

Find Rest in Christ

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Sixth Sunday after Pentecost) is Matthew 11:25-30. In this text Jesus is speaking words of severe judgment on three cities who had refused to repent and to believe in Jesus. He also speaks words of comfort to those had believed and were struggling with physical burdens.

“That time” is immediately after decrying the pride and haughtiness of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, cities of Galilee that thought they should be exalted simply because the miracle worker was from their region. How timely! And what more of an emphasis on grace alone could one ask for? God has revealed Christ’s mercy and power, hidden behind his humble guise not to the proud or the wise elite but to the very smallest, most helpless infant. We need not be wise to be loved.

Jesus is not saying educated people will be lost and the uneducated will be saved. He is simply speaking about those who wise in their own eyes and reject the invitation of the Gospel.

Jesus thanked His Father for revealing the truth of the Gospel to little children rather than having the knowledge of salvation depend on human wisdom. Jesus referred to His followers as the “little ones” (10:42) and pointed to a child as the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (18:1-4).

Jesus is by no means rejoicing in the fact that some will be lost. He is rejoicing in the fact that as God was well-pleased with his Son, this good pleasure is mine and for all people, without distinction.

At this point in the history of Jesus’ earthly ministry, the Father alone knows who the Son is, but the Father is already revealing that His way of salvation is through the Son, and through the Son only.

The people were burdened by the “yoke of the law” of which the rabbis spoke. They could not meet its demands with its many regulations and restrictions. Jesus invites everyone struggling with sin and the burden of the Law to come to him for rest and refreshment. He was keeping the Law in their stead and would bear their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross.

We are given rest when we believe, our hearts are brought to life by the Holy Spirit through Christ’s Word. Phil 4:7 say it well: *“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding and guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”*

The yoke Jesus asks us to take upon ourselves might be defined as the whole Christian life and hope. Once we have assumed that yoke, God’s commandments are no longer a heavy burden that weighs us down and destroys us. Instead, they are expressions of God’s will in which we delight, for we look for ways to express our thanks to God for the blessings of his grace.

Jesus is not saying that life is easy, but afflictions, the cross and suffering simple drive Christian closer to Jesus.

Prayer: Dearest Jesus, I praise you that when I am yoked to you, no burden is too heavy. Amen. (TLSB)