

FINDING TRUE REST PRT 3 - THE GREAT EXCHANGE

Let's go straight to our anchor scripture that has underpinned our current teaching series thus far.

Matthew 11:28 "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

If you are joining us for the first time, you will find us in the middle of a series titled **FINDING TRUE REST PRT 3**.

This morning, we are going to spend most of our time on verses 29 and 30, and in this regard, I have titled my message **THE GREAT EXCHANGE**.

Over the past few weeks, as we have been going through this series, we have been examining two main concepts: first, that many people are weary and heavily burdened, and are in need of relief; and second, that Jesus invites people to come and find true rest in Him.

- Jesus was talking to people who were burdened by many issues, which included religious burdens that were placed on them by the spiritual leaders of that time.
- Talking about religious burdens, the church is beautiful, the church is the solution to the many problems people face, but the church can also be a tough place to be part of, especially when the religious spirit is at work.
- The religious leaders at the time were placing demands and requirements that God never put on people.
- Jesus fought against the religious burdens that were placed on God's people – in Matthew 23, He derided the leaders for hypocrisy and the heavy rules they imposed on God's people.
- The Pharisees prioritized meticulous and legalistic rules over the more important matters of "justice, and mercy, and faithfulness".
- God designed His church to be a place of rest, restoration, and release. However, if we are not careful, the church can become a prison. Sometimes we can become more righteous than God Himself to a point where there is no room for healing and restoration.
- We must be careful not to become the modern-day Pharisees as we do church. Whenever a leader places a demand on you, you must always weigh it with God's word. Sometimes, we have preferences and want people to abide by them, even if they might not be scriptural.
- In other words, don't carry religious burdens that are not scriptural. You can hate the church because of them and ultimately leave the church.

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- Like we said last week, Jesus invites the weary and the burdened to come and find rest in Him, and that includes religious burdens.
- The interesting thing here is that part of his solution involves laying down one burden and picking up another – in other words, an exchange of burdens happens

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- When you are burdened and you respond to the invitation of Jesus, an exchange of some sort takes place; it is as if you lay down your burden, but at the same time, you pick up a different type of burden.
- In other words, true rest is only possible when you can exchange your burden with the burden of Christ.
- There is a technology of finding rest that we need to understand and grapple with, if we are to experience true rest.
- True rest can only happen when you can lay down your burden. You cannot pick the burden of Christ whilst carrying your own.

Psalms 55:22 Cast your burden on Jehovah, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to waver.

- In this life, every man has been allotted a burden, one that was custom-made for you. That word burden signifies a type of gift received from the Lord.
- Sometimes, God will allow burdens to come our way for refinement and growth. That portion that was assigned to “you” must be “cast upon the Lord;” that is, you are to look to him to enable you to overcome it or to bear it.
- With every burden, there is sufficient grace that is made available to bear it or to overcome it.
- Wisdom to deal with the burden is found when the burden is cast upon the Lord. The strength to fight another day is received when you roll all your cares upon the Lord.
- When you roll all your cares upon the Lord, the Lord promises to sustain you. That term “to sustain you” means that he will equip you sufficiently for the task and be up for it.
- Being sufficient has a connotation of receiving capacity to contain, to carry, and to receive nourishment.
- When you cast your burdens to the Lord, it means that you must be prepared to leave them there and walk away.

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- Those who have learnt to cast their burdens can be thought of as reckless and careless because they change the way they talk about the burden.
- Instead of giving undue attention to the burden, they shift their focus on Jesus. Instead of empowering the burden, they empower themselves in the Lord.
- Yes, your problem is big, but your God is even bigger.

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

- It takes faith and great discipline to overcome anxiety when you are facing a life-threatening moment.
- Prayer and supplication are the mechanisms by which burdens are cast before the Lord.
- The more prayerful you are, the greater the level of rest and peace you can experience.
- The Bible is the story of people who cast their burdens to the Lord.
- In her season of barrenness, Hannah cast her burden to the Lord, and over time, she was blessed with a child.
- The tax collector in Luke 18:9-13 felt he was not good enough. He felt he was stuck in a cycle of sin and shame, and instead of remaining stuck in that place, he sought the Lord and God heard his prayer of forgiveness.
- When Peter was in prison, in Acts 12:5-11, the early church cast this burden before the Lord through prayer. God answered the prayer, and an angel was sent to release Peter from prison.
- Also, Paul prayed for the thorn on his side that bothered him to be removed, and God answered by not removing the thorn but by giving him grace to carry the thorn.
- **Now this is the first part, in which you lay down your burden, and then the second part of the exchange must also take effect.**
- After laying down your burden, you must be prepared to pick up the yoke and burden of the Lord.
- The directive to take up the yoke of Christ comes after the invitation and the promise of rest. We have already discovered that one must respond to the invitation by faith but that is only the first response and there is a second response required.
- While the first response to the invitation is faith-based, the second response is obedience-based.

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- Yes, you have faith that Jesus can deal with your issues, but are you ready to obey the command to take up His yoke and cross?
- The question we need to answer is this: What is the yoke and the burden of Christ?

1. The way of Christ

- When you come to Christ, life can no longer be lived on your terms. The moment we accept Him as our Lord and Savior; we cannot live by our choices but by what He chooses for us.
- The way of Christ is the way that brings rest and peace in your storms. Unless you are ready to embrace the ways of Christ, you will not experience rest.
- His way is not to worry about the burden but to allow Him to deal with it.

2. The reign of Christ

- When you come to Christ, He takes away the control of sin in your life and introduces you to the control of grace and mercy. There is a way that Christ reigns, and it is called the reign of grace.
- He says His yoke is easy and His burden is light and this is what trips many people. Your life has been complicated by burdens, and Jesus comes and says He has a different type of burden – one that is light.
- That is why many people struggle with the grace message – you are saved by grace through faith, not of works, that anyone should boast.
- You need to learn to rest in Jesus and stop striving and getting into a performance mode.
- He told them to learn from Him – He calls himself meek and lowly. He was telling them that He is not like a taskmaster, an angry tutor, or a heavy-handed Father, but rather easy-going to anyone who decides to take up His yoke and cross (In Matthew 12, the eating of grain during the sabbath was an act of meekness by Jesus. In Luke 7, the act of Jesus allowing Mary to wash His feet with her hair was scandalous for the religious leaders but an act of tenderness by Jesus.)

3. The correction of Christ

- With Christ, there is correction and discipline that is founded on His agape love.
- Anyone who comes to Christ will be corrected and directed into the ways of heaven.
- Your rest is found in allowing and accepting the correction and the discipline of Jesus. God will correct and chastise those whom He loves.

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- In Christ, we carry His yoke and burden with a good conscience because we know that it is for our good.
- His unconditional love makes it easy to bear His yoke and His burden.
- With every burden, the longer it stays, the greater the damage and pain, but not so with the yoke and burden of Christ. The longer you bear the yoke and burden of Christ, the lighter it gets.
- Your walk with God gets easier the more submitted you are. Many people struggle in their walk with Jesus because they keep on resisting the ways and the reign of Jesus.
- Yes, it is possible to find true rest in Christ but it is premised on the great exchange. Lets pray.