

## **Christ's Yoke**

Call to Worship: Psalm 91

1st Scripture: Luke 10:1-24

2nd Scripture: Matthew 11:16-30

### **Introduction**

Having exposed the childish foolishness of the present generation, which had rejected the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus, and then having pronounced woes on three cities, as examples of such foolishness, our Lord then moves on to reveal something profound about the Father's sovereign workings behind the scenes, with respect to these matters. And to this end, brethren, I think we will find great encouragement here for all who have come to Christ in truth!

### **I. The Father Hides and Reveals His Truth** (vs. 25-26)

“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. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight”” (vs. 25-26).

We spoke last time of the privilege that belongs to God, in determining where and when to spread the light of the Gospel. And we said that, especially coming from the standpoint of sinners, no one has the right to complain about how God chooses to dispense His truth. There is no “equal fairness” policy which obligates God to do anything, and everything that He does do, in any favorable way toward any sinner, He does by His sheer grace.

Well, here we further see that ultimately, even those who are given the light, must have their eyes opened by God, in order to see what that light reveals. Jesus here reveals that to us, in His short prayer to the Father. Notice, right after pronouncing those woes on Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, we are told, “At that time Jesus answered and said...” And so, here He is building on what He has just stated. And then notice, He prays, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth...” Now, why does He emphasize God as “Lord of heaven and earth” here, before saying what He is about to say? By use of the label “Lord,” and attaching it to how God relates to both heaven and earth, the Lord is emphasizing the universal sovereignty of the Father

here. He is emphasizing God's reign over all realms, as a means of saying that even the wholesale rejection of the cities that He had just rebuked, did nothing whatsoever to frustrate the will of God. God was not derailed in some sense, concerning the design of His will. And in fact, the Lord of heaven and earth (the Supreme Ruler over all realms) has sovereignly ordained to hide His revelatory light from some, while revealing it to others. No, God is not frustrated. God is not some helpless being, standing above the clouds, begging man to do those things that would help Him see His will come to pass. No, God is accomplishing exactly all that He has planned to accomplish from the beginning, to the minutest detail of numbering hairs, and the lifespan of sparrows!

Hear it again: "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. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.'" And so, what has God done with the light of the Gospel, which would lead sinners to salvation? He has hidden it from some and revealed it to others. Now, it is important to realize that this is why even the miracles of Jesus were not sufficient to save anyone, or to create faith in those who had witnessed them. We saw last time that even those from Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, who had eaten of the multiplied loaves of bread and fish, and who had witnessed many signs and wonders, had wholesale rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. They missed the purpose of the signs, failing to exercise faith in the Christ who had performed them, while seeking to merely use Him for their own material gain. And while they were accountable for their rejection (Jesus pronounced woes on them); while they rejected the Lord of their own will, at the same time, they did not frustrate the plan and ultimate desire of the Father. For, He had yet hidden the truth from them.

Now, who was it that the Father had ultimately hid the light of Christ from? We are told the "wise and prudent." That is to say that those who had trusted in their own ability to understand and process the truth of God; those who had refused to humble themselves and to cast their confidence away from their own hearts and toward God's representative word in Christ; those who had refused to lay aside their own righteousness and to part with their own reasoning, He hid the truth from them. He did not allow access to Himself to come from any other direction than from His appointed means, through the ministry, teaching and Person of His Son. And so,

the wise and prudent; those who thought themselves sufficient to come to God and to access God and His truth through their own means, He left to their own devices and hid His truth from them.

[Note: “We have Abraham as our father...etc”]

[Note: John 6]

But, He had chosen to reveal His truth to babes! That is, to those who came “poor in spirit,” bankrupt in themselves, empty of their own devices, with a child-like dependence upon the Christ, God opened up the way of salvation and revealed His truth to them. God had sealed up all wisdom in the Person of His Son, and only to those who came to His Son with humble, open hands and hearts, He opened up the way of salvation! What was foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews, became the way; the only way of salvation for humble sinners.

And why did God choose to reveal the way of salvation in this way, leaving no other way of access to it, then by the work of the Spirit in bringing lost sinners to humbly cast themselves upon Christ? “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.” Simply put, it was the will of God to glorify His own power and the Person of His Son in this way. It seemed good to God. That’s what He chose to do, and it is His privilege/prerogative to do whatsoever He pleases. God’s design for saving sinners serves the ultimate purpose of bringing glory to Him and His Son. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which He prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10). At the end of the day, brethren, this is God’s story, from beginning to end. It is not man finding a way to God. It’s God reaching down and doing everything Himself, to bring His people to Himself. And He fully accomplishes all that He has intended from the beginning, bringing every last one of His elect to Himself. His sheep hear His voice and they follow Him! And He brings all of His sheep to Himself through the gate of humility and total dependence upon Christ! Anyone who tries to come any other way, will not find Him. He reveals Himself to babes, and babes are made by the “breaking down” work of the Holy Spirit. “Even so, Father, it seemed good in Your sight!”

Notice, we see this further confirmed in the next portion of our text.

## **II. The Son Must Reveal the Father (vs. 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” (vs. 27). [Note: Remember Jewish context here]

Again, God has put all things under, in, and in subjection to the Son. The Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, who shares His glory with no man, has delivered all things to the Son. And notice the unique and intimate relationship that exists between the Father and the Son, again, affirming that one cannot relate to either, without relating to both. If one needs convincing that Jesus is absolutely THE only way to the Father, here we find such evidence again, bold and bright, and magnified to the highest degree! “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.” Here again, we find that mutual authority shared by the Father and the Son, where each determines who is able to receive divine revelation. We have already seen that the Father hides and reveals, in accordance with His perfect will. And now, here we see that the Son reveals in accordance with His perfect will. Indeed, the will of the Father and the Son is One, and they both must grant access to it; they must open blind spiritual eyes (even as the Son has opened blind physical eyes), if any are to believe. All of this is to the praise of the glory of the grace of God!

No one knows the Son except the Father, and vice versa. What does the Lord mean by this statement? He means that only the Father and the Son know each other perfectly and in their fullness, and this being the case, no one can know either the Father or the Son, without knowing both. One cannot claim to know God while denying Christ. For, He and the Father are One, and they have a perfect knowledge of each other. And no one can know Christ without truly knowing the Father. You can't have One without the other. To reject either is to reject both. And therefore, no one can ever relate to the Father in any acceptable way, unless Christ wills to reveal the Father to them. There is no access to the true and living God, period, under any circumstance, unless that access is granted by the Son. Remember, the Jews thought they didn't need Jesus. They had Abraham and Moses... so they thought. But, in reality, if they had Abraham and Moses, they would have come to Christ... for Abraham and Moses spoke of Him, and before Abraham was, Christ was the “I Am.” And so, Jesus could not have presented

Himself as the exclusive way to the Father, any clearer than this! It is a parallel to His words in John's Gospel where He states, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me!"

Now, presenting Himself as the exclusive means of coming to the Father could be a terrifying thing/reality if He was unwilling to welcome any to Himself and the Father, but friends, that is the glory of what He states in the next two verses. Jesus presents an invitation to all, to come to Him. He says, as it were, "Look, don't try to come to the Father by any other means. It's impossible. You cannot even know the Father apart from Me. I am the only way to the Father. But, that said, come to Me, and I will gladly reveal the Father to you! Come, come, come! I am the only door, but the door is open to you, right now!"

### **III. Christ's Yoke** (vs. 28-29)

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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" (vs, 28-29).

Here it is; such precious and comforting words which bring balance to all that our Lord has said in this sobering discourse! There's the invitation to all... to all who are weary; to all who are burdened and overwhelmed by the hardships of life, and particularly by a fear of the coming judgment. You see, this life, as amazing as it is; as profoundly wondrous as existence itself is, our existence takes place within a fallen and corrupt context. Our existence is weighed down by suffering, depravity, wickedness, anxiety, fear, the reality of death itself, and most of all, the corruption of sin that lies within each of our hearts and which separates us from the living God. Life is an amazing reality, but because of the fall, it is a great weight and burden, as well. And so, Jesus here says, "Are you weary? Are you overburdened by the sense of the fall, and the reality of your own guilt and sin, which makes you an enemy of God? Well, come to Me then! Humble yourself and come to Me, and I will give you rest! I will give you true and lasting peace! I will lift your greatest burden from you! Yes, no one knows the Father unless I reveal Him to them. But, I am more than willing to reveal the Father to any and all who truly come to Me in faith! I am your only means of reconciliation with God; I am your only means of ridding

yourself of the burden of your sin so that you can come into the presence of God; and I am more than willing to do that for you... just come to Me, come to Me, and I will give you rest.”

You see, your biggest problem in this world is not simply the temporal pains and sufferings that have hit you from all directions. Those are all symptoms of a far greater problem; a problem that gets down to your very purpose for existing. Your greatest problem is that you are a sinner, who is presently at enmity with your holy God. That is where your greatest source of unrest; indeed, *the* very source of your unrest comes from. Death is approaching, and you know that you will stand before God. This reality is hardwired into your soul. You try to hide from it. You bury it in the busyness of life, but it’s a reality that you just cannot shake... and thank God for that. For then, you might have dealings with God now. But, if you are to have dealings with God now, then you must have dealings with Christ now. For, there is no other way to the Father, than through the only One who truly knows the Father; and the One who has ultimately died to bring sinners to the Father. He can give you rest! If you think you are wise and self-equipped to stand before God, then that is a sign that He has not revealed Himself to you. But, if you come as a babe; as one who is tired and weary of traveling on the path that you have paved in your sin; if you cry out to Christ, in truth, “Son of David, have mercy on Me,” then you will find rest for your soul. Christ bids all to come to Him in this way.

Hear again, the rest of His invitation. “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.” His yoke is a yoke of humility and lowliness of heart. It is a pleasant yoke; a yoke that actually frees, rather than binds, because it frees us from the burden of having to continue to stand upon a facade of our own strength that is really nothing more than a product of wicked pride. Oh, pride seems so important and precious to the natural man, doesn’t it? Our sinful hearts have a certain itch for it. We want to be God. But, trying to be God, when you are really a mere creature, is a burden in itself. It’s a lie and no life at all. And soon enough, it will be exposed for the wicked idolatry that it is. But, to let that go; to be the creature; to come before God in humility, broken and well aware of our infection and contamination in sin; to seek peace with the Creator through the Christ substitute, who laid down His life for sinners, is to exchange a weighty burden for the light yoke of Christ. His yoke is a pleasure! It’s freeing! It’s wonderful! It is true life! And

there is no greater pleasure in all of the world; indeed, all of the world's temporal pleasures jam packed into one big, huge ball, are nothing (are a burden), compared to the blessing of knowing, loving and serving God! What a lie of the devil, who would paint the picture of following Christ as a burdensome, dull, dreary, kill joy. What a lie! He knows that if you but saw, even for a moment, the glory of all that is found just beyond the wall of your pride, you would never turn back to serve in his domain. And so, he lies. He lies through the media, through friends, through your own sinful desires, through anything that could keep you from seeing true life.

But, for those who come; for those who come to Christ in truth, His burden is light, and you will find rest for your souls... eternal rest! No fear of death or judgment anymore. No troubled conscience, burying yourself in a purposeless pursuit of things that cannot satisfy. But rather, true humanity, true purpose, and true relationship with the living God and His Christ, who created you for His own glory! Indeed, His yoke is light. And He is lowly and gentle and tender in heart. And that yoke of lowliness and gentleness and tenderness is a most wonderful yoke for His people to bear themselves. Yes, God saves whom He wills. And no one comes to the Son, unless the Father draws them. But, all who come to the Son; all who call upon Him in truth, He by no means casts out. Sinner, whatever your background; whatever ungodly offenses fill your life; whatever skeletons lie in your closet, Jesus can wash and cleanse you, and He alone can bring you to God. That's why He came. That's why He died. And He rose again to assure us of all of this!

#### **IV. Concluding Thoughts**

Let me just say a few words of encouragement to those of you who are in Christ. See the wondrous glory of all that we have considered here, and how this relates directly to you, as an individual.

It is so easy to think of our conversion, brethren, purely from the standpoint of what we had experienced with our senses. But, it is extremely important for us to realize that we were absolutely dead in our sins, and without any natural ability or desire to seek Christ of our own. Hear this, brethren. This is so important. You came to Christ and you believed the Gospel, not because you suddenly decided to seek God, but rather, because God, before time, had chosen to

seek you. And His Spirit pricked your conscience, and overcame every obstacle that would have kept you from coming to Christ, so as, to humble you and to bring you to Himself. God provided everything you needed to break through the natural barrier of the flesh; God poured life into your dead spirit by His Spirit, because He set his love upon you, from before the foundation of the world, in Christ. You were chosen in the Beloved!

Now, I don't know about you, but I can look back and see very plainly that I was as dead as they come, and I was a moral horror story in God's sight, and I was arrogant and proud about that. But God reached into the deepest and darkest sewer of defilement, and pulled me up out of that place of certain condemnation, washed me off in the blood of His Son, and made me His own dear and Beloved child. And He has done nothing but shower blessing, upon blessing, upon blessing upon me, since then. Even in every trial I have walked into and through, I can see how He has held me up, and has brought me through, refined in new and glorious ways, to look more and more like His Son. To see the shaping hand of God upon your life, and the absolute impossibility of reaching any ounce of spiritual growth on your own, is a profound blessing, which itself is a gift from God. God has called, saved and delivered you, brethren! And He who began that marvelous work of grace in you, will finish what He has begun. It's His work! He has revealed Himself to you. And it was His delight to do so! Christ has chosen to reveal the Father to you! And He has delighted in doing so! And He never condemned you for the hatred and enmity which you have cast in His face, for the whole of your unsaved life; and He has never blasted you for the ways, in which, you still sin against Him... no, He just took all of that heap of defilement, and He embraced it, and took it to the cross, and absorbed the pure wrath of God for it, and then He left it in His own tomb where He was buried. Brethren you have to see that... regularly!

In closing, I ask, what will you do with that? God is not saving everyone. God is not saving most. But, He has saved you. What will you do with that? Will you hide that in the recesses of your own private mind and heart? Is your Christianity some private matter? Or will you burst forth His praises in your words and in your actions and in your service, until the day you step foot into the visible presence of Christ? Make it count, brethren! Make it count!

Amen!!!

Benediction: Jude 1:24-25