

Sunday Morning Message

October 2, 2016

Looking unto Jesus and His Instruction Regarding Resting in Him

Congregational Reading – Matthew 1:28 - 30

Text – Matthew 11:20 – 30

Our theme for the year is Looking unto Jesus

Our theme verses are Hebrews 12:1 – 2

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

This year, we will be preaching messages from the 4 gospel accounts in the New Testament and we will be closely examining the life of our Lord Jesus Christ while He walked the earth, learning the principles that He teaches us, specifically looking for ways to apply His life to our own.

Introduction

The context of the verses we are dealing with this morning begin in verse one of chapter 11.

In verses 1 – 6 we have the **concerns** of John the Baptist. The disciples of John the Baptist coming to Jesus to find out if He was the One that they were waiting for.

In verses 7 – 15 we have Jesus' **commentary** regarding John the Baptist.

In verses 16 – 19 Jesus is **comments** about the tendency of people to conform to their environment. However, there are always going to be some that don't dance when you tell them to.

In verses 20 – 24 Jesus **condemns** the cities where He had done some spectacular miracles, and yet most of the people within those places had still not placed their faith in Him.

In verses 25 – 27 we hear Jesus **communing** with His Father.

In our text verses (28 – 30), Jesus is calling – inviting – people to find rest in Him.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." - (Matthew 11:28-30)

The Christian life today can get very complicated sometimes – not because God makes it complicated, but because we complicate it.

People have a tendency to take something that is very simple, and make it very complicated.

The Hebrew people of Jesus' day were living under a heavy yoke of bondage imposed upon them by the mandates of their strict interpretations of God's Law.

The Pharisees of Jesus days were famous for this. Jesus said of them:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." - (Matthew 23:23-24)

These religious leaders tended to take the simple commands and make them difficult. They were the ones who wanted to make a long list of rules and regulations. When one of the scribes came to Jesus questioning Him about the commandments of God, Jesus said:

"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." - (Mark 12:29-31)

Illustrate – Brother Chalie at camp and now at the college – “Do right”

Illustrate – Bible College – long list of dress requirements; attendance requirements, etc.

God never intended for His people to get frustrated wondering what He expected from them.

Moses, the one who received the Ten Commandments and the Law from God, said basically the same thing that Micah did:

"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" - (Deuteronomy 10:12-13)

The Old Testament Prophet Micah also simplified the burden of God upon His people:

Turn to Micah 6:8

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" - (Micah 6:8)

So what does God want from His children?

If He doesn't want all of this religious ritual and formality, what does He require?

Micah 6:8 gives us the perfect three-point outline directly from the mouth of God. He tells us here very plainly what He expects from us; what He require of His children.

To Do Justly - To do the right thing

How do we know what the right thing is?

- 1 We have a conscience
- 2 We have the Holy Spirit of God

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" - (John 16:7-8)

- 3 We have a Bible

There is no excuse for not knowing what the right thing is.

Our problem is not that we don't understand the Scripture – it is that we do not obey the Scripture.

Illustrate – Lester Roloff – “It’s the part that I understand that bothers me”

Illustrate – Dirk Willhems – story from the Martyr’s Mirror

To Love Mercy – To be compassionate – to be kind

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." - (Ephesians 4:30-32)

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." - (1 Peter 3:8-9)

"And of some have compassion, making a difference:" - (Jude 1:22)

- 1 Look for ways to show kindness to people
- 2 Forgive each other – stop harboring grudges and bitterness
- 3 Send the message of forgiveness to the world around you

Illustrate – The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30 - 37)

To Walk Humbly with Thy God

"Serving the Lord with all humility of mind... (Acts 20:19)

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." - (1 Peter 5:5)

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." - (James 4:10)

Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly – so simple, yet so difficult for our stubborn and willful flesh to do.

Jesus said His yolk is easy, his burden is light.

Go back to Matthew 11:28.

Do you know why His burden is light. Because He did all of the heavy lifting for us. He kept the Old Testament Law perfectly, which His people could never do. He did everything right, when His people had a propensity for messing things up. And then He died on the cross to pay God's penalty for the mistakes of His people.

Jesus paid it all – that means there is nothing left for me to pay. All I have to do is have faith in Him.

I can rest in Him.

Don't you get tired? Physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?

If life has become overly complicated and burdensome for you, perhaps you are in the wrong yoke. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Why? Because if you are in His yoke, He pulls all of the weight. If you are under His burden, He does all of the heavy lifting.

Notice in verse 28, Jesus is speaking to people who are weighed down with life. He is speaking to people who were not yet his followers, but He could also be speaking to people who have been saved, yet have slipped out of his yoke somehow, and are now trying to labor alone. They are back to living life in their own strength instead of His.

God does not intend for His children to be bogged down under a heavy load of care. Give your burdens to Him.

"Cast your burden upon Jesus – He cares for you."

The Christian life is a life of spiritual and emotional rest, and there will also be plenty of time for physical rest and refreshment from our labor when we are in Jesus' yoke.

Are you resting in His yoke, or are you still laboring on your own?

When you are in Jesus Yoke:

I You Have Rest from Trying to Be Perfect

You can give up trying to work your way into Heaven – you ain't going to make it. There was only one perfect person that ever lived, and it isn't you. You fall miserably short of the glory of God because of your sin. But if you take His yoke upon you, He will pay for your sins and God will look at you as if you had never done anything wrong. Why? Because you are in Christ – in His yoke.

II You Can Rest from Trying to Be Like Everybody Else

Inside of Jesus' yoke you can be you. You don't have to conform to the crowd. In the world's yoke, you have to be conformed to their expectations; but in Jesus' yoke you can be transformed into His image, and His image allows you to be you.

- 1 You have a unique personality
- 2 You are uniquely gifted and equipped (Romans 12)
- 3 You have a unique plan – God is going to do something with you that He is not going to do with anyone else.

III You Can Rest from Trying to Serve God in Your Own Strength

The secret to living the Christian life is found in v. 29 – “learn of me” – follow His example. Jesus was never stressed out. He never seemed to be in a hurry. He lived a very simple life.

I think I see what Jesus is saying.

All that really matters in this life is what is done for eternity – in the Lord's yoke. Our craziness in life doesn't come from doing the things that are really important, they come from all of the other junk we try to squeeze into our lives.

Let's simplify our lives and focus on the things that are really important – things that will matter in eternity, like loving and serving God, providing for our families, and communicating the message of salvation to the lost world around us. Everything else is just weighing us down.

If you have yoked up with things that are weighing you down and complicating your life, get out of it. Yoke up with Jesus.

Put on Jesus Yoke

Learn of Him

Rest