

# Matthew 11:25-30

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[ 0 : 00 ] Last Tuesday morning I was speaking at the Fulham Boys School and I had a wonderful time there. I began by saying to the boys, you'll gather from my accent that I'm not from here.

In case you're wondering, it's called Educated Glasgow. I was brought up in the east end of Glasgow, the roughest part of the city. But I had a mother whom I loved dearly and I would do anything not to offend her.

And she would always be saying to me growing up in this large social housing scheme, which was once called the murder capital of Western Europe, please speak properly.

So people are a little perplexed when I meet them if they're from Glasgow. You're no fi Glasgow, they would say. I would say, well actually I am, and from a much rougher part than you.

And my background is a little unusual. My mother's family were devoted Roman Catholics from Southern Ireland. My father's family were criminal Protestant pagans.

[ 1 : 11 ] One of my uncles was in prison for armed robbery. Another was a gangster in London. Another had to escape Glasgow because he owed a lot of money to men that you shouldn't owe money to.

But it's a privilege to be here. And I want for a few minutes to consider with you these words of Jesus, which must rank amongst the most memorable words that Jesus ever spoke.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Some words in literature are memorable.

When I was at grammar school, I was taken out of the East End and transported across the city to go to a grammar school. In those far off days you were compelled to learn Chaucer and Milton and Shakespeare.

And you had to memorize chunks, soliloquies, and I think it stood me in good stead. Good literature, unlike a lot of literature today. And some of the quotations we had to memorize, some of the passages we had to note and take with us into exams, were wonderful passages.

[ 2 : 35 ] I loved Shakespeare in particular, and Robert Burns. I doubt there are more memorable words, not only in the Bible, but in all of literature, than these words of Jesus Christ.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

It must have been staggering for people to hear these words from the lips of a man who looked much like them. His accent would have betrayed that he had been raised in Nazareth.

He looked just like them. He walked the same dirt that they walked. And yet here he is saying, come to me, to me, and I will give you rest.

I will give you rest for your undying souls. You are weary, you are burdened, you may not know that you are, but you are.

[ 3 : 57 ] And so the first thing I want you to note simply is the unembarrassed egoism of Jesus' words. This is egocentricity to the n's degree.

Come to me, to me, who are you? It is quite remarkable, it is stunning to hear from the lips of a man who looked like any other man, and whose accent, as I said, would have betrayed that he had come from the north.

Who is this man who speaks like this? Later on in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus will say to his disciples, who do you say that I am?

The people were saying he is John the Baptist, raised from the dead. Some others were saying, he is the prophet, promised in the scriptures. And Jesus said to his disciples, but what about you?

You, yes, these others are saying this and they are saying that, but what about you? Who do you say that I am? And Peter said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God.

[ 5 : 18 ] The Bible confronts us with unembarrassed supernaturalism. Here is Jesus Christ, and he is as he claimed to be, as his teaching showed him to be, as his mighty works proclaimed him to be, as his resurrection from the dead asserted him to be.

He is none other than God become man. And it is in his capacity as the God-man, the one sent from the heavenly Father, that he speaks these stunning words, come to me, come to me.

He hasn't come to proclaim an ethic. He hasn't come to say, here are 25 rules and regulations that you are to embrace and commit yourself to and sign up to.

He says, come to me, to me. And I will give you rest. There is an unembarrassed supernaturalism about these words of Jesus.

But there is also, did you notice, an unqualified invitation. He says, come to me, all you who are weary and burdened.

[ 6 : 47 ] The first word weary means someone who is tired, someone who has laboured hard and long, who has been borne down by the struggle of life.

And to be burdened as someone who is overwhelmed with cares and concerns and fears and disappointments. And Jesus is actually saying, come to me, everyone, everywhere.

No matter who you are or what you are, come to me. Because I am the heaven sent remedy for your deepest need. He goes on to say, and you will have rest for your souls.

Because that's the rest that we need. Our greatest need before God. Is to have peace with God.

To have that rest that doesn't rise or fall with the circumstances of life. That doesn't ebb and flow when troubles and trials and disappointments perhaps engulf us.

[ 8 : 09 ] The rest that we need is that internal rest of our souls knowing that we have, because of Jesus, the smile of God's acceptance upon us.

And Jesus makes this large hearted, personal invitation. Actually the invitation is really a command. When he says come, it's an imperative verb.

He is commanding us as the Lord from heaven to come. He's not making a suggestion. He's not saying, if you reflect upon it and you consider it might be a good thing to do.

He is summoning us. And in summoning us, he is saying to us, the arms of God are open wide.

In fact the Bible tells us that God stands all the day long. Not just waiting for men and women and boys and girls to come to him.

[ 9 : 16 ] Because in Jesus Christ, God has not simply sat back and waited for us to come. He has come in person to seek and to save the lost.

And in Jesus Christ, God has not simply sat back and waited for us to come. And in Jesus' day were appalled with Jesus. They said, this man welcomes sinners. But they didn't understand Jesus. Jesus didn't come just to welcome sinners. Jesus came to run after sinners. He came to seek us out.

And he says to these people, come to me, O you who are weary and burdened. Because I am the remedy given by God to give you peace with God.

And that is the rest for your souls. Maybe you are here today and you would willingly acknowledge, yes, Ian, you are right. I have got this need and that need and this other need.

[ 10 : 19 ] And the needs concern me and they burden me. But do you know that your greatest need, towering above all other needs, is the need to be right with God.

To know that you have his smile of acceptance on you. To know that if you were to die ere this day ended, all would be well with you.

Winston Churchill, as he lay dying, was heard to say, I believe that man has an immortal soul.

But I don't know when I die whether I will be conscious or unconscious. He should have known. He had a Bible.

And the Bible tells us that when we die, we do not lapse into eternal oblivion or to eternal unconsciousness.

[ 11 : 23 ] We either depart to be with Christ in the glory of God. Or we are cast forever from his presence into what the Bible calls unimaginably outer darkness.

Impenetrable darkness. When Jesus spoke these words, they must have sounded strange to the people listening for this reason.

Because in the previous verses, Matthew tells us that Jesus has been announcing judgment and condemnation. From verse 20 to verse 24, Jesus began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done.

Because they did not repent. They did not turn to God. And Jesus says, Woe to you Bethsaida. Woe to you Chorazin. Woe to you Capernaum. These were religious cities. Privileged cities. They were people who possessed the word of God. But Jesus here is announcing judgment and condemnation upon them.

[12:36] In fact, he says, it will be better for Sodom. Sodom. On the day of judgment than for you. So Jesus is announcing judgment and condemnation.

But no. Instead of saying, therefore depart from me. I want nothing more to do with you. I've washed my hands of you. You refuse to take my words to heart. You refuse to receive me. The one sent from the Father in heaven. He doesn't do that. He says, come to me.

Come to me. And I'm gentle and lowly at heart. You see, God did not send his son into the world. To condemn the world.

John 3 verse 17. But to save the world through him. Through him. The great first movement of the good news of God. The great first movement of the good news of God. Is to tell us.

[13:37] That in Jesus Christ. God has come. In love. In mercy. In kindness. God has come. To rescue us. To restore us to himself. The first great movement. Of the Christian gospel. Is a movement of mercy. And so even as Jesus. Announces. Judgment and condemnation. There is this caveat. But if you come to me. If you come. To me.

I will give you rest. For your souls. I will restore you. To the friendship. And fellowship with God. I will fit you.

For the presence. And the glory. Of God. Maybe you are thinking. Well Ian.

[14:39] Okay. But. What does it actually mean. To come to him. What does that mean. You know. Sometimes you. You read a sentence. You know. You can tell. Which part of grammar. They are all about.

You think. What does it actually mean. To me. Well. There are two things. Number one. It means to come. To him. You are not coming. To a church. Although it is good.

To go to church. You are not even coming. To the bible. You are not even coming. To pray. All of these are. These are great. And vital.

And good. But. You are to come. To him. The Christian faith. Is about. A relationship. A personal. Relationship.

[15:38] With the son of God. Jesus Christ. It is about belonging. To him. It is about. Believing. In him. It is about trusting.

Him. It is about following. Him. Come to me. Because he. Is the sent one. Of God. He is the savior. Given for the life. Of the world. He is the one. Who. By his blood. Shedding. On Calvary's cross. Would. Deal.

With the sin. That separates us. From God. God will lay. On him. The iniquity. Of us all. Come to me. Come to me.

It is all about me. The egoism. Is breathtaking. Absolutely breathtaking. Jesus. Didn't come to preach. An ethic. He came to preach himself.

[16:37] I am. The light. Of the world. I am. The resurrection. And the life. I am. The way. The truth. And the life.

You know what he is saying. It is all about me. It is all. About me. So coming to Christ. Is coming. To Jesus.

Christ. But what does it mean. To come. To Jesus Christ. Christ. Well it means. What it says. You. Come to him. You rest. The weight. Of all that you are. On the grace. Mercy. And love. Of all that he is. You come to him. As you are. Not first. To tidy up. Your life. Thinking.

[17:32] Yes. Come to Jesus. But first. I will. Put away. That sin. And I will. I will. Put away. That sin. No.

You can't. Really. Put away. Sin. Until you come. To Jesus Christ. You. Are the sent. Of God. You are the one.

Who alone. Can make me. Right. With God. And I come. To cast. That I have. I am. Upon you. The Bible. As many.

As. Received him. That's. To come. To Christ. As. He is. Offered. To us. Held. To us.

Pleadingly. By God. In the Bible. It's quite. Remarkable. That God. The Lord. Of glory. Stoops. Down.

[ 18 : 29 ] And. Pleads. To come. To him. To come. To him. Some years ago. I. Heard. These words. Written by.

A. Scottish minister. Towards the end. Of the 19th century. Horatius Bonner. Upon a life. I did not live. A death. I did not die.

Another's life. Another's death. I stake. My whole. Eternity. That's what it means. To Jesus Christ. To say. With the hymn writer. Refuge. Have. None. Hangs. My. Helpless. Soul. On. The.

Because. Our hope. Before God. Does not lie. In self-improvement. It doesn't lie. In our church. Attendance. Vital. For our spiritual. Nurture.

[ 19 : 25 ] Though that be. Before God. Rests. In Jesus Christ. To come to Christ. Is to take. Shelter. In the shadow. Of Calvary's cross.

And to say. Here is where I stand. Before God. I've got nothing. To give him. But my trust. Is in a savior. Who has done.

Everything. That I could never do. It would take. The cross. And resurrection. For. These words. Of Jesus. To be understood.

In their fullness. But I want to leave you. Just with these. This. Last thought. This is the only place. In the gospels. I think.

Where Jesus. Draws attention. To his own. Temperament. Psychology. And personality. And what is it.

[ 20 : 20 ] He tells us. About himself. This. Holy one. Who has come. From the glory. Of God. Into the fallenness. Of this world. What does he want us.

To know about him. I'm gentle. And lowly. In hearts. The common people. We are told.

Hurt him gladly. And Jesus is saying. No matter how. Broken. Dysfunctional. Disordered. Your life is. I'm gentle. I'll be gentle. With you.

I won't be brus. I won't be clinical. I won't be cold. I won't be authoritarian. And so he says. When you take. My yoke upon you. It's a wonderful picture of.

How oxen would be yoked in pairs. And here you have. The Lord of glory. In our flesh. And poor little. Ian Hamilton. And Jesus says. Take my yoke upon you.

[ 21 : 16 ] And you think. This is just too much. He says. No, no, no, no. Not. I'm gentle. And lowly of heart. I'll be kind to you.

I'll be gentle with you. I won't handle you roughly. Come to me. You know.

It really is all about Jesus. It really is all about Jesus. That's our primary need. I'll close with these words of Jesus.

From Mark chapter 8. What does it profit a man. A woman. To gain the whole world. But lose their soul. What does it profit us.

To have all our hopes and aspirations realized. And to find ere we breathe our last breath. I'm an unforgiven son.

[ 22 : 17 ] And entering eternity without hope and without God. And what does Jesus say. Come to me. For whoever comes to me.

I will never, never turn away. Away. Thank you.