

When the Burdens are Heavy

Matthew 11:25-30

Introduction

Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God? When the burdens are heavy. Our text today will be from Matthew 11:25-30. This is familiar territory and one of my favorites.

One day, two monks were walking through the countryside. They were on their way to another village to help bring in the crops. As they walked, they saw an old woman sitting at the edge of a river. She was upset because there was no bridge, and she could not get across on her own. The first monk kindly offered, "We will carry you across if you would like." She accepted their help with gratitude. So, the two men joined hands, lifted her between them and carried her across the river. When they got to the other side, they set her down, and she went on her way. After they had walked another mile or so, the second monk began to complain. "Look at my clothes," he said. "They are filthy from carrying that woman across the river. And my back still hurts from lifting her. I can feel it getting stiff." The first monk just smiled and nodded his head. A few more miles up the road, the second monk griped again, "My back is hurting me so badly, and it is all because we had to carry that silly woman across the river! I cannot go any farther because of the pain." The first monk looked down at his partner, now lying on the ground, moaning. "Have you wondered why I am not complaining?" he asked. "Your back hurts because you are still carrying the woman. But I set her down five miles ago." We can find ourselves like the second monk, carrying the burdens that should've been let go a long time ago. In our text today, Jesus speaks regarding burdens, and He offers rest for the soul. A rest unlike any other.

Background

Our author of our text was penned by Matthew – one of the twelve disciples of Jesus – a tax collector. He writes primarily to Jewish readers. During Jesus’ ministry on earth, He had a lot of encounters with a religious sect known as the Pharisees. Most of them came to rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus was not shy to call out their hypocrisy. They came to rejection of John the Baptist’s preaching and also Jesus’ just as many of cities of Galilee as a whole. The cities that rejected Jesus in the previous verses all received a “woe” from him– an announcement of judgment with pity and sorrow. None of those places were ever the same. Jesus then turns to and contrasts those who have positive volition towards Him.

Scripture

Matthew 11:25-30

(25) At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (26) Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. (27) All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. (28) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) 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. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Outline

I. The Position of the Rest-giver, vv. 25-27.

A. He is in perfect communion with the Father, vv. 25-26.

(25) At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (26) Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

1. We see Jesus in communication with the Father.
2. If you're a child of God by faith in Jesus – you have that same privilege to directly talk to God. We have that “access.”

Romans 5:1-2 (1) Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

(2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 (5) For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

(6) Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

3. We see that Jesus thanks God for quote “hidden these things to the prudent and wise.”

- a. Our context from chapter 9 shows us that He is referring to the understanding of the miracles He did.
- b. The miracles were meant to authenticate the messenger. They proved Jesus truly is who He claimed to be – the Son of God – The Messiah.
- c. This did not convince many of those religious leaders. They opposed him. In another section Jesus was accused of doing miracles in the power of Beelzebub – Satan. The wise and prudent here are self-sufficient people who felt they did not need Jesus or His message.
- d. These truths were hidden from intellectually and spiritually proud.

4. He gives thanks that it was revealed to “babes.”

- a. This is the same word used for child and is also used to describe immature Christians by Paul.
- b. Here Jesus seems to be using to describe the least likely of people.
- c. It amazes me what God does through ordinary people like us.

5. Jesus takes solace in that it seemed good (well-pleasing) in the Father's sight.
 - a. We are under the watch of the one who has a purpose in everything.
 - b. No such thing as an accident with God. Even God has a purpose with the wicked that reject Him.

Proverbs 16:4 The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

B. He is the one who reveals the Father to us, v. 27.

(27) All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

1. All things are delivered to Jesus. He has the highest authority.
2. Even though opposition was escalating, the Father's plan was to give Him victory.
3. No man knoweth the Son but the Father neither knoweth any man the Father Save the Son.
 - a. At first glance it may seem that Jesus is saying no one knows Him except God.
 - b. But don't we know Jesus through the Word and we have a relationship with Him?
 - c. The key is regarding this word "know" here. It is not the common use to know meaning have knowledge of or be familiar with. That word is ginosko. The word used here by Jesus is epi-ginosko. To know upon some mark, that is, recognise; by implication to become fully acquainted with, to acknowledge: - (ac-, have, take) know (-ledge, well), perceive. It is a special unique relationship the Father and Son have in the trinity that no human has.

d. The Father can also only be known to whomever the Son wills to reveal.

John 14:6-7 (6) Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.(7) If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

e. Jesus reveals Himself to those who believe in His message.

f. There is an important difference in the way that the Son knows the Father, and the way we may know Him. We know the Father because He stoops low to us to make Himself known. The Son knows the Father because they are equal in nature, completely compatible with one another.

II. The Invitation for Rest, vv. 28-30.

A. Invitation to come unto Him, v. 28.

(28) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

1. Jesus showed His authority when He says come unto Me. This invitation is unthinkable in the mouth of anyone else but God.
2. Religion and Pharisees will say “do.” Jesus says come unto me. This is by personal trust in a personal Savior.

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

3. The invitation to come unto Him is to “all ye that labour and are heaven laden.” None of this is talking about physical labor and being tired after a full-time work week. This is spiritual exhaustion.
 - a. The word labour here is idea of weariness. It is implied to be your own burdens.

b. Heavy laden is burdens put on by others.

Matthew 23:1-4 (1) Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, (2) Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: (3) All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. (4) For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

c. What the Pharisees laid out was a clear works-based system that sought favor with God from ones own doing. But truth is even our best to offer is as filthy rags and put Jesus on the cross. They burdened people with things themselves could not follow.

d. The same goes for the modern-day preacher that tells people “Do this, do this then you might be saved. Then you have to do this and do that just to keep it.” They themselves cannot do it. What an offence to the cross it is. To believe you can go to heaven through your own doings is to believe that Jesus’ shed blood wasn’t enough. And that as we can see especially in Paul’s writings did not sit well.

4. Jesus in contrast to all these works and burdens laid says to come unto me and I will give you rest. The true and only rest-giver. The word here for rest means cease from labor. It is far more than mere rest. it is a transformation. Do you need a rest spiritually? Jesus lifts the burden by giving refreshment. He will cause you to rest. Jesus offers us peace of mind, heart and assurance of salvation in place of the weary burden of legalism. Man can never obtain this rest unless Christ gives it.

5. Other religious teachers may give you a self-righteousness, or self-delusion, but only Jesus Christ saves.

B. Invitation to take His yoke upon you, v. 29.

(29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me;

1. I am fairly confident if I gave a sheet for everyone to define what a yoke is I might see an answer that says the yellow part at the center of egg. This is a whole different word.
2. A yoke is a neck harness for two, a wooden frame fitting over the shoulders of oxen and other animals to ease the work of hauling a load. It allowed them to pull together in the same direction. The yoke consists of two parts. The first part connects both oxen. This usually is in the form of a long stick. The second part is some contraption that locks their head to their side of the stick.
3. In ancient Jewish times the yoke was used as metaphor for devotion. It is the symbol of service and servitude, and in accordance with the principle that the Jew should be free from servitude to man in order to devote himself to the service of God.
 - a. They had many different “yokes.”
 - b. “Yoke of the torah, yoke of the law, the yoke of the command, the yoke of repentance.” These were nothing but burdens.
 - c. Jesus says to take My yoke upon you. His yoke is completely contrasted to all these other yokes out there. Jesus puts Himself into one side of the yoke and the believer can put His neck in the other. He will be the one to take the lead and He will carry your burden with you and see you through.

C. Invitation to learn of Him, v. 29.

1. “Learn of me.” Jesus says. In its entirety He is talking about being apart of His church.
2. This is the same word where get disciple. We become His students.
3. For us to learn, we must refuse to demand certain things from the Lord. We cannot demand that He do this or that. He is not your genie in a bottle We cannot insist that if we do this, He will do such and such a thing. We must allow Jesus to lead us.
4. Jesus is saying, “Become my students, submit yourselves to My instructions and learn of Me.” He invites us to come and submit ourselves to Him. We cannot do that without humbling ourselves and trusting Him.
5. Getting in His Word, getting involved in your local church is key to learning of Him. And heads up, learning of Him is a never-ending process. And what a wonderful one it is.
6. This is not a call to a lazy or indulgent life. There is still a yoke to bear and burden to carry. Yet with and in Jesus, they are easy and light.

D. The reason the invitation is significant, vv. 29b-30.

. . .for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

1. “I am meek and lowly in heart.”
 - a. Meekness can be defined as power under control. The world may view as a weak attribute, but it’s just the opposite.
 - b. It is power to heal and not harm.
 - c. He is “meek” as opposed to the haughty and harsh teachers of the law.

He is “lowly in heart” not arrogant, proud and repulsive.

2. It is His servant’s heart, displayed throughout His ministry, making Him more than qualified to be the one who bears our burdens.

Hebrews 4:14-16 (14) Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. (15) For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (16) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

3. What better one to be yoked together with than the one who understands perfectly? He has something that we do not though and no one else had. He was without sin.
4. Jesus’ yoke is easy in contrast to those legalist yokes. Legalistic yokes are negative and depressive to have around. They will choke you to death spiritually. His burden is light. He gives rest unto your soul.
5. The yoke is easy, and the burden is light because He bears it with us. Borne alone, it might be unbearable; but with Jesus it is easy and light.
6. You may be thinking “it doesn’t feel easy.” Jesus isn’t saying life in general gets easy. It is Him leading and bearing the burden that is easy. Our New Testament commandments are not burdensome.

1 John 5:3 (3) For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

Conclusion

When it feels like the burdens we have in our lives are too heavy. It is because we need Jesus to take charge. The greatest burden we can ever carry was dealt with on the cross. We no longer are to carry the burden of sin's penalty. Our burdens after salvation were never meant to be carried alone. We have Jesus and we also have each other. In Galatians, Paul says to bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. We are going to be pressed into circumstances that ourselves are not capable of handling. 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

(8) For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: (9) But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: (10) Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; If you are weary and need rest today. Jesus is reaching. You may be feeling like you just want to give up. Life has you beaten and down and you can't seem to grasp hope. But let me point you back to Jesus. You can trust and lean on, and depend on Him, because He is dependable. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. He invites you to cast your care upon Him for He careth for you.