anxiety of this world and trust in that as your perspective going forward? My unsaved friend, with all the earnestness that in my weak human flesh I can bid you and plead with you, Jesus Christ is the answer to everything in your life and he is the answer to the spiritual death from which you cannot deliver yourself. I plead with you to heed his command when he says, "Come to Me." I plead with you, I entreat you, I present to you the promise of Christ when he says, "I will give you rest." You will find rest for your soul. I and millions like me have found his promise to be true. My friend, no one has come to Christ in the way that he calls them and found that he let them down and has found that he has actually turned them away. So whatever it takes for you, call out to Christ. Ask him for mercy in this time of darkness and realize that the essential thing for you in these unfamiliar times is to find your salvation in Jesus Christ alone.

Let's pray together.

*Our Father, we just ask You to bless this word to saved and unsaved friend alike. We pray that You would have mercy on all of us in these unfamiliar times, and that we would turn to Your familiar word to find the rest that our soul needs. Father, even from those that have heard here over the live stream today, may there be some, no, Father, may there be many who find their eternal rest for the first time through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Thanks for listening to Pastor Don Green from Truth Community Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. You can find church information, Don's complete sermon library and other helpful materials at [thetruthpulpit.com](http://thetruthpulpit.com). This message is copyrighted by Don Green. All rights reserved.