Matt. 11:28-29 Come to Me

Today, as we take the Lord's Supper, I want to preach Matt. 11: 28-29 (2nd version from 2021). In these words Jesus says, "Come to me." This is fitting as I am in the middle of preaching four messages on the same topic from John 6. I want to focus on three "commands" (the first is an interjection, but functions as a command). Here they are: 1) Come (v. 28); 2) Take (v. 29); and 3) Learn (v. 29)

1. Come to me. In v. 28 we have the English word "come." And yes, it is a command, but more than a command; it is an interjection. It is a word with great force and emotion. How many of you remember "School House Rock?" These were short singing cartoons to teach English grammar and other facts. One of them teaches "interjections." The first part is a young boy who is sick in bed. The doctor comes and gives him a shot in the back side. And he lets out an interjection: "Hey," "Ouch," "that hurts." Later, we see a crowd at a football game and the quarterback throws the ball in the wrong direction. The crowd screams: "Aw," "*Darn*," "*you threw it the wrong way*." And one guys says, "*Great*," "*I'm for the other team*."

Well, in this word "come" we may see the greatest interjection ever spoken, as Jesus proclaims with the greatest of emotion, "***Come! . . . to me***." This invitation is for the world; it is for us! Let me make three observations: 1) Authority; 2) Recipients; and 3) Result.

First, notice the authority of the ONE who says, "Come." Look back at vv. 25-27: "**At that time Jesus declared, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; 26 yes, Father, for such was your gracious will**." In these verses Jesus acknowledges the authority of the Father to make his will known, to reveal Himself. And then in v. 27, Jesus makes a striking statement. He says, "**All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him**." In these verses, Jesus reveals his special place of authority as the only ONE who knows the Father. And, if anyone would know the Father, it will be because Jesus reveals Him.

Here, Jesus claims authority that can only be said of God Himself. We have seen this over and over again in the book of John, starting from 1:1: "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men**." Therefore, this interjection, this command does not come from a boy getting a shot or a crowd of emotional spectators, but from the sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, the King of all, who says, "***if you've seen me, you've seen the Father***" (John 14:9).

And here, he says, "***Come . . . TO ME***!" As the ONE with all authority in heaven and one earth (Matt. 28:18-20), there is no greater command than to come to HIM! As we just read, "**In him was life, and the life was the light of men**." If we are to have life, we must get it from HIM. He holds the keys to heaven. He is the door, and through HIM we must enter. He is the Shepherd, we must hear his voice and follow his commands if we are not to perish in the wilderness. He is the great physician, if we are to find healing it will be as we come to HIM. HE is the bread of life; we must feed on him if our souls will find satisfaction. He is the light, and if we do not

come to Him we walk in darkness. He is the fountain; we must wash in his blood if we are to be cleansed.

Second, notice the recipients; those who come to the Son. Look back at vv. 25-26: "**At that time Jesus declared, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children**; 26 **Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will**." Who comes to Jesus? . . . It is the "little children," not the "wise and understanding." Here, Jesus is pressing the truth of humility. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Consider the context of Matt. 11. Jesus is comparing the humility of John the Baptist with the pride and unrepentance of his generation. Look back at 11:16: "**But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places and calling to their playmates, 17 we have played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn. 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' T19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!** . . ." And then Jesus links humility with repentance in vv. 20-24 as he says, "**For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes** . . ."

Now, look at v. 28. He says, "**Come to me** . . ." Who? . . . "**All who labor and are heavy laden**." He does not say "*those who feel themselves righteous and worthy*," but those who "**labor and are heavy laden**." As God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble, so the heart of Christ is for those who feel a load on their heart, those with a load of sin and sorrow, those who are anxious to get rid of the great burden that weighs them down. These are the ones to whom the Son reveals the Father.

Third, notice the Result of those who come. Jesus says, "**Come to me and I will give you . . . REST**" (v. 28). To "rest" means to cease from work. Have you ever worked all day and the closer you get to the end of your time of work, you can't wait to get home, have a glass of tea (me), sit in your couch, maybe watch tv, read a good book, etc. The older I get, the more I want to rest (physically). Well, Jesus is speaking about a different kind of rest. He is speaking about rest for our souls. Why? We are sinners!

Brothers and sisters, there is no rest for the sinner; and "**ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). "**The soul that sins will die**" (Ezek. 18:4). "**But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear**" (Is. 59:2). This is the awful consequence of sin. It is our nature imputed (passed down) to us by our first father, Adam. And this is the great problem of this world. It is "enmity" between sinful men and a holy God. This is the worst tragedy imaginable. And it CANNOT be fixed by us. It is a chasm no sinner can overcome. No matter how hard we work to make it right, we cannot fix it. Our good works are filthy rags that we try and wipe over our sins. And in response to this condition, we echo the words of the Prophet Jeremiah: "**Woe is me! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest**" (Jer. 45:3). (This is me! This is you!)

It is this unsurmountable problem Jesus promises to fix . . . for those who come to him. Brothers and sisters, the great characteristic of this world is UNREST. "**Why do the nations rage and the**

peoples plot in vain?" (Ps. 2) Why do we run to and fro, trying to make ourselves look better in the sight of man and God? Why do the Hatfields and McCoys feud? Why do political parties fight and jockey for position? Why is my child struck by the impaired driver? Why do wars and rumors of wars come? Why do the psychological terms and definitions of this world multiply with every disorder? Why do earthquakes and tidal waves destroy millions? Why do children lie to their parents and hit one another? Why does creation groan for its redemption? All of these things and more are the result of sin, which leads to unrest. But, Jesus says, "***come to me and I will give you rest***." I think of Noah's dove. He let one free to check and see if the waters had subsided? But it flew and it flew and it flew, finding no place to rest. And it came back to the ark. In the same way, those who come to Christ will find rest for their souls. Therefore, COME TO CHRIST AND HE WILL GIVE YOU REST.

2. Take my yoke. Look at v. 29. Jesus says, "***TAKE . . . my yoke upon you***." Here, Jesus gives us a picture of what happens when the soul of unrest comes to him. A yoke is normally a wooden bar or frame that connects two animals while they work. They are bound by their yoke. A yoke can also be a frame fitted to a person's shoulders in order to carry heavy loads on each side of the body. And, the picture is clear. He is speaking about a yoke of sin. Our yoke is a never-ending labor. And we are always under this yoke. No matter how hard we try, we cannot get rid of this yoke laid upon us. V. 28 . . . This yoke is ALWAYS laborious and heavy. You and I can never find rest because of this yoke.

This is why Jesus says, "***Come to me*** . . ." and "***take MY yoke***." You see, Jesus has another kind of yoke. Look at v. 30. His yoke is "easy," and "light." This is the most beautiful picture! Jesus is saying, "*Give me your yoke and I will trade it for mine. And the yoke I give you will be easy and light*." In other words, "*my yoke will not cause you to labor incessantly, but it will give you rest*." Matthew Henry says "*His yoke is no more of a burden than feathers are to a bird*." In this picture we see the gospel of Christ. "**For the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and lay down his life for the many**" (Mark 10:45).

In the Lord's Supper this morning, this we remember. For those who come to him, ALL the weight of our "yoke" was laid upon him. God takes your yoke, ALL your sins, and he yokes them to Christ! He lays them on HIS shoulders and says, "*you carry them*." Is. 53:6: "**All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all**." And then in v. 11: "**he shall bear their iniquities**." And then in v. 12: "**he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors**." In this great exchange, Christ gives his people his yoke. And we carry HIS yoke. And his yoke is not heavy or laborious. Why? Because it is HIS yoke. And his yoke is one of righteousness, as of the ONLY Begotten Son. Tit. 3:5: "**He saved us not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior**." This we remember as we take the Lord's Supper today.

Application: Though this world is full of sin and unrest, those who come to Christ have rest NOW. Your sins are forgiven. You have peace with God. And yes, the yoke of this world is all around us; sickness, hate, conflict, death, chaos, and a whole host of unnamed sins. But, today, as Christians, we grow in the grace of God as we face tomorrow with the most beautiful yoke around our necks.

Application: The comforts of the gospel of Christ far outweigh the trials and tribulations of taking up the "cross" of Jesus. Yes, we take up the cross! Yes, we fight for the Gospel and for righteousness and for truth. And Yes, this will lead us to trials, tribulations, and persecutions! But, our souls find rest in the midst. Therefore, "**Take the yoke of Christ upon you**."

3. Learn from me. Finally, this morning, Jesus says, "***LEARN from me . . .***" (v. 29). As we've learned from the Book of John, the VERY same wisdom that belongs to the Father belongs to the Son. As Jesus tells Phillip, "**If you've seen me, you've seen the Father**." This means Jesus is our example, not the things found in this evil world. As the Son, He is the Wisdom of God. So, learn from him! Today, in his holiness, we find in Jesus EVERYTHING this sinful world is NOT. The burden of this world is "heavy." What this world gives you will not lead to rest, but to continual unrest. Therefore, we must LEARN from him! The world teaches from sin and deception. But Christ teaches in righteousness and truth. The ways of the world lead to suffering and disappointment in the soul. But Christ gives life and hope and an anchor for the soul. The world teaches selfishness and hate. But Christ teaches us to love our neighbor and even our enemies and to put others' interests above ourselves. The ways of the world lead to anguish and confusion. But Jesus teaches that which is true and right and good. The ways of the world lead to death, but the ways of Christ lead to eternal life.

Brothers and sisters, if you take your cues from the world, (if you learn from the world) you can expect to have a VERY stressful life. You SHOULD expect anger and impatience and impulsiveness and worry. You SHOULD expect fighting in your families. You SHOULD expect conflict with your neighbors. If you are learning from the world, you should not expect the peace of God to rule in your heart. Now, I know I am speaking to Christians, Christians who are still sinners. And we are all at different places in our sanctification. But to the extent that we learn from Christ is the extent of rest we find in our souls. Therefore, learn from him! Read the Word daily, as often as you can. Pray to God the Father to reveal the beauties of Christ in you and your families. Continue to gather with God's people as much as you can as you seek Christ. Fathers and mothers, lead your children to come to Christ, to take his yoke, and learn from him.

In these verses today we find the heart of Christ. So, Come to Him. Take his yoke. Learn from Him.

(Transition to Lord's Supper.)