

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King's baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

Matthew presents the “credentials” of Jesus proving Him to be the prophesied Jewish Messianic KING. But alas Israel did not receive Jesus as the promised Messiah King. As seen in Matt. 11:16-19 the people of Jesus' day were non-responsive and rejected both the ministry of the forerunner (John the Baptist) and that of Jesus as the Messiah. This rejection brought with it a change in the ministry of Christ.

The miraculous evidence had been extensive and since they rejected it Christ then denounced them. Matt. 11:20 says “**He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His might works had been done, because they did not repent.**” Jesus then singled out three cities in particular for special condemnation; namely Chorazin, Bethsaida, and His adopted hometown of Capernaum saying it will be worse for them in the day of judgment than for wicked pagan cities.

And that brings us to Matt. 11:25-30. In effect, Jesus had been presenting Himself to the nation of Israel which as seen in their representative leaders had largely rejected Him. Consequently, Jesus now focuses upon individuals inviting them to come to Him individually and find rest in Him. Matt. 11:20-24 describe the condemnation of those rejecting Him, while verses 25-30 describe the blessing or REST on those accepting Him.

Matthew 11:25–30 (NKJV)

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

“**At that time**” emphasizes the time of the Lord’s rejection. This is Christ’s response. The phrase “**I thank You**” (Gk. *exomologeō*) literally means to acknowledge or to confess coupled with the sense of praise.

Slide # 2

When this verb [**thank**] is used with respect to God, the person praying “acknowledges” who God is, the propriety of his ways, and the excellence of his character. – **D.A. Carson**

In this prayer Jesus uses two descriptive titles for God the Father: namely **Father**, and then also “**Lord of heaven and earth**”.

“Father” emphasizes God’s sovereign superintending over all and “Lord of heaven and earth” emphasizes Him as being sovereign Master over all (cf. Gen. 14:19, 22). Both underscore the idea of sovereign authority.

In context there is a strong emphasis that nothing can thwart the sovereign will of God. Even this strong rejection by the nation at large did not mean that God was not in control. He was still sovereign. He always remains sovereign! This is the BEDROCK truth that everything comes back to.

As the One Who has absolute sovereign authority Jesus acknowledges that the Father has “**hidden these things from the wise and the prudent and have revealed them to babes.**” This is God’s way and Jesus praised the Father for it.

Remember this is the context of rebuking the cities in which MOST of Christ’s mighty works were done. They didn’t get it. They didn’t see the truth of Who Christ was. They didn’t connect the power of His kingdom miracles with Jesus being the promised King.

Slide # 3**John 12:37 (NKJV)**

37 But although He had **done so many signs** before them, they did not believe in Him,

The signs were clearly there for all to see and they are clearly held accountable for seeing, but indeed they failed to see. The sign-miracles (that I call kingdom-miracles) all pointed to Jesus as being the promised Messiah Who brings in the kingdom, but “***the wise and prudent***” didn’t see it.

Why didn’t they see it? Well, we have an indicator in verses 23-24 where Jesus said to Capernaum that on judgment day it will be better for Sodom than for them because if Sodom would have had the privilege of seeing Christ’s mighty works the implication is that they would have repented.

But what was Capernaum’s KEY problem? Jesus describes Capernaum as being “***exalted to heaven***” which is description of PRIDE! In other words, they were full of PRIDE. Pride is the idea of “independent self-exaltation”.

The “***wise and prudent***” here are those who think themselves to be very wise and intelligent about spiritual matters. Thus, they are very proud of all their supposed wisdom! They are full of themselves. Sometimes people can be “***to smart for their own good***”.

People think they are so smart and sophisticated, but they are not smarter than God. In fact, in their puniness they fail to see that God in His wisdom hides His truth from prideful self-wisdom that does not humbly rely on God. This is the KEY point. We can only know God’s truth by humbly relying on Him – we never arrive there through our own mental brilliance.

The problem here is not merely their intellect. It was not that their IQ was too high. The problem was intellectual pride that depends on human wisdom instead of on the revelation of God. Proud people think they can figure out spiritual truth by means of their own human intelligence.

As a means of judicial judgment God hides His truth from such people. In all their supposed brilliance they claim to be the “***all wise ones***” but in truth they don’t get it. God does not cater to prideful wisdom that thinks it is self-sufficiently wise and is therefore dependent upon the strength of their own intellect.

Slide # 4

Jesus' point in Matthew 11 was not that God has withheld the truth from intelligent people, but rather that those who rely on their own cleverness cut themselves off from the truth. – **John MacArthur**

Have you met people who come of like “**a know it all**” when in fact they have no clue what they are talking about? And as you go along in the conversation they continue to “**put on airs**” and won't back down. Such a person has a PRIDE problem. They don't know what they are saying, but their PRIDE won't acknowledge it.

Pride is the besetting sin of mankind and God hates pride – which in essence is the idea of operating independently of God. Pride says I can do it myself – I don't need God's help. God hides His truth from such an attitude. The Bible is clear that God gives grace to the humble.

Slide # 5**1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)**

... “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

Want to be graced by God – be humble. He doesn't cater to the pride of self-made people who think they can know truth apart from Him.

In truth, we can only know the things of God by His revelation. We totally need His help (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14). Paul deals with this extensively in 1 Cor. 1-3.

Slide # 6**1 Corinthians 1:20–21 (NKJV)**

20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? **Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?**

21 For since, **in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God,** it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 3:18–20 (NKJV)

18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.

19 **For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.** For it is written, “He catches the wise in their own craftiness”;

20 and again, **“The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.”**

You take the most intelligent person in the world who is not a believer, and all of his spiritual ideas are foolishness. He never has a great original spiritual thought. Those that think so are merely deceived. No one ever outsmarts God and God works in such a way that we are totally dependent upon Him to know spiritual truth and the key is to humble ourselves and admit it (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14). That is where it all starts – right there.

God has hidden “**these things**” – that is kingdom truth as previous revealed by Christ’s might works. In other words in context they have not seen the significance of Christ’s miracles that point to Him as the Messiah King. God hides the truth of Who Christ is from them because they were not reliant upon Him.

But while God has hidden these things from the “self-wise” He has revealed them to babes (cf. Mt. 18:3). Babes here refers to those who are not self-wise. They recognize their helplessness and are totally dependent upon God. That is the picture. They are humbled and in a position of dependence upon God to know His truth. Babes here depicts those with a teachable, humble, dependent spirit.

Here was the problem with Israel. They refused to assume the position of dependent babes. They were not in the position of humble dependence, but rather in the position of prideful self-wisdom, and consequently spiritual things of the King and His kingdom were not revealed to them.

They had a PRIDE problem! The proud don’t come to Jesus. They are self-satisfied in their self-righteousness and their legalism. That was Israel.

Slide # 7

Isaiah 57:15 (NKJV)

15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and **humble spirit**, To revive the spirit of **the humble**, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Matthew 5:3 (NKJV)

3 “Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

God gives rest – salvation- to humble people, people filled with contrition, brokenness, and a sense of dependency. There is no place for the proud. – **John MacArthur**

In 1 Cor. 1:26-29 Paul says that God has chosen not many wise and He has done this so that “***no flesh should glory in His presence.***” No one can strut their wisdom stuff before God. All the glory belongs to God alone!

26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

This is God’s way of working which He deems as good. And I for one am really glad that the smart alecks of the world are not given any room to boast before God. It is a good thing that God humbles the proud and give grace to those who humble themselves before Him. God reveals His truth to those who humble themselves before Him. Those that refuse to humble themselves will never see the kingdom!

This withholding insight from the wise was not a matter of injustice but rather a matter of judicial judgment. In their self-proclaimed wisdom they rejected the light of God’s truth found in Christ and so God removed the light from them. That is judicial judgment.

27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

In verse 25 we see Christ’s emphasis on the Father’s absolute sovereignty but now Jesus says that “***all things***” have been delivered to Me by My Father. The One Who is sovereign over all has delivered all into Christ’s sovereign care. To be sovereign over all in the case of both the Father and that of Christ speaks to the reality of Deity. Only God is sovereign over all.

And to further show you that the deity of both the Father and the Son are in view, note the phrase “***My Father***”. This indicates that Jesus shares in the very nature of God the Father.

Slide # 8

John 5:18 (NKJV)

18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that **God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.**

Christ in saying that God was His Father was emphasizing that He shares in the very nature of God. As such He has a unique relationship with God the Father. And His Father (the all sovereign One) has delivered all things to Him showing that He is sovereign over all things.

And in context the “**all things**” speaks of revelation. Jesus is now the exclusive agent over the entire revelation of God. All divine knowledge is now committed to the Son. Jesus is in charge of who gets to know!

Slide # 9

Colossians 2:3 (NKJV)

3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

And then Jesus says, “**and no one knows the Son except the Father.**”

There are incomprehensible mysteries about Christ. As Paul says in 1 Tim. 3:16. “**And without controversy great is the mystery... God was manifested in the flesh...**” The union of Deity and humanity in Christ boggles the mind. Where does one leave off and the other begin? For example, what about the issue of death. God cannot die. And yet Jesus is God and He did die. His divine nature and His human nature are distinct and yet somehow they are mysteriously brought together in one person in the person of Christ. There is great mystery here.

Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son”. The Father and the Son have an exclusive “**knowing**” relationship. No one completely knows the Son with perfect intimate knowledge except for the Father, and no one completely knows the Father with perfect intimate knowledge except for the Son. No one ultimately knows them except for themselves and they know each other perfectly.

Ultimately, only God is great enough to understand God. Man cannot know Him by his own strength or intellect. – **William MacDonald**

If this is true, then how can God be known? Well, only by God revealing Himself. And since the Son is now in charge of all things revelatory the only ones who can know God are those “**to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.**” Thus, we are completely dependent upon Jesus to disclose God to us. Want to know God? You can only know Him through Jesus.

So, when the Jews rejected Jesus they closed themselves off from the only source of revelation that could really make God known to them – that being Jesus!

People can know something of God’s power and wisdom from nature, but they can’t know His heart – they can’t know His plans – they can’t know His love. This is only known through the Son. To really know the intimate character of God we have to know Christ.

Back in the OT Moses asked to see God's glory. God said He would make His "goodness" [that is His character] to pass before Him and proclaim the name of the LORD (cf. Ex. 33:18-19). As LORD passed before Moses He proclaimed His attributes such as merciful, gracious, longsuffering, goodness, and truth. In other words, God revealing His glory to Moses involved showing Him the essence of His glorious character – the kind of God that He truly is (cf. Ex. 34:5-9).

And yet, note that Moses only saw the backside of God's glory because God said, "***You cannot see My face, for no man shall see Me, and live.***" (Ex. 33:20) In other words no one can see God in His full frontal glory and live. Only the Son knows the full glory of the Father and only the Father knows the full glory of the Son. And yet Jesus came to make God known to us on a level previously unknown. Jesus came to make God known to us by presenting the PERSON OF GOD in a human body!

Slide # 10

John 1:18 (NKJV)

18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom [most intimate of relationship] of the Father, **He has declared Him.**

John 14:9 (NKJV)

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father;** so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

This is totally unique to the Lord Jesus Christ. No one else in the history of all the prophets ever said, "To see me is to directly see God." No apostle ever made such a claim.

The Son as the image of God is the revealer of the invisible God (Col. 1:15); he is the Logos, the expression of the unseen God (Jn. 1:1, 18). – ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

Slide # 11

2 Corinthians 4:6 (NKJV)

6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the **knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Colossians 1:15 (NKJV)

15 He is the image of the invisible God...

Slide # 12**1 John 5:20 (NKJV)**

20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

John 17:3 (NKJV)

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

The way we know the one true God is through the agency of Jesus Christ. And KEY to what we know of God through Jesus Christ is the LOVE of God. We only know the extent of God's love through Christ.

Slide # 13**Romans 5:8–9 (NKJV)**

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

1 John 4:9–10 (NKJV)

9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

In verses 25-27 there is a tremendous emphasis on the Father who is mentioned 5 times in these verses. The concept of God as Father and sovereignty go together! And there is a tremendous emphasis on the sovereignty of the Son over the administration of knowing God. God is known only in accordance with whom the Son wills to reveal Him. That is a great emphasis on sovereignty.

And whom does the Son will to reveal Him to? Well, in context the answer is babes - those who come to Christ – those who take Christ's yoke upon themselves. It is these who are shown the truth of God by the Son.

Sovereignty is emphasized, and yet immediately in the very next verse Jesus goes on to speak in terms of human responsibility as He extends the invitation to ALL to come to Him. We see this interwoven tension between God's sovereignty and human responsibility throughout the Scriptures. Both are true and the combination thereof is inscrutable.

Slide # 14

The Scripture furnishes numerous instances where God's sovereignty and man's free will interplay with each other. Both are biblical teachings. For man to try to alter either one to find a reconciliation is an attempt to eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, an attempt of man to escape his finitude so as to become like an infinite God. ...

The best we as humans can do is to accept the Bible's teaching about both the absolute sovereignty of God and freedom of men to make their own moral decisions whether to believe in Christ or not, without changing either teaching. From the standpoint of human logic and philosophical reasoning, the two teachings are in conflict, but from a biblical standpoint they are not. **-Robert Thomas**

In context Christ has just expressed condemnation in the previous verses on those cities that saw His mighty works. There was accountability for the light they had. It's not that they never had any light – they did and for that reason they are especially accountable.

As Jesus said in John 12:36, "***While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.***" *They can never say, "Well, the blame is on Jesus because He didn't will to reveal the truth to us."* The accountability is on them because in their proudful self-wisdom they rejected the truth. In PRIDE they rejected the light that was given them and therefore the light was withdrawn, and consequently they were left in the darkness of human pride.

The overall emphasis in context is on how God sovereignly works in relation to human responsibility. God sovereignly makes His truth known through the Son. That is His plan, His mode of operation, and no one can thwart it. He calls people to repent and accept the Son for Who He is and gives ample evidence to support this demand. However, the truth is ultimately HIDDEN from the proudly self-wise, but it is REVEALED to humble-dependent babes. This is how God works! The Son wills to reveal the truth of God only to those who humble them self and depend on Him.

In Luke 18:9-14 Jesus told a parable about a self-righteous Pharisee and a humbled tax collector. The Pharisee prayed about how great he was, and I am sure he could have added about how smart he thought he was. The tax collector was humbled before God admitting he was a sinner in need of the mercy of God. Jesus concluded by saying this:

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Luke 18:14 (NKJV)

I tell you, this man [the humbled repentant tax collector] went down to his house justified rather than the other; for **everyone who exalts himself will be humbled**, and he who **humbles himself will be exalted.**”

Only those who humble themselves can know God and His salvation! Being proudly self-wise defined the generation of Christ’s day as a whole and yet Christ held out this invitation to all individuals generally...

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The only one who can know the Father is the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him and with that thought in mind Christ invites ALL to come to Him – ALL who labor and are heavy laden – with the promise that if they come He will give them rest.

“Come to Me” is tantamount to repenting and believing on Him. To come is to recognize Him for WHO He is and, on that basis, come -recognizing Him as the God-source of rest.

Slide # 16

John 6:35 (NKJV)

35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who **comes to Me** shall never hunger, and he who **believes in Me** shall never thirst.

Clearly Jesus equates coming to Him with believing on Him.

The object of faith is not a church, a ritual, a sacrament, a creed, or a clergyman, but rather Christ Himself. Salvation is in a PERSON and His name is Jesus!

Slide # 17**Acts 4:12 (NKJV)**

12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name [Person] under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

1 John 5:12 (NKJV)

12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

And the invitation is to ALL who labor and are heavy laden. Note the invitation is not merely to some but rather to ALL. The one condition is that we must COME.

Slide # 18**Isaiah 55:1 (NKJV)**

1 “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

Revelation 22:17 (NKJV)

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Ya gotta wanna! You have to come and of course that doesn't happen apart from divine intervention, but when God is calling you must come. As Hebrews 3:7-8 says, “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...”.

The invitation is to all who labor and are heavy laden. The word “labor” (Gk. kopiao) is sometimes translated as weary. It has the idea of being exhausted through strenuous toil or struggling. “Heavy laden” is the idea of being burdened down or overloaded like a beast of burden.

Some think that the emphasis here is in relation to sin and its consequences while others think the emphasis is on the bondage of Jewish legalism. Both certainly apply and the one certainly involves the other.

In the greater context was a burdensome legalistic religious system. In Matt. 9:36 we saw that Jesus was moved with compassion as He looked on the multitudes because they were weary [or harassed] like sheep without a shepherd. Judaistic legalism was HARD.

Slide # 19

Matthew 23:4 (NKJV)

4 For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

Acts 15:10 (NKJV)

10 Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

In reality what Jesus is asking them to do is to jettison the "Lordship" of their religious legalism and come to Him as Lord and He would give them rest. It's all a matter of Who or What is going to be Lord of your life. Note that "rest" here is a GIFT. Christ says, "I will give you rest." You don't earn it or work for it. He as the sovereign Lord has the authority to GIVE it to you as a gift if you will but come to Him.

Trying to work your way to God is nothing but exhausting and a very heavy burden. What a relief we have in Christ Who gives us REST simply for coming to Him in faith. That is all He requires. Now it must be the right kind of faith involving repentance which the context makes clear, but the only condition for entering into Christ's REST is coming to Him.

As a footnote some see here an echo from Jer. 31:25 where God promises satisfaction for the weary soul in close connection with the promise of a new covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31-33). Others see an echo from Jer. 6:16 where God invites the people to walk in the good way and thereby find "rest for your souls" and this "good way" ultimately leads to Christ Who is "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6).

Those who REST in Jesus have ceased from their own works in trying to get right with God. Instead, they now have their REST completely in Jesus.

Slide # 20

Hebrews 4:9-10 (NKJV)

9 There **remains therefore a rest** for the people of God.

10 For he who has entered **His rest** has himself also **ceased from his works** as God did from His.

However, note that the thought of Jesus is not complete as it continues on into verses 29 and 30.

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

To come to Christ is to come on His terms. It comes recognizing Him for Who He is as my Lord (Master) and that I am now His disciple. A disciple is a learning follower. Coming to Christ involves becoming His disciple as the great commission makes clear in Matt. 28:19-20.

In ancient writings, a pupil who submitted himself to a teacher was said to take the teacher's yoke. – ***John MacArthur***

Thus, the yoke was a common symbol of submission. In Judaism it was a common metaphor for the law but now Jesus applies it to Himself. Coming to Christ in effect meant exchanging the yoke of the law for the yoke of Himself! The essence is this: What is going to run your life? Is it going to be Jewish legalism or is it going to be Christ. Who or what is going to be Lord! That is the ultimate issue!

Slide # 21

Philippians 3:8–9 (NKJV)

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus **my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is **from the law**, but that which is through **faith in Christ**, the righteousness which is from God **by faith**;

Coming to Christ involves entering into a YOKE relationship with Him – acknowledging that He has the sovereign right of control (cf. Rom. 12:1-2). Now we must learn and grow in this role, but in salvation we enter into it.

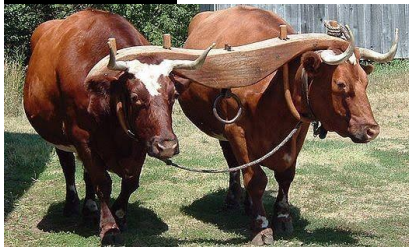
Slide # 22

The “yoke” (v. 29), put on animals for pulling heavy load, is a metaphor for the discipline of discipleship. If Jesus is not offering the yoke of the law, neither is he offering the freedom from all constraints. The “yoke” is Jesus’ yoke, not the yoke of the law; discipleship must be to him. – **D.A. Carson**

This is a great point. As believers we are no longer under the law of Moses, but this does not mean we are under nothing – that we are not under any yoke at all. Now as believers we are under the law of Christ as Paul indicates in Gal. 6:2. While we are freed from sin, we are now the slaves of Christ (1 Cor. 7:22). While sin is no longer our master, Christ now is our Master, and we are His disciples (Rom. 6:7, 11, 22). Those who have truly come to Christ are now under His YOKE.

A “yoke” is a neck harness for two. Most commonly oxen were yoked together to do work in the field.

Slide # 23



The NT instructs believers not to be yoked together in fellowship with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14). It is to be in union together. In coming to Christ we yoke up with Him – we enter into union with Him. The NT constantly emphasizes that we as believers are now “in Christ”.

The Rabbis referred to the yoke of the law but here the metaphor of “yoke” refers to one of discipleship. As we enter into this yoke relationship of discipleship with the Lord the result is that we begin to learn from Christ (cf. Eph. 4:20). It is a learning relationship. He is the Master/Teacher and we are His disciples.

And what do we find? Do we find Him to be a harsh taskmaster – and that being in union with Him is HARD. No, as we learn from Him, we find Him to be gentle and lowly in heart resulting in rest for our souls. Gentle is sometimes translated as “meek” and lowly in heart as “humble in heart”.

Some tie the idea of gentleness to the Messianic servant passages in Isaiah (cf. Isa. 42:2-3; 53:1-2).

What a beautiful picture of graciousness. He is not harsh jerking us around in an abusive manner. Rather He is gentle and humble in heart. Think about this the sovereign Lord over all is “humble in heart”. We see this in His relationship with His disciples. He was ever amazingly patient, tolerant, and gracious with them. And yet, it is always evident that He is the Lord Who is in charge. It is great to be yoked up with such a person. He is totally in charge and yet He is gentle and not forceful in His dealings with us.

And in this YOKE relationship we learn to be like Him. We too learn to be gentle and humble and in doing so find the way of rest for our souls. There is a positional reality of REST that we enter into upon coming to Him – that’s verse 28. This is our eternal position in Christ. But then as we enter into this “yoke” relationship with Him there is also the reality of practical sanctification in which we learn to find rest in Him in our daily experience. Both are found in Jesus.

So note the connection of thought between verse 28 and 29 and yet the distinction.

Verse 28 is dealing with justification while verse 29 goes on to deal with sanctification. They are related and yet distinct.

Justification is an event, sanctification a process. The two must be distinguished but can never be separated. God does not justify whom He does not sanctify, and He does not sanctify whom He does not justify. Both are essential elements of salvation.

– **John MacArthur** in Faith Works, p. 90

We see that balance here in Matt. 11:28-29. In verse 28 we have the REST (or peace) with God that comes in justification at the moment of saving faith (cf. Rom. 5:1). It is a REST given by Christ to those at the time they come to Him in faith. But then in verse 29 we have the REST (or peace) of God that comes from learning from Him that we find for our souls in practical sanctification (cf. Phil. 4:6-8). The one leads to the other. In verse 28 Christ gives us REST and in verse 29 we learn to have REST for our souls. Both are borne out of saving faith, but one relates to justification and the other to ongoing sanctification. Coming to Christ He gives us rest! Coming to Christ we are YOKED up with Him and begin to learn His rest!

Positionally we rest in Him and in practice we learn to find rest in Him as we more and more learn to cast all our cares upon Him (cf. 1 Pet. 5:7). We learn instead of being anxious to pray about everything and thereby experience the peace of God that surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:6-8).

Are you tired - burdened down by the sin and stresses of life? Are you burned out on religion and the demands of legalism? Come to Jesus. He offers REST! Learn from Him and let Him teach you about His rest! He gives us rest from the penalty of sin, He gives us rest from the power of sin, and ultimately, He will give us rest from the very presence of sin (Rev. 14:13).

Slide # 24



30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

The way of sin is hard (cf. Prov. 13:15). The yoke of the law is HARD (cf. Acts 15:10). The yoke of legalism is HARD (cf. Gal. 5:1). But in contrast the yoke of Christ is easy.

Christ’s yoke is His yoke. Two times Christ calls it His yoke in verse 29 and again in verse 30. He carries the load. Yes, in union with Him we share in this yoke but it is essentially His. And His yoke comes with REST.

We positionally REST in a right relationship with God because of our union with Christ. No matter what comes, no matter what happens that REST remains secure and unmoving. You can rest easy in this relationship.

And regarding our practice, even in all the struggles and challenges of life, being in union with Christ means we always have Him with us to help us. His yoke means we always have His grace available, and His grace is sufficient no matter what we go through (2 Cor. 12:9-10). Being in yoke with Him means the Lord is our shepherd providing all that we need and therefore we shall not lack (Ps. 23:1).

Being linked with Christ is the EASY way in comparison to the world’s way.

Slide # 25

1 John 5:3 (NKJV)

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

They are not burdensome because what Christ commands of us – what He asks us to do – He also empowers us to do by the Holy Spirit Who lives in us. In Christ we are blessed with every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3).

Peter says “***His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness***” (2 Pet. 1:3). This is the EASY way – Christ’s yoke is easy. And His burden is light. Some translate this “***My load is light***”. Whatever Christ asks you to carry is light because He is with you in the yoke. Christ with you makes all the difference. It is because of this that Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:13).

Note He didn’t say there would be no burden, but rather with Christ in the YOKE it is light. It is what Christ gives you and since it is His yoke we can trust that it is good. He has promised that He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10:12). He will not allow us to be crushed. His burden therefore is “***light***”. He is there to always do the heavy lifting and He leaves the EASY/LIGHT part for us.

And as we learn from Him, we more and more learn to REST in Him which is why we find it easy and light.

Christ’s yoke is not burdensome because His character is “gentle and humble in heart.” His service flows from grace, not legalism; from love, not judgmentalness; and from gratitude, not trying to earn what is unattainable by human effort. – ***Ed Glasscock***

God never intended for us to bear life’s burdens alone. A yoke is a neck harness for TWO. Christ invites us to yoke up with Him and in this we find REST!

The story is told of a man who was carrying a heavy basket along a dirt path one day. Because of the heavy load, the man’s young son offered to help. The father cut a large stick and placed it through the handle of the basket. His own end was very short and heavy, while his son’s end was long and light. When each took hold of the stick it was the father who essentially carried the burden. That is a picture of our yoke with Christ. He essentially carries it which means it is EASY and LIGHT for us!

The Lord will never tax us beyond our strength, never impose a task beyond the ability He gives. He is on the other side of the yoke and He carries all its weight. The responsibility is His. The results are His burden, not ours. The Lord is the kindest, most considerate Master in the world. Come! Take! Learn! Find! – ***John Phillips***

True REST, spiritual REST, is found only in Jesus. Yes, Come! Take! Learn! Find! Jesus invites, “Come to Me...and I will give you rest! COME!