

**Study Notes: Matthew 11:28-30**  
**Friendship and Fellowship Sunday: November 14, 2021: “Come to Jesus”**  
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**Background:** These verses were words spoken by Jesus to the crowds of people that gathered to hear His teaching. At the beginning of Matthew 11, Jesus was approached by disciples of John the Baptist, who was imprisoned, to ask whether or not Jesus was the Messiah (Matthew 11:3). Following this encounter, Jesus addressed the crowd, speaking first about John the Baptist (Matthew 11:4-15), and then turning to the unwillingness of the generation gathered to listen to His voice, understand His miracles, and repent of their sin (Matthew 11:16-24). After this, Jesus gave thanks to God for revealing Him to people who opened their eyes and hearts to see and receive Him (Matthew 11:25-27), then He spoke the following words.

***“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.***

- As Jesus spoke to the crowd, He called them to “come to me [Jesus].” It is both an invitation and an imperative command. The call is also time-sensitive, it means “Come now!”
  - Jesus, alone, can issue this invitation because Jesus is the way to the Father, who can give us true rest.
- The call is made to anyone who is “weary and burdened.” The word translated as “weary” is the Greek word, *kopiaō*. It means “to grow tired or exhausted from toil, burdens, or grief.” The word translated as “burdened” is the Greek word, *phortizō*. In some translations, it is rendered “heavy-laden.” It carries the sense of being weighed down with many burdens and spiritual anxiety.
  - Biblical Scholar, James M. Boice, describes what Jesus meant when He mentioned people who are weary and burdened, “The phrase ‘weary and burdened’ does not refer to physical weaknesses or to what we might call the burdens of a difficult life, though it may include them. It chiefly refers to a sense of sin’s burden and the need of a Savior.”
- The promise of Jesus is that when people come to Him, He will give them rest. The concept of rest runs throughout Scripture, beginning in the book of Genesis as God rested from His work on the seventh day (see Genesis 2:2-3). Later in the book, Hebrews, the author of Hebrews, compares rest to the gift of eternal life (Hebrews 4). When Jesus promised the people rest, His offer is freedom from the burden of sin and salvation to those who believe.

***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.”***

- Jesus’ next statement to the people was to take His yoke upon them and learn from Him. The Pillar New Testament Commentary explains this invitation, “Jesus is inviting people to follow him, to serve him, and to learn from him.”
  - A yoke would have been familiar imagery for the people accustomed to an agrarian society. The Faithlife Study Bible states, “Yokes were heavy, wooden crossbars used to connect two oxen together for more efficient plowing. Here,

Jesus' yoke represents His teaching. Allegiance to Him and His kingdom results in a sense of peace — it is not laborious, like keeping the requirements of the Jewish leaders of the time, but instead is joyful.”

- Jesus said His yoke is easy and His burden is light, which is in direct contrast to the yoke and burden that the Pharisees laid upon people (Matthew 23:4).
- Jesus promises that as people take His yoke, and learn from Him, they will experience rest for their souls. Jesus is not putting an additional burden on people, but is instead lifting that burden.
- In this verse, Jesus also described His own heart to us. This is the only time in the Scripture that Jesus Himself made a comment about what His heart is like. Jesus used two words to describe His heart: gentle and humble. About this statement, the Pillar New Testament Commentary explains, “Leaders and teachers have always tended to take a superior place, but Jesus has no need of such gimmicks. He left his place in heaven and on earth took the form of a slave (Phil. 2:7). In heart locates these qualities at the center of his being. It was not that he pretended to be humble and made a show of being lowly: he really was lowly, and that at the very center of all that he was. Because of what he is in his innermost being, meek and lowly, those who come to him find rest.”