



Matthew 11:25-30

The Great Invitation

How do you live above the chances, changes and circumstances in life? Jesus gives us a grand invitation to come and join Him where He is at work and receive His rest. Only the disciple of Jesus can have that kind of rest when his life is filled with chaos.

Let's keep in mind the context of this grand paragraph in Matthew 11:25-30. Judgment awaits those who have had the greatest opportunity to respond to Christ's ministry, but have rejected Him. The context of these words deals with the unreasonable and determined rejection of both Jesus and John the baptizer by the Jews (vv. 16-19), and the impenitence of the people who live in the cities where Christ had performed miracles (vv. 20-24). Those who were rejecting Jesus were religious teachers and leaders in the Jewish community. They were wise and intelligent and acquainted with religious truth. But they were not humble in spirit. They were arrogant in their attitude toward God. Jesus said to these people, "Every one therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33).

OUR POSITION WITH GOD NEVER CHANGES

The Great Exchange

Our salvation was completed through a great transaction (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:8; Gal. 3:13; 2 Cor. 8:9). Jesus Christ died in our place on the cross to give us His righteous standing before the heavenly Father. It is not something we merit or deserve in any manner. It does not depend upon our virtue or self-righteousness. The foundation is the death of Jesus Christ. He died for me. "God demonstrated His own love toward me, in that while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me" (Romans 5:8). He chose to die for me and pay my debt to the righteousness of God. The apostle Paul wrote, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). Our substitute died in our place on the cross (Isa. 53:4-6).

The grand transaction took place the moment you put your faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. "He [God] made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). When He died on the cross He died for all of your sins, every one of them. And when you trusted Him as your Savior you appropriated all His righteous standing before the Father in heaven. Now you did not merit that or earn it in any way. God bestowed that right standing with Himself by His infinite grace and tender mercy.

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We have a new legal standing before God that can never change. That new relationship gives us all kinds of privileges and corresponding responsibilities.

The moment we believed on Christ we were united with Christ. This new relationship with God gives us everything we need to live the Christian life. With this new relationship with God we can praise Him even when we hurt and are discouraged.

PRAISE GOD WHEN DISCOURAGED (11:25-26)

Matthew 11:25, "At that time Jesus said, 'I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.'"

How did Jesus worship?

He is our best model of an intimate walk with God. Jesus spoke to His Father in an audible voice. In this passage we have a glimpse of Jesus in one of His modes of worship. It is at once prayer, praise and intimate fellowship in a worshipful spirit. His is in precisely the same mode of elevated communion with the Father that we have reflected in John chapters 14-17.

He was filled with praise to the Father (v. 25a). Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants." What are these "things" that are revealed? They are things concerning the kingdom of God. The wise and intelligent, taught, self-sufficient, self-made man who thinks he can save himself, the Pharisees and Sadducees, Scribe and Lawyers taught a doctrine of salvation by meritorious good works. These highly educated individuals can become a "baby" who humbly depends upon God's grace. Even the uneducated person can be in the same undesirable company of the "wise and intelligent." It depends on the heart. Am I humble enough to learn something new, even from some other servant?

Those who humbly depend upon someone else to meet their needs are as "babes." Those who are conscious of their own nothingness, emptiness, helplessness and lost condition and humbly depend absolutely upon God's grace to save them are spiritually "little children." A highly educated, "learned" individual can be a "babe" in spirit. Jesus is describing humble people of every rank.

John Broadus said, "The most useful Christian will be those who are 'wise and intelligent,' and are *also* 'babes'—intellectual and cultivated as possible, but childlike in spirit. And when the wise and intelligent fail to discover the significance and value of Christ's teachings, it is not the fault of their intelligence, but of this lack of a right spirit." Only the humble of heart understand the teachings of Christ.

"I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth." The word "praise" is a compound word, "I say the same thing," "I agree," "concede," or "admit," "thank" and "praise." The background of the word is to confess and in the Greek Old Testament was equivalent to give praise. In this context "thank" or "praise" is most appropriate. Jesus rested in the absolute supremacy and will of His Father. Because out of that security He could praise Him! Jesus made the difficulty of the moment the occasion for thanksgiving and praise to the

could praise Him! Jesus made the difficulty of the moment the occasion for thanksgiving and praise to the Father who controls the universe and to whom the universe owes allegiance. When we get God into the picture our whole perspective changes. Jesus' Father is the Lord who rules heaven and earth. He is the Sovereign owner and master of the whole universe. "My Father, You who are Lord of heaven and earth, the whole universe, I thank you." What a great God who is worthy of all our praise!

When Jesus says, "Oh My Father," or "My Father," He is speaking about *His* Father. He does not say "our Father." He was claiming equality with God (Jn. 5:18). Jesus is referring to His Father, in a unique Trinitarian and Messianic sense. This is a different relationship than the "spiritual" Father of all those who are His children by adoption who are here designated as "little children" or "babes." His relationship with the Father was a unique and special relationship.

John 17 is a good example of Jesus worshiping the Father in time of extreme crisis. The context is the night before the crucifixion.

Hidden things (v. 25b)

Arrogant pride always alienates us from God. Here it applies especially to the Scribes and Pharisees and the religious teachers. It was wisdom and intelligence misused and perverted. Note how verses 25-30 form a tender invitation and a sharp contrast to the previous paragraph of reproach toward the unrepentant cities. Jesus is preparing His listeners for a loving invitation.

Jesus emphasized humble attitudes. His delight is to see people humbly trusting in God. God does not delight in sin and judgment, but calls men to repentance and faith. Arrogance shuts the door; humility opens it wide.

The Scribes and Pharisees claimed a sophisticated knowledge of God. They were the professionals. They had the degrees and superior knowledge. The true believer had an intimate knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. The prudent and wise, the clever and brilliant were ignorant of the very truths they claimed. The humble stood in a true knowledge of God.

The apostle Paul came to the same understanding (1 Cor. 1:21-31). Here Jesus says children who are dependent upon some one else for their needs illustrates God's delight in those who will humbly depend upon Him. It is in vogue in our day to proclaim, "God helps those who help themselves." However, God is a God of grace and He only helps those who cannot help themselves.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit" communicates this same sense of humility and dependence on God. The apostle Paul said, "not many wise after the flesh," the highly intelligent, "not many mighty" with great ability and force, and "not many noble" well-born, well-bred princes understand spiritual things. "God has chosen the foolish things," the common insignificant foolish—the cross, truth, righteousness, the incarnation to bring salvation to lost mankind.

God's delight is in communicating His grace to the humble in heart who have a childlike simple faith in Him. Only those who are willing to receive it can understand the good news of Jesus Christ.

God's delight (v. 26)

"Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight." The word for "delight" is "well pleasing," good will, pleasure, and satisfaction. It is God's good pleasure, delight He has in mind. He delights in choosing people for Himself (Eph. 1:5, 9). The apostle Paul uses the same word. What was decided from all eternity was realized in time (Eph. 1:4, 5, 7ff).

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Jesus acknowledged the priority of the sovereign Father and praises Him for it. And should we not likewise do the same thing for no other reason than the fact that He is worthy of our praise! Whatever delights God ought to please us!

A PROCLAMATION CONCERNING HIMSELF (11:27)

Only Jesus Christ can give us a true and accurate knowledge of the Father.

Jesus has unique authority (v. 27a).

“All things have been handed over to Me by My Father . . .” The Father has committed or delivered over to Jesus authority. Plummer said, it “points back to a moment in eternity and implies the pre-existence of the Messiah.” It is timeless aorist. A. T. Robertson notes, “The Messianic consciousness of Christ is here as clear as a bell. It is a moment of high fellowship.”

The “all things” is not referring to material goods, but to the “full knowledge” of God. The context suggests the content of the revelation is God Himself. With that full knowledge comes full authority.

No one really and thoroughly knows the Son except the Father so that He must not be considered a mere ordinary human teacher.

John A. Broadus says, “perhaps, when the covenant of redemption was formed in eternity—all things were committed to Him, viz., all that pertains to the instruction of men in religious truth . . . All authority in heaven and earth was given to Him as the Mediatorial King (28:18; 1 Cor. 15:24f). Jesus is the authorized instructor in the knowledge of God.”

Jesus, the Father’s Son, has received full authority over Satan (4:1-11) and demons (8:28-32); over human ailments and handicaps (9:20-22; 9:1-8), winds and waves (8:23-27), body and soul (9:1-8); life and death (9:18-19, 23-26); His own disciples and all other people (ch. 10); to save them (9:13), and to judge them (7:22, 23), authority over heaven and earth (28:18). Jesus has what the sinner needs. He also knows and He alone can provide for the sinner’s needs. Therefore, in verses 28-30 He offers what is needed to the weary and burdened sinners!

The Father and Son know each other intimately (v. 27b).

It is like Father and Son, Inc. Jesus says, “no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.” The word “knows” means to “fully know, a knowing that really penetrates.” Sometimes the word means “exact knowledge.” It is a thorough intimate knowledge that puts people in special relationship to one another. Jesus and the Father stand in a unique and intimate relationship with one another. Only the Father knows who Jesus really is, and only Jesus possesses a true accurate knowledge of the Father. Whatever is known by the Father is known by the Son and what the Son knows is known thoroughly by the Father. It is a perfect knowledge. “No one knows the Son . . . no one knows the Father . . .” Don’t miss the “perfective action” of the compound verb. Charles Williams catches the heart of the idea, “No one but the Father perfectly knows the Son, and no one but the Son perfectly knows the Father, and the one to whom the Son chooses to make Him known.” Only the Father has a full knowledge of the Son, and likewise only the Son has a full knowledge of the Father. Only God the Father really knows the Son, and only those whom the Son chooses to reveal it have a true

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What is being revealed is the inner relation between the Father and Son that has existed from all eternity (Col. 2:3, 9, 10). The reservoir is so inexhaustible that only the Father knows its capacity. Since the Son knows the Father He, He alone, is able to reveal Him (John 1:18; 6:46; 14:8-11). It is the revelation of the kind of knowledge the Father and Son have for each other. But it does more than that it shows the true nature of God. Jesus shows us what God is really like. Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). The Son knows the true nature of the Father and fully reveals Him. No one else can do that. Only Jesus Christ can reveal God to men because He is the Son of God. Jesus alone reveals the mind, heart, attitudes and attributes of God to men.

From start to finish salvation is of grace.

"Whom the Son wills" or "whom the Son chooses," means the Son retains the power and the will to reveal the Father to men. No one knows the Father with the real knowledge which is eternal life, except the Son, and "he to whomever the Son wills to reveal Him." From start to finish salvation is based on sovereign grace of God (Eph. 2:8-10). "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3).

Men can accumulate all the wisdom and intelligence of mankind, but it will not avail to gain a true knowledge of the Father, unless the Son chooses to reveal Him to them. To Him, then, let all come and receive eternal life (Jn. 8:19; 10:15; 14:9; 16:15; 7:17; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

PROMISE TO ALL WHO COME (11:28)

In the mind of Jesus there was no contradiction between the sovereign, electing grace and the free invitation of the gospel.

The invitation is to all who are needy.

"Come" means to believe or receive and has the idea of "come here" with the "here" implied. It is like John 6:35, when Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

The point is, "I alone can give knowledge of the Father; *come* to Me, and receive the instruction."

Everyone is included — "all who are"

The only qualification is to have a need (v. 28). No one is excluded. "Come to Me, all you who are . . ."

Jesus speaks of the weariness of working hard. Are you "growing weary to the point of exhaustion?" Jesus says, "Come to Me all you who are exhausted." The "weary" is the weariness of the heavy load of rules and regulations placed upon the people's shoulders by the Scribes and Pharisees. The people were exhausted with the search for religious truth. Legalism always places oppressive burdens on people. It applies to anyone who tries wholly or partly to achieve salvation by means of his own exertion. All legalism does is prove to the individual that he cannot save himself by rules. It is impossible. It always causes a person to stumble spiritually. The search for God always ends in Jesus Christ. "Come to Me all you who are weighed down beneath your burdens." Is your religion a thing of endless rule and regulations, full of "Thou shalt not"? Come to Jesus Christ and be set free.

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The "burdened" is a state of weariness (perfect passive participle) meaning he is overwhelmed by fear, anxiety and despair. Jesus is describing those "who have been loaded with burdens and are bending beneath their weight." The Jewish Law and the oral commandments dictated every action and activity of Jewish life. These were a massive burden for the sincere religious person to carry. Jesus alone can come along side and lift the load and cause you to rest. There is a sweet restfulness when we yoke up with Jesus Christ. He invites us to take His yoke upon our shoulders.

An expanded paraphrase could read, "You are distressed by the legalistic commands which the religious teachers of the Law have laid upon you. Come to Me; I will receive your burden and you will find rest with Me."

Have you been caught up in some cult, or religious leader who has placed obligations upon you? Have you imposed upon yourself some man made list of demands that supposedly you will be a better Christian if you obey it?

THE PROVISION OF THE EXCHANGED LIFE (11:28-30)

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

Jesus alone provides "rest" (v. 28c).

"I will rest you." More literally Jesus says, "I, yes, I, will lead or cause you to rest." The emphatic, "I" meaning Jesus will do what the Scribes and Pharisees cannot do. He will give the power to do what He requires of the "babes." Rejuvenation, refresh like living water. "I will refresh you." It is far more than mere rest; it is a transformation. Do you need a rest spiritually? It means to "rest up." Jesus lifts the burden by giving refreshment. Literally, "I will rest you." 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. Men can never obtain this rest unless Christ gives it.

How does Jesus give this rest? This is the exchanged life. It is the life of grace. It is the life Christ alone can give to those who are weary and heavy burdened.

We are accepted into God's favor through the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1; 8:1). Only Jesus Christ gives rest. Other religious teachers may give you a self-righteousness, or self-delusion, but only Jesus Christ saves!

Jesus exchanges yokes with us (vv. 29-30).

As a carpenter Jesus probably made many yokes for farmers around Nazareth. He could have made well-fitting yokes that would not have bruised, pinched or blistered the animals. The Palestinian yokes in Jesus' day were made of wood. The farmer brought his ox to the carpenter who took the measurements and roughed out the yoke and then the ox was brought back and the yoke tried on for adjustment. The carpenter worked with it until the yoke was carefully adjusted so that it would be well-fitting and not burr the ox. The yoke was tailor-made to fit the ox. Yes, I too, suspect that Jesus made the perfect fitting yokes.

"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" (vv. 29-30).

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He invites us to "take My yoke" (v. 29). In the Jewish literature it is the symbol of the sum-total of submission to the obligations a person takes upon himself. "Yoke of the Torah," "yoke of the commandments," "yoke of the kingdom" were expressions that described the Jewish yokes. Their misinterpretation placed a heavy burdensome yoke on their shoulders. There were yokes of legalism, yokes of salvation by works, yokes of obedience to rules, regulations, etc. Jesus says, let's exchange yokes! Here take My yoke. Yoke up with Me! Simply trust Me and I will give you rest (salvation and sanctification) for your weary and burdened souls. I choose to submit myself to the teachings of Jesus. I choose to become His disciple and be obedient to Him. That is His yoke. It is a yoke of faith and trust in a person. I choose to be yoked up with Jesus Christ.

Legalistic yokes are negative and depressive to have around. They will choke you to death spiritually.

Jesus says, "Become my students, submit yourselves to My instructions and learn from Me." He invites us to come and submit ourselves to Him. We cannot do that without humbling ourselves and trusting Him.

Jesus still makes perfect well-fitting yokes. When God sends us opportunities in His service they are made to exactly fit our needs and our abilities. When we yoke up with Jesus the burdens become songs.

Jesus gives us a tailor-made yoke and He invites us to submit ourselves to Him. Learn what it means to become My disciple. His discipleship is like a well-fitting yoke of submission because He is humble and gentle. The yoke that Jesus gives does not cramp and pinch or hinder. If the yoke Christ gives pinches and embitters it is because we pull against Him and are not in submission to Him.

What Jesus requires is "light." He demands simple trust in Him and obedience. It brings peace and joy. He frees us from spiritual slavery. He carries the load when we are yoked up with Him. When we yoke up with Him we serve Him spontaneously, eagerly and enthusiastically from a heart of love.

Need some rest for a weary soul? Give Him your burden . . . your anxiety . . . your hunger for God. Do you long for a mature, intimate love relationship with the LORD God? The "rest" Jesus gives is an intimate fellowship with God. Jesus' invitation is, "Submit to Me and you will find rest in Me."

Do you have some old yokes of legalism? They must go. Exchange them for the yoke of Jesus. His yoke is not burdensome. It is full of love and grace.

Christ will lighten your load.

Martin Luther said, "Christ's burden is light because He helps us to bear it, and when it becomes too heavy for us He puts Himself under the load with us."

He will get underneath and lift your burdens. His yoke is "gentle and humble in heart." His yoke is gentle because He is kind and gentle. The yoke Jesus puts on us is easy to wear. The load He gives is not heavy because He carries it with us.

The word "gentle" is the same word Jesus used in the beatitudes in Matthew 5:5. Here is power under perfect control. He is "gentle" as opposed to the haughty and harsh teachers of the law. He is "humble in heart," not arrogant, proud and repulsive. He condescends to that of a humble servant. He is the Sovereign God whose power is perfectly under control. How can we possibly fail when we are yoked up with Him who is the Sovereign?

Sovereign?

Not everyone can be rich, but all may be poor in spirit.

Not all can be wise and intelligent, but we can all be humble and submissive to God's revelation.

No one can commend himself to God by his good works and virtue, but anyone can confess his sins and humbly call upon the name of Jesus Christ to save him.

Jesus issues a sovereign invitation. John A. Broadus writes:

- 1) The sovereign Father reveals the Son only to the lowly.
- 2) The sovereign Son reveals the Father only to such as He chooses.
- 3) All who need and desire the rest-giving knowledge of the Father are invited to learn from this sovereign, yet meek and lowly Teacher.
- 4) The full knowledge of God can be had only through the Son of God.
- 5) It is conferred by the Son upon such only as He willeth.
- 6) He willeth to confer it upon all who will come and take Him as religious Teacher.
- 7) He is a gentle Teacher, and His requirements are easy and pleasant.
- 8) To accept His teaching will bring rest to the soul (*Matthew*, p. 256).

The he adds, "The Son of God is the Revealer of the Father . . . to bring the Godhead into saving contact with the sin-sick, ruined soul."

Jesus invites us to come and yoke up with Him. He takes all of our heavy loads and reaches under and enables us to bear them. His yoke will be easy and our burdens become light. There are no exceptions; nothing in our lives is excluded.

Where is your greatest need today? What is the heavy load you are carrying? What is the pain, hurt, grief, guilt, burden that you bear? His invitation includes every thing in our lives. Will you hand them over to Him and as you do you receive His sustaining presence? He gives forgiveness in exchange for our guilt. He exchanges rest for our anxious worries. He gives peace in place of your tumult.

How do you yoke up with Jesus? It begins by making yourself available to Him. As we submit to Him He meets our need.

Have you experienced the sustaining grace of God during difficult circumstances? He who abides in us gave us more and more grace when we need it most. With each new situation He comes and strengthens us. He doesn't give it all at once, but as we need it. When the heavy loads grow greater He comes to us and gives us the strength to bear them. It may be during emotional and physical suffering, difficulties, hardships, persecutions that He multiplies His sustaining grace. There is no limit to His abounding love, mercy and grace. He is there to help when we need it.

Have you experienced this kind of grace? Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you can say I am walking in that grace by faith? It is a daily walk. It is not something magical. It is a moment-by-moment trusting Christ to live His life through you. If you are already a Christian will you commit your life once and for all to Christ as Lord of your life? Just pray, "Lord I do know You as my Savior. I want You to be the Lord and Master of my life. Here is my life. I give it to You. You live it through me."

This kind of life begins by asking Christ to come into your heart by faith. If you have never done so pray with me this simple prayer, "Lord Jesus I now believe that I am a sinner, and that You died for me on the cross and rose from the dead to save me. I want You to be my personal Savior. I ask You to save me right now. Amen."

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

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