

Title: **THE COMING OF CHRIST**
A MATTER OF GREAT JOY

Text: Zechariah 2:10-11

Subject: *The Incarnation*

Date: Sunday Morning — December 31, 2006

Reading: *Jeremiah 28:1-17*

Tape # Zechariah #47

Introduction:

Last week the minds of all people, throughout the world were, were fixed upon the fact that God's darling Son once came into this world in human flesh. Few know who he is, why he came, or what he accomplished, but all men know that he came into this world. None can deny it. But we want to know him and know everything revealed about him in the Book of God. So, today, while the fact of our Lord's incarnation is still fresh on our minds, I want to go back to Zechariah chapter two, and read one of the many remarkable prophecies of our Savior's incarnation given in the Old Testament Scriptures.

(Zechariah 2:10-11) "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. (11) And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee."

May God the Holy Spirit graciously teach us the message he has for us in these two verses and apply it to our hearts, that we may know more of him who loved us and gave himself for us.

Proposition: Here, the Lord God, the Triune Jehovah, calls for us to rejoice, not only in the fact that Christ came into the world, but in character in which he came and in the work he accomplished.

Notice, it is "the LORD," Jehovah, who said, "Lo, I come," and it is "the LORD of hosts," Jehovah who sent him. In the first part of verse 11, "the LORD," Jehovah declares that by his coming he will save a great multitude of sinners. — "And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people." Then, in the latter part of verse 11, he tells us that those to whom and for whom he was sent shall know these things. — "And

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I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.”

PRAISE AND JOY

First, the Lord God here calls for all his saints to praise him in song and rejoice in their hearts at the prospect of the Word being made flesh and dwelling among us. — “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion.”

“The daughter of Zion” is the Church of God. The temple and worship being established on mount Zion, and the city of Zion being joined to Jerusalem, as the mother to the daughter, the Church is here called “the daughter of Zion.” — “The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob” (Psalm 137:2). — “The LORD hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation” — He says concerning it, “This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.” And speaking of his Word, the ordinances of worship, and the pastors according to his own heart that he has given his Church, he says, “I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation and her saints shall shout aloud for joy” (Psalm 132:13-16).

The Church of God, having the promise of salvation given by God himself, is called upon to rejoice. — “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion.” The Old Testament prophets often called for God’s saints of old to sing and rejoice in the prospect of Christ’s coming (Isaiah 12:6; 62:11; Jeremiah 31:7-9; Zephaniah 3:14-17). How much more ought we, to whom he has come, sing and rejoice before him!

(Isaiah 12:6) “Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.”

(Isaiah 62:11) “Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him.”

(Jeremiah 31:7-9) “For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. (8) Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame,

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the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. (9) They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* my firstborn.”

(Zephaniah 3:14-17) “Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. (15) The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, *even* the LORD, *is* in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. (16) In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: *and to Zion*, Let not thine hands be slack. (17) The LORD thy God in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.”

Zechariah gives us this same admonition again in chapter 9. — “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (v. 9).

Blessed be his holy name, it is the will and pleasure of our great God and Savior for his people to rejoice and be happy in him, that we sing his praise and rejoice before him. Let us be glad in his salvation, and triumph in his praise, and thus find the joy of the Lord to be our strength.

Surely, if the people of the Most High ever had cause for singing and rejoicing, it is now, for Christ has come! — “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The saints of God in Zechariah’s day were called to sing and rejoice because they were informed that the coming of the Lord drew nigh. He was soon to be manifested in the temple they were now rebuilding, and be the glory of it From the first revelation of Christ as the woman’s Seed who would crush the serpent’s head, to his advent, a period of four thousand years passed. During those four thousand years, sacrificial worship was maintained as a picture of all that Christ was to be, and do, and suffer as our Substitute. Throughout that time he uttered his glorious voice to his people by the ministry of his prophets, declaring his “delights were with the sons of men.” His voice

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having been heard, his Church was enraptured by it, and cried out, “It is the voice of my Beloved.”

The inspired psalmist records the words of our Redeemer to the Father, the words of Jehovah the Son to Jehovah the Father, — “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:6-8). Hearing those words, the Bride our Savior espoused to himself from eternity was ravished and cried out, “Behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.”

And at the time Zechariah spoke the words of our text to the people of God, they were building the second temple, into which the desire of all nations was to come, and the Church typified by that temple is called upon to “sing and rejoice.”

THE TRINITY

I cannot proceed without calling your attention to the fact that our text is another of those many displays of the Triune God performing the work of our salvation. — “There are Three who bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One” (1st John 5:7). — Our all-glorious, incomprehensible, triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the one living and true God. Because the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, though three distinct persons, are one God, God’s incommunicable name, Jehovah, belongs to each person in the indivisible Trinity.

In the text before us the speaker is Jehovah. Yet, he speaks of himself as being sent by Jehovah. — “Sing and rejoice, O Daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people, and I will be their God, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.” — Here is Jehovah the Messiah, speaking concerning his mission, his incarnation, and his dwelling in our nature, in our world. And, at the same time, he speaks of being sent by Jehovah.

The Word of God clearly and universally teaches what we call the doctrine of the Trinity. I once heard Bro. Mahan say, “That man is a fool

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who denies the doctrine of the trinity; and that man is a fool who tries to explain it.” So, lest I be numbered among foolish men I will make no effort to explain the Trinity. Let me simply state what the Word of God clearly teaches.

When we say, we believe in the Trinity of the divine Persons, we do not mean that there are three, equal but separate Gods. And we do not mean that there is one God manifest in three personalities. We mean that we worship one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We worship one God who subsists in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, equal in all things. The Father is God. The Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. This is the doctrine we teach. That is exactly we read in 1 John 5:7.

(1 John 5:7) “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

In addition to this definitive statement there are **numerous examples** in which the Trinity is set before us.

- The Baptism of Christ (Matthew 3:16-17).
- The Baptismal Formula (Matthew 28:18 – “Name” Singular – Persons Plural).
- The Apostolic Benediction (2 Corinthians 13-14).

(2 Corinthians 13:14) “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen.”

- Our Lord’s Declarations (John 14-16). “Another” Exactly Like Me!

The New Testament declares that God the Father is God (Romans 1:7), that God the Son is God (Hebrews 1:8), and that God the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4). Yet, there is but one God (Deuteronomy 6:4).

Someone accurately stated it this way – “The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead invisible (John 1:18). The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested (John 1:14-18). The Spirit is all the fullness of the Godhead acting immediately upon the creature (1 Corinthians 2:8-10).”

And all three Persons in the Godhead are equally gracious. This is what Jude asserts (Jude 1:1), and Paul explains to us in Ephesians 1:3-14. As the

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three Persons of the Godhead are equal in divinity, but distinct in personality, so all three Persons in the Godhead are equal in grace, but distinct in the operations of grace.

God the Father is set before us as the Fountain of all grace (Ephesians 1:3-6). It was God the Father who, in the covenant of grace, proposed redemption, devised the plan, and chose the people whom he would save by his almighty grace. He found a way whereby his banished ones should not be expelled from him. Then, in the fullness of time he sent his Son into the World to be the Medium, or Mediator of grace (Galatians 4:4-6).

God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Channel of all grace (Ephesians 1:7-12). All grace comes to sinners through Christ the Mediator. In the first chapter of Ephesians the Holy Spirit tells us **fourteen times** that everything God does for sinners and gives to sinners is “in Christ.” Apart from Christ there is no grace.

Do you see this? All grace comes to us through Christ! **There is no other way the grace of God can reach a sinner.** Let no rejecter of God’s Son imagine that he shall be the beneficiary of God’s grace! It is the work of Christ upon the cross that has brought grace and justice together in the salvation of sinners. Through his blood, “mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10).

God the Holy Spirit is the Administration of all Grace (Eph. 1:13-14). It is God the Holy Spirit who effectually applies the blood of Christ to God’s elect. He regenerates the dead by omnipotent power, calls the redeemed with irresistible grace, gives faith by almighty operations of grace, and seals God’s elect unto everlasting glory.

Without the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit in conversion no sinner would ever become the beneficiary of grace. He takes the things of Christ and shows them to his people. He quickens those the Father chose, reclaims those whom the Son redeemed, and leads to the Good Shepherd all the sheep for whom he laid down his life (John 10:11).

“He conquers the stoutest hearts, and cleanses the foulest spiritual leper. He opens the sin-blinded eyes and unstopped the sin-closed ears. The blessed Holy Spirit reveals the grace of the Father and applies the grace of the Son.” (C.D. Cole)

All three Persons in the Godhead are equally gracious; and all three must be praise!

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Him all creatures here below!
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts!
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

All the love, mercy, grace, and glory of the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit, shines forth upon the sons of men in the person and mediatorial work of the God-man, our Surety, Christ Jesus. The Son of God was made flesh, that all the fulness of Godhead might reside in him and shine forth to us, that he might redeem and save his people, that we might know God and live forever in perpetual communion with him (Colossians 2:9-10).

(Colossians 2:9-10) “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.”

Let us ever sing and rejoice because Christ has come, because the triune God has come to us in the person of the God-man, our Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ!

“I COME”

That brings me to the third thing set before us in our text. We are here called to sing and rejoice because the Lord Jesus declared, “Lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee.” Men who are much smarter and far more capable of interpreting the Scriptures than I am are divided about that declaration. All are agreed that it immediately refers to God’s promise to return to his ancient people, the Jews, in mercy. Some are confident that this statement also refers to our Savior’s incarnation. Others say it speaks of the Lord Jesus coming to sinners in the mighty, saving operations of his grace. And others assert that our Lord is here speaking prophetically of his glorious second advent.

I see no reason to limit it to any of those events. If I understand the passage correctly, it clearly has reference to all of them. Certainly, its immediate

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application referred to the Lord God, mercifully returning to the people he had brought back from Babylon. But that was only the foreshadowing of great things to come.

THE INCARNATION

When our Savior here declared to his believing people, “Lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee,” he was, without question, giving another of those many Old Testament promises of that great day when he would come into the world in human flesh to redeem and save his people.

The incarnation of God the Son, the Word, the only begotten of the Father, was set before the Old Testament Church, was fully expressed and declared in God’s first revelation of grace in Genesis 3:15. Before expelling our fallen parents from the Garden, the Lord God declared that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent’s head.

(Genesis 3:15) “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

The promise was repeated to the Abraham, when God declared that in his Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. In fact, this great promise of Christ’s coming and of redemption, grace, and salvation in him is the message of all the Old Testament prophets (Acts 10:43).

(Acts 10:43) “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”

All the saints who lived in the typical, legal, Mosaic age anticipated this one, great, wonderful and astonishing display of grace, trusting Christ the Redeemer, looking for the coming of that One who would be called Immanuel, God in human flesh, Jesus, the Christ, who would save his people from their sins. They all rejoiced with Abraham, seeing his day.

As coming of Christ drew near, God inspired his servants, the prophets, with such clear views of the great event that they wrote in detail about his **virgin birth** (Isaiah 7:14), — **the place** of his birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), — **the time** of his incarnation (Genesis 49; Daniel 9), — **the massacre** of the infants that followed his birth (Jeremiah 31:15), — and **the**

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blessings of his coming (Zechariah 2:10-11; 9:9). The prophets even described in great detail **his being made sin** for us suffering and death as our sin-atonement Substitute, the accomplishment of redemption, and his resurrection glory as our Savior King, possessing power over all flesh to give eternal life to his ransomed ones (Psalm 22, 40, and 69 and Isaiah 53). To him all the prophets gave witness. Then, in the fulness of time, Christ came to save his people from their sins (John 1:14; Romans 5:6-8; Galatians 1:4-5; 4:3-5; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 John 4:9-10).

(John 1:14) “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

(Romans 5:6-8) “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

(Galatians 1:4-5) “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: (5) To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

(Galatians 4:3-5) “Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: (4) But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

(1 Timothy 1:15) “This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

(1 John 4:9-10) “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (10) Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”

SAVING OPERATIONS

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But let us never be guilty of limiting the promises of our God and his grace. This promise of our Redeemer is also his promise to come to his chosen in the mighty operations of his saving grace. — “Lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people, and I will be their God, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.”

At the appointed time of love, the Lord Jesus comes to every chosen redeemed sinner, in the saving operations of his Spirit, to dwell in us. He brings his people from many nations and joins them to himself in the vital union of life. He makes those who were by nature strangers his people, and makes himself our God. How does he do all that? He reveals himself as that One God promised from the beginning to send as our Savior, causing us to know and trust him as him whom Jehovah has sent.

Look at the promises leading up to this great promise. — In verse 4, the Lord assures us that his Church, Jerusalem, shall be fully inhabited. — Then, in verse 5, he promises that he will “be a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst” of his chosen. — In the 8th verse our Savior tells us that he is sent to his elect among the nations for the glory of God, and assures us of his abiding protection and care, saying, “he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” — Then, in verse 9, we hear our Savior declare, “I will shake mine hand upon all” your enemies and every foe shall be destroyed. Yes, by such mighty operations of his grace, the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is established in the hearts of his people. If such grace does not cause us to sing his praise and rejoice in his goodness, nothing can!

O blessed Savior, arise and come to this place today! Cause chosen sinners in this place to hear your voice in the gospel, saying to them, “Lo, I come to take you for my own, to dwell in you forever!”

IN PROVIDENCE

I must not fail to remind you that our Savior graciously comes to his own in marvellous grace in his daily providence. When we hear him say, “Lo, I come,” surely his providence is not to be excluded. I am reminded of his words to his troubled disciples in Mark 6:50. — “Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.”

The Lord's disciples were in the midst of a terrible storm, in the middle of a dark, dark night. They were toiling hard with trouble, but everything appeared to be contrary to them. In those circumstances, our all-glorious, ever-gracious Savior came to his troubled friends, walking upon the sea that caused them so much trouble. As he approached their little, storm tossed boat, he said, "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." Then, "he went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased" (Mark 6:45-51).

This is written in the Book of God for you and me, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). I trust that the Lord will graciously step into your storm-tossed life and cause the winds that appear to be so contrary to you today to be calm.

Remember, it was the Lord Jesus who sent his friends into the storm, who sent them away from himself (Mark 6:45-46). He seems to have done so specifically that he might come to them when they desperately needed him, speak these words to them, and make himself known to them in a way that was not otherwise possible. Surely, that is the case with you. Listen, then, to the voice of your tender, omnipotent Savior in the midst of your storm. — "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid."

Let us ever hear our Redeemer's voice in every storm into which he sends us, as he comes to us upon the troubled waters of life. — "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." "It is I" who raised the tempest in your soul, and will control it. "It is I" who sent your affliction, and will be with you in it. "It is I" who kindled the fire in your furnace, watch the flames, and will bring you through it unharmed. "It is I" who made your burden; and "it is I" who will give you strength to bear it. "It is I" who mixed your cup of grief and make it good medicine for your soul. "It is I" who brought your grief, and "It is I" who will comfort you. "It is I" perform all things for you.

I make the clouds my chariot, and clothe myself with the tempest as with a garment. The night hour is my time of coming, and the dark, surging waves are the pavement upon which I walk. Take courage! "It is I." Be not afraid. "It is I," your Friend, your Brother, your Savior! Your trouble did not spring up out of the ground, but came down from heaven above. "It is I" who have ordered all, arranged all, and brought all to pass. "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid."

IN REVIVAL

And how sweetly, we hear our Savior's voice, "Lo, I come," when he visits our souls to revive us and refresh us with his grace!

(Song of Songs 5:2-8) "I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night. (3) I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? (4) My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved for him. (5) I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. (6) I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. (7) The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. (8) I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love."

SECOND ADVENT

Surely, the promise reaches even further, and speaks of the glory of that great day when our Savior's feet shall stand again upon the Mount Olives, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all that believe. — "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Revelation 1:7). "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

WILLING SAVIOR

Hear those majestic words of grace, "Lo, I come," once more. Do they not tell us that **our Lord Jesus Christ is a willing Savior**, as well as a mighty Savior?

- He stood forth as our willing Surety in the covenant of grace, saying, "Lo, I come!"

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- In the fulness of time he came into the world in our flesh, as Jehovah's willing Servant, saying, "Lo, I come!"
- When his hour was come, he went to Calvary, saying, "Lo, I come," as a willing Substitute.
- He comes to sinners in grace as a willing Savior, saying, "Lo, I come!"
- And, soon, he shall return to gather his beloved Bride to the marriage feast, as a willing Bridegroom, saying "Lo, I come!"

Do you hear him? — "Lo, I come!" How can I declare to you how willing Christ is to save? The Lord Jesus Christ is a willing Savior, the willing Savior of helpless, ruined, lost, doomed, damned, vile sinners! His soul's delight is the salvation of sinners! That is the message of his coming! Our Lord Jesus Christ is willing to Save; and he is mighty to save!

- Willing and able to save!
- Willing and able to forgive!
- Willing and able to forgive again!
- And willing and able to forgive again!
- Willing and able to keep!
- Willing and able to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy!

Believe him today. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

(John 6:37-40) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (38) For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (39) And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (40) And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

(Matthew 11:28-30) "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."

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If you come to Christ, you will find it to be so. The easiest most pleasant, most tranquil existence in this world is the life of faith in, submission to, and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. – He calls sinners to this life in him. Today, if you hear his voice, harden not your heart!

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and helpless, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, grace and power.

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Bruised and mangled by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.

I will arise and go to Jesus.
He will embrace me in His arms,
In the arms of my dear Savior.
O there are 10,000 charms!

Amen.