

Matthew 11:28

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[0 : 00] Tonight, I would like that we turn to our second reading in the New Testament, in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 11.

And as I already hinted, we're going to look at a passage which I'm sure is well acquainted, and I'll repeat myself with no fear that it does us no harm to come back to these passages that we maybe feel we're so well acquainted with.

I know that some time ago, many years ago, I have preached on the subject of rest, finding rest in Christ, and that's not the way we're going tonight.

If you want a text to hang on to, so to speak, I would refer you to verse 28. Verse 28 of Matthew, chapter 11, the first three words, come to me.

Just a little background for an introduction of this passage. In verse 20, we found Jesus began to denounce the cities where he had performed most of his miracles.

[1 : 18] Then verse 21, these cities are identified as Crasan, Berseria, Capernaum, northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Also Tyre and Sidon are both brought into it. And the prophecies were told in Ezekiel. I think it's chapters 26 to, I think it's two or three chapters from 26 onwards.

These prophecies were told, and they all came to a very accurate fruition. And then 22, verses 22 to 24, there's a suggestion here about the degrees of punishment.

And some of the commentators say that these degrees of punishment will be in hell itself. And the people condemned.

And then verse 23, we've identified of Capernaum, this area chosen by Jesus as his sort of main base where he was at the time of his miracles, is even facing condemnation.

[2 : 29] And verse 25 is quite interesting, and I hope I'm not overstepping the mark, but I would say there's almost a sort of sarcasm where, in these words, little children, as the Jewish leaders are ironically identified as wise and prudent and the followers of Christ as little children.

You can see possibly the effect that might have had at the time. Yet God has revealed to those followers the truth of the Messiah and his gospel.

And then verse 26 and 7, this was for your good pleasure. It pleased God to do this, this powerful affirmation of the sovereignty of God over all affairs, over men.

And then the next verse, Jesus claimed the task of executing God's will, his divine will being committed to him.

That would be a claim at the time of Jesus that would be considered blasphemous. And Jesus was not afraid to identify himself as carrying out the will of God.

[3 : 43] And then verse 28, where we have our text for tonight, the invitation, come to me. Given by the Lord Jesus for sinners, for the free author of salvation, come to me, he says.

Highlighting our need for a rest and a freedom from our burden of sin. And then verse 29, the fruitful rest that is available to the person who comes.

I trust tonight, before we leave here, that each one of us, collectively and personally, will know something of that rest in our own hearts and lives.

As we look at this together. I often feel, as I've said, that there is a danger, and I'm really highlighting myself as much as anything here, that there are so many passages for those of us who had the benefit of being brought up in Christian homes that we perhaps know literally verbatim.

And that we sometimes gloss over them. And don't look into them for their true meaning and Christ's own direction for us.

[5 : 10] And I'm as guilty as anybody, I must say. But here then we find Jesus making an offer to the men and women of his time around the area of Galilee.

And through the gospel, that same offer is as relevant and as alive tonight as it was the day Jesus spoke these words, Come to me.

And I just want us initially to think in our own terms, in our own lives. When people make demands of us, or people make an offer to us, is it not the case that we would want to know and clarify in our own minds as to who that person is?

What authority and what right that person has to come and make such a demand or an offer to us? And I was trying to think this afternoon how I could have a practical illustration being the type of guy I am.

And really the best one I can think of is the one nearest to my own heart. Because from the 31st of March 1971 to the 31st of March 2001, I had a great authority.

[6 : 25] I could stand up at the side of a road and I could hold up my right hand like that and ask you to stop. And if you didn't stop, you were in trouble.

Because as a police officer, the Road Traffic Regulation Act, provided I was in uniform, Gave me that authority to call you to a halt and to interfere in your business, so to speak.

Maybe for good reason, maybe not. For example, if you're a driver and you're driving along a road in Aberdeen, where it's Queen's Road or Rosemount Place, whatever road you're going to go home, and you see a police officer in uniform signalling you to stop, you would want to be satisfied in your own mind that that person is, in fact, a police officer.

If you saw a young child, maybe 10 years of age or whatever, in a police uniform, you would quite happily just carry on and say, well, that's someone who got a nice present for their Christmas or their birthday.

And you would take no heed because there would be no fear of any reprisals. There would be no consequences of disobeying the law. If you're talking to a friend in a public place, and perhaps you're going on and telling your friend about this symptom and that symptom that is wrong with you, and you've got this illness, you're describing it to them in great detail, and suddenly someone puts their hand onto your shoulder and says, I couldn't help but overhear your conversation.

[8 : 02] I know exactly what's wrong with you, and I can sort that problem out for you. Would you readily just accept that person's word and say, yeah, okay, I'll come with you, let's go?

No. No. You would want to know who that person was. And then that person then turns and says, I am a consultant physician working at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

That's my speciality. Then, perhaps, you would be more satisfied. The person has identified themselves. And you would feel happy that they've verified their legitimacy to be able to help you. I trust you see where I'm coming from. Jesus says in his word here, Come to me. Who is this Jesus?

Who asks me, who asks you, Come to me. He's offering an invitation.

[9 : 10] Offering to help you. And he has told us, in the passage before us, who he is. And that's what I would like to look at.

And that's the tact I want to take tonight. First of all, I want us to think about his identity. And we have that in verse 27. Who does Jesus actually claim to be?

And he tells us, I'll read, All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father. And no one knows the Father except the Son.

And those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. And then secondly, I want us to look in light of who he is, as to what it is Jesus actually asks us to do.

What is it that he offers to do for us if we respond to his invitation? Firstly then, his identity.

[10 : 13] All things have been committed to me by my Father, he says. All things. And these words are very deep and heart-searching words.

One thing is clear to any reader, that Jesus is bearing witness as to being the Son of God the Father. These words are giving testimony to his self-consciousness of his divine Sonship.

The Son of God. To the unique Son of God. And he's claiming a divine identity. In other words, the Lord Jesus is saying, I can deliver what I'm offering you.

I can stand by my promise because I'm the Son of God. Yes, in the flesh. We've always got to remind ourselves, God sent his Son into this world.

And if I could just remind you how Jesus, just prior to the crucifixion, I always feel it helps myself understand something of it where he paid to God the Father that this cup, if it were possible, that this cup would pass over him.

[11 : 44] And I feel that that actually helps us identify Jesus' humanity, his flesh that he took upon himself.

Jesus is making a very clear statement how he can offer the promise to deliver is that he claims to be and he is the Son of God.

That, says Jesus, is my identity. That I am the eternal Son of God. And let's just break that down a wee bit.

Jesus identifies himself regarding this sonship. All things have been committed to me by my Father. It seems that here, amongst other things, Jesus is on a mission. There was no, as we touched on this morning, God being a God of justice and judgment of sin that he required.

[12 : 49] He required the sacrifice to be made. He required the sinless one to take upon the punishment for your sin and my sin.

Jesus is saying, I have come with a particular task to accomplish. And the Father has committed to me that task.

Jesus is identifying that to us. So the things committed to Jesus by the Father are to obey and to die.

To obey God the Father and to die for our sin. And Jesus is saying that he has taken on that task. That's where we get our word atonement. Jesus atoned for our sins. He had been given the all-equipping power by God the Father to carry out this task.

[13 : 54] And entrusted to the Lord Jesus Christ, entrusted to him, is mankind and forgiveness for your sin and my sin.

Jesus is saying, everything has been committed to me. I have come to carry out this task, this mission, given to me by God the Father.

Everything committed to me. This is some claim, is it not? Are you satisfied in your own mind tonight regarding this claim?

I ask sincerely, are you satisfied regarding this claim that Jesus is making? No one knows the Son except the Father, he says.

No one knows the Son except the Father. And what Jesus is claiming is almost mysterious. That the Father, with his knowledge of everything, actually knows the Son.

[15 : 04] What Jesus is saying, in effect, is it takes God to exhaustively know God. Because remember, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Now, I know that I'm in deep danger of going out of my depth here. But, I do pray that God will make this clear to you. We are speaking of God the Son, of God the Father.

And what Jesus is saying is that only God can really know everything about God. And only God the Father could know him.

I know, just through my study in these last few days, that the theology that has been written on this passage is endless.

Theologians have written books upon books upon books on it. And are still doing so. these things of great profundity and depth.

[16 : 11] Really, all they are doing is scratching the surface. But I trust tonight, I ask the question again, are you satisfied of this claim made by the Lord Jesus?

Jesus? The second thing I want to ask is, or look at, is no one knows the Father except the Son. Look how he's turned the whole thing on its head now. No one knows the Father except the Son. I am the Son, and because I am the Son, he's saying, I have full intimate knowledge of the Father. I know his mind, I know his counsel, I know the Father's will. And this is the Jesus taking upon himself the form of man, yet claiming to know the Father's will.

He was there in fellowship with the Father. The Father knew him, and likewise he knew the Father.

[17 : 21] And he is saying here, I understand the Father, the incomprehensible Father of all things. I know it's deep, but it's thought-provoking.

Because this is this Jesus who gives an invite to you and to me tonight. Come to me. Are you satisfied about his authenticity?

Are you satisfied as to who he is? And then the third thing in verse 27, he goes on to say, and to those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Look at the claim he's making there. That he has the choice as to who he is going to reveal to the Father. This is his privilege.

And bearing in mind in the light of the fact that only he knows the Father, Jesus is saying only he can choose to reveal you and I to the Father.

[18 : 28] Do I ask again, are you satisfied who this Jesus is? And I ask that for a reason that hopefully by the time we finish you will see. Jesus is stating that he has that authority and he's not just saying that because he knows everything about the Father, but he's saying that it is his mission.

He can actually introduce you and I to the Father. He can bring you and I to know God as our Father in heaven, this Jesus.

Here again then is a huge claim, the sovereign one able to introduce individuals and boys and girls I'd like to take you into this. He's claiming that for you too.

He can introduce you to God the Father, this Jesus that we're speaking about. Clearly Jesus is making the most amazing claim on his own unique identity.

It should also be noticed that Jesus is making these claims in an exclusive manner. There is no middle ground. There is no other way. He says I am the way, the truth, and the life.

[19 : 49] No man comes to God but through me. Now I'm diversifying a wee bit, but it just emphasizes. There is nothing in between. There is nothing like any hint that Jesus perhaps is.

No, I am, he says. None of these statements are relevant.

There is no middle way except through Jesus. And it's only, and in him only, that we can come to the Father as he pleases to reveal us to him.

no one else in human flesh can make such a claim. The Father having an exhaustive knowledge of me, Jesus says, and I having an exhaustive knowledge of the Father, whom I choose to reveal.

Has he revealed you? I would ask tonight, do you know that claim of Jesus, the I am?

[20 : 59] Because he is our only hope. If you're out with Christ tonight, friend, he is the only way. Are you happy with the authenticity of his claim?

bearing in mind the simple little illustration I gave you with the police officer, if he's not real, there's no consequence.

Well, that's not the case here. I assure you tonight, friend, as sure as God's word is before us here, Jesus is real, the consequence of which we looked at this morning.

the only hope, the only way to the Father with whom our destiny lies. I firmly believe, you know, that there are some of you here tonight, and you're perhaps not willing to say, yes, I believe he is who he claims to be.

because if you are there tonight, seated, and you're saying, yes, I believe Jesus is the one he claims to be, you have no excuse but to trust him.

[22 : 19] Think it through. If you say tonight that, yes, I believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the one he claims to be, you hear that invitation given to him, given to you by him, come to me.

So what is it? What do you believe about this Jesus? Do you believe that he is telling the truth?

Or do you make him out to be a fraud and a liar? Because if you're not accepting who he is, that's what you're saying, you're saying he's a fraud, you're saying he's a liar.

Don't for one minute, friend, tonight think that you can through good deeds and other means get yourself to heaven. No chance.

Disobedience of the law of Christ and the law of God has consequences. there will be retribution, there will be judgment, and there will be these fearful words that are made very clear to us in the scriptures, that you will hear ringing in your ears for eternity when Christ says, depart from me, for I know you not.

[23 : 49] I want secondly to look at his invitation, found in verse 28, come to me.

It does interest me in particular here that in a sense there is a twofold invitation. There's come to me, and then there's take my yoke and learn from me.

And you notice in each case, the promise is rest. Rest and peace for your soul. I do feel it's important at the outset to note that when you think about the invitation, the Lord Jesus does offer that rest.

The gospel is saying, come and realize what has been done for your soul. We haven't had the benefit of witnessing the crucifixion like some people had, but we will be held equally accountable as witnesses there who put the very nails through his hands and feet.

We will be held to account for it if we continue to deny who he is. The gospel is saying, come and realize that Jesus has done it all for you.

[25 : 13] Come and find rest and peace. assurance for your soul. Let us think of the invitation then. Come to me.

Come and trust the Lord Jesus Christ. Boys and girls, it is so simple as that. I've sat at your age in churches similar to this, and I've heard it expounded on, and I always thought to myself there had to be some magic lights.

There had to be some magic moment. It is so simple, boys and girls, it's respond to come to me. That's what Jesus says to you, as he says to me, he says to your mom and dad tonight, come to me.

And I would also suggest to you that there is an invitation here to discipleship, a life of serving the Lord Jesus. Jesus. Firstly, an invitation to faith, and stress, I do stress, put your faith in me.

Come to me, Christ says. Christ doesn't say, come to the free church. Christ doesn't say, come before the elders. Christ says, to me, come to me.

[26 : 31] Nothing more, nothing less. realize what I have done for you, he says. Realize his finished work on the cross.

Christ didn't come out of heaven to this earth for the fun of it. God required that sacrifice to be made, as we've touched on. And then it goes on, Jesus Christ goes and puts your trust in him, and what will happen as a result?

he tells us that his yoke is easy, his burden is light, because if we put our faith and our trust in Christ, he presents us to that father whom he has the intimate knowledge with.

He presents us faultless, sinless. I always emphasize that great illustration given to us in the scriptures, and it's so much of a contrast.

Again, we sometimes maybe miss it as we know it so well. Though your sin be as red as scarlet, I shall make them as white as snow. The contrast from the red of scarlet to the whiteness of snow.

[27 : 50] That's what Jesus can do for you and I tonight. It's sometimes so simple we maybe make it complicated.

The Holy Spirit tugs at you. The Holy Spirit through God through the Holy Spirit speaks to you. Look to him and he says, come, come to me.

Jesus means us to feel the pressure of our sin, to feel the load of our sin, and he means us to be tired carrying it, the burden of sin.

And he means us to realize that our best is not good enough. He means us to realize that we never will be good enough until we trust him.

Come to me. Jesus clearly asking people to come and to trust him and him only. But then it's an invitation to discipleship.

[29 : 06] If you come to Christ, you come and you begin trusting and believing in him and you go out in his name. Why do you think I'm standing here tonight quivering and shaking in my shoes?

Because I have trusted Christ. Because he has taken me from the depths of sin and set my feet upon a rock, him, the rock of my salvation.

Here is Jesus using that simple picture of the yoke. And I just want to take a minute or two just to highlight this yoke. For those of you who don't know and especially boys and girls, the yoke was a wooden instrument used between two animals, used to draw mainly a plough or sometimes a carriage with a heavy load on it and it equaled the drawing power of the two animals.

It was also used in the time of the Lord Jesus to control a younger, more vigorous animal. They would put it alongside an older, wiser animal and the yoke was used to train the younger animal. And the load was pulled equally between the two animals. What Jesus is highlighting to us here is that his yoke is easy because he carries it.

[30 : 45] He has drawn the burden of sin through and if we come alongside him we won't feel any weight, we won't feel any power being drawn down by our sin.

Animals yoked together had a tremendous pulling power and so it is with Jesus. If you yoke up with Jesus friend tonight you will find your burden is lifted.

You will feel no burden of sin. Helping one another that's what Jesus is saying. I'm here to help you, to save you from sin, to save you from eternity in hell.

That's the alternative. And he goes on and promises other places in his word, lo, I am with you always, he says, through the thick and the thin.

I'm not saying here tonight, and please don't get any impression that I'm saying if you trust the Lord Jesus Christ, life will all be a bed of roses. I'm not anything but.

[31 : 53] We're not promised that. But what I'm saying is, like we looked at this morning, you may be a loser in life, but you'll be a winner in death.

because when we pass on from this life into eternity, you will be then benefiting from all the assurances and the promises that Christ gives.

He has gone to prepare a place for you. Are you going to take up his offer? He says, come to me. me. So then, we have thought about the identity of Jesus, we have thought about the invitation given, and we have thought about the invitation to faith, and an invitation to discipleship.

And Jesus says, and I say again, come, come to me. Come to me, you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

[33 : 13] what is it tonight that is going to make you come? Christ calls you to come.

It's not me, it's not any individual human being here. God the Father, God the Son, through the Holy Spirit, calls you tonight.

And I'll repeat myself from this morning. The biggest burden that Christ has tonight is you refusing it.

If you wish to die in your sin, continue refusing it. But I say this to you tonight, God will not hold me responsible for not telling you, nor anybody else.

You have the free offer of God's salvation and the invitation given to you to come out of your sin and to put your rest and your trust in him.

[34 : 23] But as long as he gives you in this life, you'll be free from that burden of sin with a promise of eternity in his glory.

I trust you'll come in the silence of your own heart and mind that you will pray to God. That is the simplicity of it.

And I can't put it any more simple. From the youngest person here tonight to the oldest, come to Christ. Let's pray. cut trust Google soi two two one two kost solve s dos