

# Sermon Notes - 'Come' - Matthew 11:25-30

Now some of you may know of the Greek mythological Titan called Atlas.

Atlas and his brother sided with the Titans against the Olympians and when the Titans were eventually defeated, many of them were confined to Tartarus (a deep abyss used as a dungeon) including Atlas' brother. However, Atlas had a different fate, Atlas was a Titan who was responsible for bearing the weight of the heavens on his shoulders, a punishment bestowed on him by Zeus. He was given this task in retribution for him leading the Titans into battle against the Olympian Gods for control of the heavens. He was Atlas Telamon, or 'enduring Atlas,' a name embodying his daily struggle and punishment.

Atlas had to carry a heavy load, the weight of the heavens on his shoulders, his punishment was to remain being burdened.

Now a few weeks ago I was with a group from Manor Park that went to help with some work at Gaines (If you don't know Gaines its a youth activity centre that runs camps at a this beautiful old manor house just a few miles away from here). What we ended up doing, as a team on that work day, was clearing this big patch of stinging nettles and brambles, and then clearing about 100 old tyres and a few ton of rocks and rubble. It was good fun, but at the end of the day we were wearied and tired. We'd worked hard, it was a hot day, a lot of lifting, moving and physically we were exhausted.

In Matthew 11:25-30 we hear the invitation of Jesus too those who are wearied and burdened.

We all have heavy loads that we carry at some point in our lives. We all sometimes just feel tired and weary. Don't we sometimes feel like that? We may often say I feel like I am carrying the weight of the world on my shoulders at the moment. Sometimes life can be really tough and we can end up being weary and burdened, in need of rest.

What is it that you have had in your life that has made you feel like you carrying the weight of world on your shoulders?

All of us will have had different situations, different seasons of life that have left us feeling like we just need to stop, that we maybe feel like we can't carry that load anymore.

Jesus responds in this passage to that situation in our lives, he knows that weariness is draining, that to keep going with the weight of the world on our shoulders will crush us. But Jesus offers us a different way to live, he offers us the spiritual rest that our souls truly need.

Jesus points out three keys that help unlock 'rest' for those who are burdened and weary. That he wants us to be able to take away.

His first advice for rest is to simply have a **humble heart**. Being caught up with pride, arrogance and puffed up knowledge will ultimately lead to a heavy weight of needing to perform well and gain affirmation from others. Without a humble heart we will be crippled.

If we want to hear about a new way of living, that will provide us with rest, then we need to be humble in our own lives and humble in the way we think and approach Jesus. In verse 25 we see Jesus pointing this out. There are two kinds of people that Jesus points out here. 1. 'The wise' -

who are some consumed with their own knowledge that their arrogance has made them blind to the truth. 2. The little children who are humble in their thinking, willing to learn from others and accept the truth of God's word. Jesus then chooses to reveal things to the little children, instead of those who are arrogant and think they know everything. He is saying stop overthinking, stop building up our own clever ideas and abstract concepts but instead come and listen to me.

It reminds me of a picture I saw last week come up on facebook at the PGA Championship. Here it is...



Credit: Mike Pomranz -  
May 26, 2022 - Explore  
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We have Tiger Woods playing a shot and a crowd around him watching. As you may see in that crowd, so many of the fans have their phones out, taking pictures and videos but if you look closely you see one fan, just there, standing with a drink in his hand. He is simply watching one of the greatest players in Golf, just playing the game. He isn't caught up in videoing and photographing of that moment, he simply is there. Humbly watching and taking in what's in front of him. Isn't that something we need more of in life. To just take in the moments that are put in front of us.

This is what Jesus wants to get across, he wants people to come to him in simplicity, with no pre-conceived agenda, no puffed up arrogance and knowledge, he see right through that. He simply and humbly want us to be in his presence and listen to him.

That simplicity and humbleness is vital to ultimately getting to see the Greatest invitation which we will pick up on just a minute.

You may also be thinking, well I can see that being humble is a good thing to do within myself but why would I want to listen to Jesus and how does that help me gain rest.

Well, what do we see in the passage, Verse 27 gives us the second key to unlocking rest. Jesus needs you to know who he is and why he has authority to grant rest.

He states that it is only through him that people can know the true giver of Rest, that is God the father. He says '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'.

What Jesus claims here is significant: He is claiming that he fully represents God. That he is God.

- He is claiming that he is from the Fathers Side
- He shares in the father care and compassion for you and me
- Only Jesus fully understands God the Father.

This is summed up in John 14:6 - 'I am the way, the truth, the life, no one comes to the father except through me'.

Just before moving to Worcester and we knew the house we were going to be moving to I looked around for the closest park that would be appropriate for walking our dog. And the closest park to us was Pitmaston park. So I looked the park up on Maps on my phone and tried to work out the different entrance and exits to the park. Most parks tend to have 2 or 3 ways in and out but I couldn't see any other way in other than the main gate. Well as we eventually did move up we started taking our Dog up to the park and as you wander around it you quickly realise there is one entrance and exit for the public.

Jesus is saying here in verse 27 and in John 14:6. If you want to come to God, you can only come through me. If you want to find rest it can only be found through come to me.

'If you want to know what God is like, Look at Jesus'.

'If you want to get through to God, Come to Jesus'.

'If you want to rest, sit at the Feet of Jesus'.

If we want to find rest for the soul, we need to have a humble heart... We need to see Jesus for who he truly is... then we need to accept the invitation that Jesus lays out for us in verse 28-30.

And what an **Invitation** that is... Receiving an invitation is quite often a very exciting thing. We recently went to a good friends wedding, which was a lovely day and that day started with a wedding invitation months before. Im sure throughout the years we may have all received a wedding invitation, or an invite to a celebration, and they tend to be quite beautiful, maybe they reflect the style of wedding or the character of the hosts. People spend a lot of time to create a beautiful invitation that represents who they are, it represents their character as individuals and as a couple.

Well this is what we see here... Jesus is offering everyone the most beautiful and important invitation of your life. And that invitation comes in three parts.

The Call - 'Come to me' - It's an open invite, you don't have to be a person of certain standing or someone who has all the right ingredients or even someone who has enough knowledge to work everything out. You very simply need to come to him. It is the simplest, gentlest invitation you could ever receive. As you are, with everything that is going on in your life, past, present, future. With all your troubles, all your searching, all your worries and burdens, Just Come to me.

It's almost like the slogan for Jesus. We see Nike with 'Just do it'. Jesus say 'Come to Me'. Simple, clear, beautiful yet profoundly life changing.

The Condition - Jesus wants to frames the condition, as we've said he understands that feeling of having the weight of the world on your shoulders. What he portrays here is radically different from any other religion or ideology. Matthew 23:4 says 'They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.' Jesus points out how he differs from the religious leaders of the day and shows the life transforming way in which this simple invitation of 'Come to Me' elevates all the burdens and weariness that has been placed on people throughout history by religious ideas and leaders, telling us to earn our way to God. We can also look at the worlds version having to work to improve ourselves. The world tells us to work a little harder, to keep pushing into our dreams all to gain other peoples approval or to gain our own perfect life. These lies cripple the soul, burden the person and ultimately lead to no way to live. Whether we end up following an idea that we can

work our way to God or follow the ways that the world teach us. We will end up with the crushing realities of burdens too big to bear and a soul that is weary.

With Jesus call to “Come to Me”, he has no condition to earn your spot, he doesn’t ‘detail how you became weary and burdened’. Just as he calls you, as little children, he comes to you as a loving father.

*The Consequence* - What’s the consequence of accepting that invitation, of coming as you are to Jesus. It is, in its simplest terms, He will give your soul rest. Not only that, what the translation is here is literally saying is ‘I will rest you’. Jesus will rest our souls, he will not just give us the option to rest, because if we are honest by nature a lot of us would probably still try to work that rest into our lives, no he will actually rest us. He will give us freedom from burdens and weariness.

Now please understand, this is not a free pass to never be worried and tired, we aren’t magical pulled out of the realities of life but its Jesus promise that if you come to him and stay close to him, the load will be shared and the work will not drain us. There will be a spiritual sustenance for the soul that only he can provide.

This is why he uses the analogy of a yoke, which is a bit of a strange image for us, but this is what it looks like. So a yoke is a heavy wooden harness that fits over the shoulders of an ox or oxen. It attaches the animal to the piece of equipment that is being used, a plough or something alike. This analogy was a common image used for the time and really shows that nature of hard work with burdensome load that would leave an animal tired.

The context of the yoke is really important to understand. Metaphorically, the yoke was used to describe the law which the Jewish youth undertook to bind to himself in the bar mitzvah ceremony. It spoke of loyal comment and a duty to the Law. Jesus wants to offer you spiritual rest, his method is simply come to me as opposed to the method of the religious leaders.

As we read on in verse 29 and 30 its interesting that we may think that Jesus is performing a little switch because he promises to remove the ‘The Yoke (the burden) of the Law’ that is given by the religious leaders and then swap that and put his yoke on us. The defining difference between the yoke that is tied on us by the religious leader in comparison to the yoke laid on us by Christ. Is that Jesus places a yoke of love on us instead of a yoke of duty.

What Jesus knows is that humans will always be yoked to something, we will all place idols in our lives, we are intrinsically designed by God to worship something, it is in human nature to worship. Whether thats sport, money, fame or power. The world offers us so much too idolise. So Jesus offers us the best way to live, the most complete way to rest, and that is life that is found in him. Who best knows the creatures then the creator. That is why this analogy of having his yoke placed on us is not another burden, it's not a quick switch but instead is freedom and rest in its purest form.

Let me put it to you like this. Is a tree really free if it is uprooted and not bound to the earth anymore. Is a fish free when it’s pulled out the sea and not bound to the water. Is a train at rest if it’s not in contact to the the tracks. True freedom, where we find perfect rest is not found in being unbound to anything but instead is found when we are bound to the correct thing in our lives.

Humans are designed to the yoked to something, but being yoked or bound to the world will cause pain, suffering, a burdened life and will ultimately lead to an unrestful soul.

The other element of a yoke is that it's designed to bring the two animals together in tandem. They are meant to work together. The beauty here is Jesus is saying, I will remove the yoke that doesn't fit well, I will give you a yoke that you are designed for. Quite often farmers would place a bigger and smaller oxen together, so the strong one could help the weaker. What a beautiful image that Christ is bound with us. He is working for the good of those who love him. Which means when the load is tough, the weariness kicks in, Jesus is already pulling you along.

Does life feel like it's a hike up a steep mountain, carrying a heavy load to a destination that out of reach? Can it feel like we have the weight of the world on our shoulders?

Jesus here offers you rest, he offers you a different way of living. He can offer this to you because he is your creator.

Who is the best person to explain the details of how your car works? The designer, the engineer who put it together. God is the one who designed you, he knitted you together in your mother womb, he knows what is correct for you. He knows the best way for you to be living. He knows the best way for you to gain rest.

So if that is something you need in your life, Rest. Then have a humble heart, see Jesus for who he is and accept the invitation from him that simply says 'Come to Me'.

This invitation is for everyone.

- Whether you have never know Jesus or whether you have but are still holding on to your burdens.
- The call to 'Come to Me' is free to everyone and available to all.
- It will release you of burdens that may have been holding you down.
- It is a call to have Jesus as Saviour (removal of burdens) and Lord (sharing a yoke with him, learning from him).

Whether you've never heard that invitation to 'Come to Me' from Jesus or whether you have and need to be bound to Christ more closely, that invitation is open for you.

Are you going to accept the most beautiful and life transforming invitation?

Let us pray before we close in a time of Worship.

'Father we thank you for the beauty of the Invitation that simply says 'Come to Me', we thank you that you offer that, no matter of what burdens we hold on to, no matter if we think we are too far gone for Gods grace to work in our lives. You simply want us to come to you, with a humble heart recognising who you are. Would you give us a heart to respond to your word. In the name of the father. Amen.