



GROW AT HOME

DAY 6

READ

MATTHEW | CHAPTERS 11 + 12

FOCUS

²⁸ COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY AND BURDENED, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST. ²⁹ "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. ³⁰ FOR MY YOKE IS EASY AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT."

REFLECTION from PASTOR DOYLE SURRATT

So Chapters 11 and 12 in the book of Matthew tell us of a pretty intense time in the life and teaching of Jesus. The religious leaders were feeling threatened by Jesus and He wasn't backing down from calling them out on their hypocrisy. But, in the middle of this, He gives us a little bit of hope and insight in the form of an invitation to a different kind of life. This inspiration appears in Matt 11:28-30 (see above) In this passage Jesus acknowledges that life can be hard but that He has a better way. He instructs us how to have a better life.

He invites us to:

COME

He invites us to come to Him because we are "weary and burdened". This is in contrast to those in verse 25 who thought they were "wise and learned." He is pointing out that there are some (like the religious types of His day) who think they've got it all figured out, but they are wrong. He is speaking to those of us who are weary from the struggle and burdened by the loads we are carrying. Whether it is being cooped up all day with the kids, worrying about our jobs, getting sick, or frantically strategizing how to keep our company open, these days there are plenty of weary people.

The picture of being burdened is one of a pack animal with more than it can carry. I remember many years ago during college I spent a summer in Portugal. The country is full of narrow, curvy, cobblestone roads and you have to drive carefully because you never know when you might turn a corner and be right up on top of a small donkey with hay stacked so high on his back that all you could see were four little legs sticking out from under it. That is what it feels like sometimes being so overloaded - "burdened."

But Jesus says we can come to Him for rest. This is particularly interesting in the context of Jesus day because the Pharisees (religious leaders) would have said to do rather than come. Theirs was a religion of doing more to get Gods approval, but Jesus says to come to Him—He is the source of rest. By the way, He may very well have been referring to the weariness and burdening that were imposed by the religious leaders with all the rules they had made. Sometimes our weariness is self-inflicted, and often others impose it on us—but either way He says come.

TAKE

Jesus invites us to take His yoke upon us. Now, a yoke is a collar of sorts that is attached to an animal so that they can pull a plow or a wagon. While we may not like being told we have to be in a yoke, the truth is that we will be in one whether we like it or not. The real question is: whose yoke are we wearing, who is driving us, whose task are we accomplishing? We all "hitch our wagon" to something hoping it will bring what we are looking for—it may be money, power, family, or any host of things. But what Jesus is talking about is coming to Him as a student ready to learn how to live and what to live for.



GROW AT HOME

DAY 6

REFLECTION from PASTOR DOYLE SURRETT (CONTD)

He is inviting us to take His yoke - His teaching, and a relationship with Him as our way of life--and then we will find rest. It is in the surrender and the obedience that we find a more restful way to live. He says this, not from the point of view of one who is stronger and therefore will force us to do it His way, but from the heart of a Servant who is gentle, humble, and wanting to help us. He says His yoke is easy and His burden is light. The literal translation of these words indicate that His yoke is "well fitted:" custom made for each of us. His yoke is much easier than trying to carry around all of these burdens by ourselves.. We will find rest when we simply choose to do life with Him, His way.

LEARN

This is not a one-time experience. Jesus is inviting us into a process of life-long learning--of learning what Jesus taught that He alone could teach and that carry the words of life and rest. By the way, what we are to be learning is how to live for (and receive) rest at a soul level. Sleep can't do this, nor can a vacation, because Jesus' rest is a rest of a clear conscience and the confidence that we are living the life we were created to live. It is a life of peace with God and peace from God that only deepens as we learn more from and about our Savior. It is life simplified and unified around Jesus.

So today I want you to ask yourself, "How big a stack am I carrying around?" Remember that poor donkey with the hay? If that were a picture of you today, what are you carrying? One bale? Two? Twelve? The whole world? COME, TAKE, LEARN! What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you today? Would your life be easier and (you be lighter) if you could learn it?

P.S. If you need a little extra encouragement today, I suggest you listen to an old gospel song that says, "The Lord will make a way somehow." My favorite version is by Mike Farris.

QUESTIONS

- HOW BIG OF A BURDEN ARE YOU CARRYING AROUND? IF YOU WERE THE DONKEY IN DOYLE'S STORY, HOW MANY BALES WOULD YOU BE CARRYING?
- WHAT DO YOU THINK JESUS IS TRYING TO TEACH YOU TODAY?
- WOULD YOUR LIFE BE EASIER (AND YOU BE LIGHTER) IF YOU COULD LEARN IT?

SONG OF THE DAY

THE LORD WILL MAKE A WAY SOMEHOW // MIKE FARRIS

LISTEN ALONG ON YOUTUBE

DAILY DEVOTION