

## Matthew Lesson 11

### Matthew Chapter 11

*Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies*

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Memory verses for this week: *1 Cor 1:25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

**Introduction:** In last week's lesson, we studied about Jesus sending the 12 disciples forth with great power to heal all manner of sickness and disease. The apostolic powers given during the early days of the church included the ability to heal lepers, cause the blind to see, and even raise the dead. These were special gifts that we can not do today. God still heals, but it is faith in God by the individual, not the Christian who causes this to happen.

In this chapter, John the Baptist questions whether Jesus is in fact the Messiah. Jesus responds and uses the occasion to answer the whole matter of His person and ministry. The chapter ends with Jesus taking the cities of Galilee to task for ignoring His message of repentance. He concludes with a moving invitation for any who will come to Him.

#### I. Jesus Goes Forth to Preach and Teach

*Mat 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.*

Christ was always about doing the Father's Will. As a young child, we found him interested in the word of God. Once when Joseph and Mary had taken the family up to Jerusalem for the Passover, they left Jesus behind when he was about 12 years old.

*Luke 2:41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.*

*Luke 2:42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.*

*Luke 2:43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.*

*Luke 2:44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.*

*Luke 2:45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.*

*Luke 2:46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.*

*Luke 2:47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.*

*Luke 2:48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.*

*Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*

After Jesus sent the disciples forth to preach, he then goes himself to the cities to preach. The cities mentioned in all likelihood were those of the Galilee region. Notice the emphasis of His ministry: teaching and preaching. That example remains for the ministry even to this day.

## **II. John the Baptist Sends Disciples to Question Jesus**

*Mat 11:2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,*

*Mat 11:3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*

John the Baptist had been imprisoned by Herod the tetrarch. (See Matthew 14:3). The essence of John's ministry had been to preach that the King was about to appear and establish His kingdom. His message was repentance toward that end. Now in prison and with no imminent appearance of a Jewish kingdom in sight, John wondered if Jesus indeed was the Messiah.

John may well have harbored a bit of the prevailing Jewish thought that the Messiah would come politically and militarily, throwing off the yoke of the Romans. Yet, he knew of Jesus' miracles and message. His current situation brought reasons I believe would cause anyone to ask for assurance.

*Mat 11:4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see:*

*Mat 11:5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

*Mat 11:6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

John had met Jesus on other occasions and had been given proof that Jesus was the Messiah.

*John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

*John 1:30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.*

*John 1:31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.*

*John 1:32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.*

*John 1:33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.*

*John 1:34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

Another example of how we can see the John truly knew that Jesus was the Messiah is here in Chapter 3 of John.

*John 3:22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.*

*John 3:23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.*

*John 3:24 For John was not yet cast into prison.*

*John 3:25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.*

*John 3:26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.*

*John 3:27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.*

*John 3:28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.*

*John 3:29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*

*John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.*

What we do makes a lot bigger impact on people than what we say. Jesus answered them and told them to tell John that the blind receive their sight and lepers are healed. And probably the greatest proof, "The Poor have the Gospel preached unto them." Unfortunately not all were believers, and many were offended because of Christ. When your life conflicts with the standards God sets, you will be offended. But the right thing to do is to repent of our sins, and follow those standards and commandments. They are all for our own good.

Jesus' response to John's disciples essentially was go and show John what you have heard and seen in my ministry. After reciting His various miracles, Jesus said, "*and the poor have the gospel preached unto them.*"

The word translated as poor (ptwcov *ptochos*) has the essential thought of 'lowly.' The gospel was bypassing the religious hierarchy and going directly to the common people who were willing to listen and believe. Jesus added, "*And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*"

There is promised blessing for any who are not offended by the name and message of Jesus Christ. The message to John was clear: bear reproach for the gospel and for His sake.

To heal a person born blind was unheard of before Jesus came on the scene.

*John 9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.*

*John 9:25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*

*John 9:26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?*

*John 9:27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?*

*John 9:28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.*

*John 9:29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.*

*John 9:30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.*

*John 9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.*

*John 9:32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.*

### **III. The GREATEST Man Born of Woman**

*Mat 11:7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?*

*Mat 11:8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.*

*Mat 11:9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.*

*Mat 11:10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*

*Mat 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

Many great men and women have come and gone since the beginning of time. However, the greatest man ever born of woman was John the Baptist according to Christ. He was not a man who was fearful or weak, or shaken by things. He was not clothed with kings apparel, but he was a prophet, and more than a prophet Jesus proclaimed. None greater than John the Baptist it says in verse 11. Jesus points out that the least in the

kingdom of heaven was greater, meaning a saved person in the family of God. That means a saved child of the Lord is greater than anyone here in the flesh. John the Baptist did God's Will in his life, and his job was to prepare a people for the Lord.

In the early ministry of John, multitudes had gone into the wilderness to see and hear John. Referring back to that time when John's disciples departed. Jesus spoke to the multitudes concerning John. Jesus asked three questions.

Did you go into the wilderness to see a reed bent by the wind? The answer is obviously no. The metaphor of the reed was purposeful. John did not bend, though the winds of opposition against him were great.

Did you go to see someone in soft clothing? Again, the answer is obvious. Jesus was well aware that John's garments were camel skins and leather.

Did you go to see a prophet? Here, the answer is obviously yes. Jesus went on to state that John was far more than an ordinary prophet.

Jesus made clear that John was the forerunner prophesied in Isaiah and Malachi. See Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1.

Jesus spoke highly concerning John. Jesus clearly demonstrated that spiritual values are in a different dimension than the values of the world. John was a preacher and a man of God. The world considered him a curiosity.

Jesus said he was greater than all the kings and notables the world had produced. Yet, John would not have the privilege of seeing the kingdom in his day. To that extent, he was less than the least who will someday be in the kingdom. Implied here is the greatness of the kingdom. Moreover, it is apparent that the kingdom was not as yet.

Though the King was present in their midst, the ultimate kingdom was not and will not be until the King returns to establish it.

Matthew Henry said this about verse 11

**There was not a greater born of women than John the Baptist, v. 11. Christ knew how to value persons according to the degrees of their worth, and he prefers John before all that went before him, before all that were born of women by ordinary generation. Of all that God had raised up and called to any service in his church, John is the most eminent, even beyond Moses himself; for he began to preach the gospel doctrine of remission of sins to those who are truly penitent; and he had more signal revelations from heaven than any of them had; for he saw heaven opened, and the Holy Ghost descend. He also had great success in his ministry; almost the whole nation flocked to him: none rose on so great a design, or came on so noble an errand, as John did, or had such claims to a welcome reception. Many had been born of women that made a great figure in the world, but Christ prefers John before them. Note, Greatness is not to be measured by appearances and outward splendour, but they are the greatest men who are the greatest saints, and the greatest blessings, who are, as John was, great in the sight of the Lord, Lu. 1:15.**

#### **IV. The Kingdom Has Been Rejected**

*Mat 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

*Mat 11:13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.*

The message of the kingdom (repentance) had been largely ignored and the principle of the kingdom rejected by the leadership of Israel. The word translated as suffereth violence (biazw *biazo*) means to 'use force' or more simply 'to force.' The thought likely is that many Jews had sought, through means of insurrection, to overthrow the Roman occupation forces to reestablish the Jewish kingdom. That occurred with some degree of regularity and was why Barabbas was later incarcerated.

The Zealots temporarily succeeded in revolting against Rome in A.D. 66 only to be crushed altogether several years later when Rome returned with overwhelming force. John was now in prison for his convictions. The

greater point Jesus was making is that the kingdom would not be by political or human means. It would not come by force though some were trying to accomplish it through that route.

In verse 13, Jesus continued, "*For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.*" His mention of "the prophets and the law" refers to the Old Testament Scripture. The thought clearly implied is that John was different than the prophet of the Old Testament. His purpose was specific. He was the forerunner of the Messiah.

As the common people of Israel perceived that John was a genuine prophet, they flocked to see him. The last genuine prophet had been Malachi, more than four hundred years earlier.

*Mat 11:14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.*

*Mat 11:15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

John would have been Elijah had the Jews accepted Christ as the Messiah and allowed him to bring in the kingdom at this time. But they not only rejected the kingdom, but they rejected it violently. Those that came to bear the Kingdom, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ were met with violence. Verse 13 points out how the Old Testament Prophets had prophesied of the kingdom coming, and this was the exact message that John the Baptist was preaching. John came in the power and spirit of Elijah, although he was not Elijah. As I mentioned earlier, had they accepted Christ as Messiah, he would have been Elijah. God knew the Jews would reject Christ this time, and Elijah will still come one day. This will be during the Great Tribulation period just before Christ comes to setup his kingdom at the close of the tribulation.

In verse 14, Jesus makes direct reference to the prophesy of Malachi. In Malachi 4:5, Malachi made clear that the prophet Elijah would reappear before the Day of the Lord. Jesus said that if they would receive it (the whole and message of the kingdom— repentance), John was in fact the embodiment of Elijah.

He perhaps was not so in person, but he certainly fulfilled the essence of the prophecy. And indeed there were distinct similarities between the ministry of Elijah and John. Though John had earlier denied that he was Elijah in person (John 1:21), Jesus however, said that he had in fact fulfilled that prophecy. To that degree, John was a *spiritual* fulfillment of Elijah. It is conceivable that there may be a *literal* return of Elijah as one of the two



prophets described in Revelation 11. That certainly will be the time prior to the actual implementation of the kingdom and the return of the King.

Jesus concluded this particular section with the comment, *"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."* On four different occasions in the gospels, Jesus used this phrase. The thought in other words simply is, take heed. He intimated there is more to what He had just said than might meet the eye. Therefore, take heed there to.

*Mat 11:16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,*

*Mat 11:17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.*

*Mat 11:18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.*

*Mat 11:19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.*

Jesus now addressed the contradiction of His critics. No matter what Jesus or John did, they were criticized. Jesus likened His critics to the empty-headed and indecisive nature of undisciplined little boys out in public.

They ask foolish questions and then changed the subject to some other foolishness. John came with an unusual lifestyle. They thus accused him of being demon possessed. Jesus came with a normal life in so far as His eating habits were concerned. The world around Him accused him of being common.

Jesus' response was as profound as it was to the point. *"Wisdom is justified of her children."* His reference to *children* is not coincidence. Perhaps the most telling revelation of wisdom in our lives will be disclosed in the lives of our children. Likewise, the justification of wisdom is found in its results. Wisdom is justified in its results.

In so many words, Jesus answered His critics by noting that the proof is in the pudding. They criticized everything He did. But the wisdom of His life and ministry were manifested in the results thereof.

The Kingdom was not rejected with knowledge, but was rejected due to foolish pride. They rejected John although he came not eating or drinking. Christ came eating with the publicans and sinners and they accused him of evil for doing it. Thank the Lord Jesus cares about sinners and the lost. Without that, none of us would ever have

been saved.

## V. Jesus Predicts Judgment Upon the Rejecter

*Mat 11:20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:*

Verse 20 marks another major turning point in Christ's ministry. Little by little it was becoming evident that Israel collectively was rejecting the gospel of the kingdom. The thrust of that message was of repentance. Even the region of Galilee, more likely to receive such truth than the religious professionals of Jerusalem had rejected the moral and spiritual basis of the kingdom—repentance toward God. Though the rejection of the King was not final until Calvary, for all intents and purposes, it was clear enough even now.

Jesus' initial ministry had been in the region of Galilee. There, His miracles had been evident and His voice heard. Yet, the cities of even that region refused to repent. Galilee was considerably more 'conservative' and potentially receptive than Jerusalem. Nevertheless, even they for the most part refused Christ's message. Therefore, He began to sharply warn them.

*Mat 11:21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.*

*Mat 11:22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.*

Sackcloth and ashes were an ancient, middle-eastern way of publicly expressing repentance and mourning. *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida* were small Jewish towns in Galilee which had witnessed Christ's ministry. And yet Jesus said that if the *gentile and pagan* cities of Tyre and Sidon (in Lebanon) had witnessed the same, they would have repented. Both Tyre and Sidon had been violently destroyed in earlier history. The Old Testament made clear that it was God's judgment upon them. See Isaiah 23:1, 4-12 and Ezekiel 26-29. These gentile cities will be dealt with more tolerably in the day of judgment than these towns which had rejected Christ's ministry.

*Mat 11:23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.*

*Mat 11:24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

Jesus reserved the same judgment for Capernaum. Capernaum was a relatively affluent city with a prosperous business climate. Situated on the north shore of Galilee, it enjoyed cool breezes off the lake. Its very name, *Capernaum*, means 'village of comfort.' It was a town to which prosperous Jews resorted.

An ornate synagogue had been constructed there. However, in their prosperity, the town had become indifferent to the things of God. They were cynical of Jesus' ministry. Their affluence and prosperity dulled them to things spiritual. The word translated as hell ('adiv *hades*) can also refer to the 'grave' or the 'realm of the dead.' Jesus may have been referring to the inhabitants of Capernaum; He may have been referring to the city itself, or both.

Though many towns and villages in Israel continue to this day with their ancient namesake, Capernaum along with Chorazin and Bethsaida were long ago destroyed and only ruins remain to this day. Notwithstanding, they had witnessed perhaps more of God's power through Jesus' presence than other cities.

Jesus said that if the same works had been performed in Sodom, it would have long ago repented. Likewise, it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for them in the judgment. Implicit was the spiritual hardness of heart of these towns.

God for-knew those would believe and repent and those who would reject. Capernaum was another city where many mighty works were done in it. He states that if Sodom, that horrible wretched sin-filled city that was destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven, had seen the works done in Capernaum, they would still remain.

*Mat 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*

*Mat 11:26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

*Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*

Perhaps in the spirit of Isaiah 6:9-11, Jesus prayed and thanked God that the learned and upper echelon of the day were oblivious to the truth. Yet, *babes* (i.e., children) understood and accepted the truth. His reference to the “wise and prudent” alludes to the elite of the day. The overall thought may be that the common and humble accepted Christ’s ministry while the high and mighty did not. Jesus accordingly added, *“Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.”*

Notice also how that Jesus referred to His Father as “Lord of heaven and earth.” Indeed, He is!

Here is an insight into the intimate relationship between Jesus and His heavenly father, similar to John 17.

God has revealed all to the Son. Only they truly know each other. The thought likewise parallels that which Jesus said to Philip in John 14:9, *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”* As we come to know Jesus Christ, we likewise come to know the Father as well.

Funny how some will listen and respond, and others will reject. God is able to reveal things unto babes in Christ (those who are still childlike) and yet keep those things from the wise. The wise of this world normally will not hear nor respond to the gospel.

*1 Cor 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

*1 Cor 1:26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*

*1 Cor 1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;*

*1 Cor 1:28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:*

*1 Cor 1:29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.*

## **VI. True Rest and Peace can be Found Only in the Lord**

*Mat 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

*Mat 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

*Mat 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

There are two kinds of rest spoken of in these verses. There is a given rest to the child of God and it is given at the time we are saved. You know the feeling of joy and relief you had the day you were saved. Then we see there is a 'found' rest as mentioned in verse 29. We must come and take Christ's yoke upon us, and then we will find a special rest that the world can never give us. Christ is meek and lowly, and he wants us to be like him and be this way in our lives. The battle is truly of the Lord's, but we are to be willing to get in the yoke and do our share. I think all who have put the yoke on know that the major part of the load is ALWAYS borne by Jesus. But we are required to get in the yoke before we will find that special rest.

The message of Jesus here begins to transition. Whereas to this point, the focus of His ministry has been the kingdom and preparation thereof, He now begins to shift to that of a personal relationship, fellowship, and discipleship. This is particularly heartbreaking in light of the rejection and ignoring of Him by His own people.

*Joh 1:9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

*Joh 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*

*Joh 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

Jesus extended an invitation for all who will come. There are three imperatives here: (1) "Come unto me," (2) "take my yoke upon you," and (3) "learn of me."

It is only as we come to Him that we can find rest for our soul. His promise is essentially of peace of heart which is rest of soul. Rest of soul and peace of heart are precious virtues which ultimately come only in Christ. In coming to Christ and following Him altogether, there comes that rest and peace which no other can ever give.

This requires turning toward and coming to Him. That calls for repentance and true repentance requires the exercising of faith. It also includes accepting His yoke.

(1) A yoke was an ancient implement used to harness oxen or other draft animals to work together.

(2) It is a symbol of service.

That peace and rest which is in Christ comes immediately at the moment of the new birth and continues as we willingly begin to serve Him, taking His yoke of service upon us.

As we are weary and heavy laden with the problems of life, Jesus directed to take His yoke. In so doing, He will give rest to our souls. In addition to coming to Him and serving with Him, He also said, *"learn of me."* Jesus in so doing noted two of His character traits. He is (1) *meek* and (2) *lowly in heart*.

Though these terms are somewhat related, they certainly are not synonyms. The word translated as meek (praov *praos*) derives from the more basic word (prauv) *praus* and has the sense of being even natured. It implies discipline of one's emotions, attitude, and tongue.

Meekness, in the biblical sense, therefore has the outworking of being gentle of spirit and disciplined of emotions. It results in one being even-tempered; or, cool, calm, and collected. It is the direct opposite of losing one's temper or other emotional outbursts. It bespeaks righteousness of spirit and attitude.

The word translated as lowly (tapeinov *tapeinos*) refers to being of humble spirit. Thus, our Lord characterized His Person as being even tempered and humble of spirit. This is all the more extraordinary when we recall that He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the Creator and Judge, the beginning and the end. A clear pattern for our spirit and attitude is thus established for our example in being conformed to the image of His Son.

Notwithstanding our Lord's commands to come to Him, take His yoke, and learn of Him; He reminded us, *"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* Though our Lord has called us to salvation and thence to service; when engaged, that yoke is neither difficult nor burdensome. This stems from the fact that He is meek and lowly of heart.

No ill temper or arrogance dwells in our Lord. As we submit to His Lordship, He gives peace and rest. New Christians may be apprehensive about serving Him, fearing what He may require. And yet as they will submit to

His will, it never is unpleasant or onerous. Personally, I recall having resisted the call to the ministry. However, after eventually yielding thereto, it has brought many years of blessing. Anything less would have been miserable. His way is always best.

J. Vernon McGee said this about the Yoke of the Lord.

This language is in contrast to what has preceded it in this chapter. It is like coming out of a blizzard into the warmth of a spring day, like passing from a storm into a calm, like going from darkness into light. This is a new message from Jesus. He turns from the corporate nation to the individual. It is no longer the national announcement about a kingdom but a personal invitation to find the “rest” of salvation.

“I will give you rest” is literally “I will rest you.” When He speaks of being “heavy laden,” He is referring to being burdened with sin. This same figure is used by Isaiah and the psalmist: “Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward” (Isa. 1:4). “For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me” (Ps. 38:4).

My friend, sin is too heavy for you to carry—you’ll really get a hernia if you try to carry your load of sin! The only place in the world to put that burden is at the Cross of Christ. He bore it for you, and He invites you to come and bring your burden of sin to Him. He can forgive you because on the cross He bore the burden of your sin.

**“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”** refers to the salvation of the sinner through Jesus Christ. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” refers to the practical sanctification of the believer. There is a *rest* which Jesus gives, and it is the rest of redemption. There is also a *rest* which the believer experiences, and it comes through commitment and consecration to Christ. You don’t have to worry about being recognized; you don’t have to jockey for position if you are committed to Christ. Frankly, I quit joining organizations because I got so tired of watching ambitious men trying to be chairman of something or trying to be president of something. If you are committed to Christ, you don’t have to worry about that. He will put you exactly where *He* wants you when you are yoked up to Him.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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**Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.**