

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 98

March 19, 2021

Welcome to the next edition of the “The Mind of Christ”. We’re making our way through everything Jesus said and everything He did following A. T. Robertson’s book, chronological sequence of the life of Christ in his “The Harmony of the Gospels” and we’re just making progress here. There’s a lot to cover in trying to discern the mind of Christ.

I found, since my last recording, that there was a section that somehow I skipped; it did not get into the first journals, so I have been working the last week or more to catch up on that particular section and that’s what I will present to you today since it’s the next in line in this series. That section is found in **Matthew 11:25-30** and it is a very significant message and one that I am glad to go back and review and revisit it this week or so. In fact, I liked it so much I have turned it into a sermon series, so those of you who are hearing this “Mind of Christ” today are getting a real preview if not a lot of the substance of those sour sermons, so you’ll be getting a double dose. So let’s read the text from **Matthew 11:25-30**.

Matthew 11:25-30

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. ²⁶ “Yes, Father, for this was well-pleasing in Your sight. ²⁷ “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

²⁸ “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, 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.”

That’s a reading from the New American Standard Bible and you will need your Bible. This is a very in-depth study so hold on to your seats; we’re going to dive down deep into this message today.

After renouncing the unrepentant cities in Northern Galilee, Jesus addresses His Father and then He addresses the people that are there with Him. Jesus doesn’t need a special place or circumstance in order to praise His Father. The New American Standard Bible says, “At that time” “indicating that this prayer is on the occasion of the “woes” that He has just presented to those cities that were unrepentant. In fact, ‘occasion’ is given in the footnotes for the word “time”. So, ‘on this occasion’ it says. The same phrase is used in **Matthew 12:1** where it says ‘anokrinomai’ (αποκρινομαι) which means “*answered*”; to give an answer to a question or simply to begin to speak based on something previously said; it’s a response.

This is very much a part of the occasion of the message to the unrepentant cities. This word is used 250 times in the New Testament. Some say Jesus offered *thanks*, and others say He offered *praise*. The word that is used here is ‘exomologeō’ (εξομολογεω) meaning to confess, to profess, or to acknowledge openly or joyfully. So, when He says, “I praise thee, O Father,” this is the word we’re looking at now. It can mean all of those things.

This word is used in **Matthew 3:6** of confession of sins. It is used in **Romans 14:11** saying, “Every tongue shall give praise to God”. So when you’re praising God, it is a form of confession. In **Romans 15:9** it talks about giving praise among the Gentiles.

Philippians 2:11, quoting the same passage as **Romans 14:11** says, “... that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” It comes from **Isaiah 45:23**, the word is rendered confess here in most translations. When Jesus says “I praise thee, O Father”, He could be saying, “I confess to you, O Father”. Now it *doesn’t* mean He is confessing *sin*, He may be confessing the content of what He is going to say. He is confessing this *as a truth* before God.

So, Jesus addresses God as ‘Father’, and ‘Lord of Heaven and Earth’ in this particular place. Of course, “Father” is Jesus’ most natural designation but He also adds “Lord” here or ‘kurios’ (κυριος); the ‘Lord of Heaven and Earth’.

In studying the names of God, I’ve recently been doing a study of the names of God, but in **Joshua 2:11** God is referred to as “the God in heaven above and earth below, (or beneath).” The omnipresence of God is indicated, but more than mere presence, He is Lord in both realms - heaven and earth; even though Satan is said to have some “rule” here, look at **Ephesians 2:2** where he is ruler of the kingdom of the air.

God does not relinquish His sovereign control over the Heavens and the Earth; He remains “*Lord*” and *all authority is given to Jesus* in heaven and on earth according to **Matt. 28:18**. He is both creator and sustainer.

Jesus begins to speak of God’s revelation to little children, (*You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants*), a contrast to the adults in Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum; those who were wise and intelligent in their own eyes. **1 Corinthians 1:20** addresses this context in Paul’s statement, “*Has God not made foolish the wisdom of the world.*” Man does not come to know God through his own wisdom. **James 3:15** says that there are two kinds of wisdom; one from above and another that is Earthly. Proverbs personifies wisdom as God partner in creation of the world. In **James 1:5** it says, if we lack wisdom we must go to the source, who is God Himself who gives it generously.

How does God hide these things, and what things does He hide from the wise? The word “hidden” is ‘krupto’ (κρυπτω). It means to conceal, or to escape notice. It is used in **Matthew 5:14** of a city on a hill that cannot be hidden. It is used also in **Matthew 13:35** quoting **Psalms 78:2**, “*I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world.*” (NIV) Then it’s also found in **Matthew 13:44** speaking of the treasure that is hidden in the field; and you remember the man, when he found it, he went out and sold everything he had and bought the field so he could have that treasure. The word is also found in **Colossians 3:3** speaking of our lives being hidden in Christ.

From these, it seems some things are just naturally hidden until such time that they are revealed; and other things are deliberately hidden so that they will not be found, or only after some difficulty. Some things are hidden merely because no one is looking for them. Other things are hidden in plain sight because a person doesn’t think it is what he’s looking for or what he needs.

Jesus talks about spiritual blindness of those who have a bias against certain realities. They cannot or will not accept these realities; therefore these realities are hidden from them.

Those from whom these things are hidden are described as the *wise* and the intelligent. “Wise” is the word ‘sophos’, (σοφία), we get the word Sophia from this word. It is used in **Matthew 23:34** of those Jesus will send out with the gospel; those who will be killed. He’s going to send out “wise men”, it says, but those “wise men” will be killed. The word is used approximately ten times in 1 Corinthians alone. Most references directly relate to what Jesus is saying here in **Matthew 11:25**; “[At that time Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants,”](#) so there are many quotations there.

1 Corinthians 1:19 quotes **Isaiah 29:14**. In **1 Corinthians 3:19** He quotes **Job 5:13**, “[He captures the wise by their own shrewdness, and the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.](#)” And in **1 Corinthians 3:20** He quotes **Psalm 94:11** so you’ll find when it talks about wisdom in the New Testament, many times it will go back to the Old Testament in order to give you a reference to what it is talking about. So, there is a rich history of *fools* who pretended to be wise. This was not peculiar to Jesus’ time. I once wrote a sermon called, “We Have Enough Fools”. As Jesus said, in the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 7** *the foolish man is the one who hears His words but does not put them into practice*. So, some people think that they’re wise in their own sight, and they’re not wise if they ignore what Jesus says and if they do not put into practice what Jesus says.

When Jesus says, ‘these things are hidden’, to what does He refer? Contextually, He has just reproached the Galilean cities for not repenting at seeing the miracles of Jesus and hearing his teaching. The light produced by Jesus’ presence was hidden from them. He did not do things in secret. He did not put a basket over His works, but they had a basket over their heads it seems. It is clear that we must not ignore the *works* of God any more than the *words* of God. *We should be diligent in our observing His miracles as we listen to His words.*

Jesus reveals, and the word here is “apokalupto” (αποκαλυπτω), it’s the word from which we get apocalypse or apocalyptic. In **Matthew 10:26** it says, “[Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.](#)” So, Jesus says that there are things that are hidden that *will be revealed*, and they will be revealed in certain times, in certain ways and ultimately everything that’s hidden will be made known and everyone will recognize the truth of the matter, whether it’s now or perhaps too late.

In **Matthew 11:27**, “[All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.](#)” Here, we know “Him”, we know God, because *He chooses to reveal Himself*. In **Matthew 16:17** it says that the Father revealed to Peter that Jesus was the Christ. Do you remember when Peter confessed in verse 16, “[Simon Peter said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”](#) And Jesus said to him, “[Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because *flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*](#)”

The word “infant” used in this text is the word “nepios” (νηπιος). As Jesus was entering Jerusalem the ‘little children’ (the same word) were praising Him and were rebuked by the Jewish leaders. Jesus responded by quoting **Psalm 8:2**, “From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease.” *Jesus rejoiced in the simplest and the purest praise.* Children are unhindered in their responses. Perhaps we can understand what worshiping in *Spirit* and *truth* means by observing little children. Jesus’ point is that sometimes those adults who *should be* the most mature and open to the truth are the most difficult to work with. They think that they know better. They are not moldable as children are.

Jesus acknowledges that the way God chose to reveal Himself to man was well pleasing in His sight. The word used is “eudokeo” (ευδοκεω) meaning will or choice. It’s a good will, a kindly intent, a delight, a pleasure, a satisfaction. God gets great satisfaction; He gets great pleasure or delight to reveal Himself to those who are like *little children*. It is used by the angels in **Luke 2:14** of men with whom He is pleased. It is used by Paul in **Romans 10:1** in the phrase, “Brethren, my heart’s *desire* and my prayer to God for them is for their *salvation*.”

In **Ephesians 1:5** says that our adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ was accordance to the kind intention of his will. In other words, the pleasing nature of His will was to adopt us as sons. **Ephesians 1:9** in a very similar way, says, “He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ.” It was according to *His kind intention which He purposed in Him*. Then in **Philippians 2:13** it says, “God works in us, both to will and to work for His *good pleasure*.” **Philippians 1:15** contrasts those who preach Christ from envy and strife and others from good will. It’s the same word for those who preach Christ because it’s pleasing to them. They love to preach Christ.

Paul prays in **2 Thessalonians 1:11** that God will fulfill every desire for goodness. A desire, again, is something that is pleasing to us. The motive of God’s revelation by way of the innocent, those children, was to make Himself experience pleasure. *Why did God reveal Himself to those who are like children? It pleases God; it gives Him great joy to do that.* It doesn’t give Him great joy to reveal Himself to people who think they are wise, and yet are fools. We would do well to understand what gives God pleasure. What makes God happy? What causes Him to rejoice? When we try to do His work in a way not prescribed by Him, perhaps even working through unscrupulous men to do good, this makes God sad. God wants His work carried out in dignity and in purity and transparency and innocence. Any compromise to this brings displeasure to the Father. The money-changers in the Temple are a good example. They provided a service for the Temple sacrifices but in an underhanded way and without showing respect for the sacredness of the place where they were setting up their shop.

Paul says in **Ephesians 5:17**, “So then, do not be foolish but understand (or find out) what the will of the Lord is.” This revelation to infants which is *well pleasing* in the sight of God, this is *before* God, or *in front of God’s face* or in His sight. This decision to thwart the wisdom of the wise was made before the eyes of God. *God was fully aware and consenting to this action*. Decisions in Heaven are made in full view of God, if not *by God Himself*. This is not used this way in Matthew elsewhere.

The word is used in **1 Thessalonians 1:3** translated in The New American Standard Bible as “in the presence of our God and Father” referring to the work of the Thessalonians. Their work was done in His sight or in His presence. **1 Thessalonians 2:19** uses this phrase regarding Paul’s hope which was the Thessalonian Christians. The Christians themselves were Paul’s hope and it was in the presence or in the sight of God. **1 Thessalonians 3:9** says Paul rejoiced *before our God on your account*. In other words, he was rejoicing over the Thessalonians but he was doing it in the sight of God or ‘before God’. **1 Thessalonians 3:13** speaks of their hearts being established without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints. Then in **1 John 3:19**, it speaks of our hearts being assured before Him. Again, the word he is talking about is “emprosthen” or (εμπροσθεν).

So Jesus’ statement back in **Matthew 11:27** is foundational to His relationship with the Father who handed over all things to Him. All means “all”. “Paradidomi” (παραδιδωμι) means to give into the hands of another. “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father...” To commit, to commend, even to deliver verbally, to permit or to allow. It’s used 120 times in the New Testament. It is used over thirty times in the book of Matthew.

Let me give you a few of these references so we can understand what it means to *hand over* something to someone else:

Matthew 4:12 it says “John was **put into the custody of**”; he was “**handed over**” to those who arrested him. In **Matthew 5:25** says one is “**handed over**” to a judge, or a court. In **Matthew 10:4** it’s used of Judas as a “**betray**er”. To betray someone is to “**hand them over**”. That’s what the word “betray” means. Then in **Matthew 10:17** is warning His disciples that they will one day “**be handed over**” to the courts. **Matthew 10:19** says not to worry about what you are going to say “**when you are handed over**”.

Matthew 10:21 uses the word “betrayal”, they will be **betrayed** or they will be **handed over**. In **Matthew 17:22** it says the Son of Man will be “**delivered into the hands of men**”. He will be “**handed over**”. In **Matthew 18:34** it talks about the man who will be “**handed over**” to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him’.

Then in **Matthew 20:18-19** Jesus is “**handed over**” to the chief priest and scribes and then “**handed over**” to the gentiles. In **Matthew 24:9-10** it says Christians will be “**delivered**” or “**handed over**” to tribulation and betrayal. In **Matthew 24:14** it talks about a man who is “**entrusting**” his slaves with his possessions. In other words, he’s “**handing his possessions over**” to the slaves.

Then in **Matthew 25:20** men are “**entrusted** with” talents of silver. These talents were “**handed over**” to them. In **Matthew 26:2** it says the Son of Man is **handed over** to be crucified. Also **Matthew 26:15-16** Judas is the “**betray**er”. That means to “**hand over**” as well as many other references here that I won’t go into using.

In **Matthew 27:18** it was for envy that Jesus was handed over and then in **27:26** it says He was **handed over** to be crucified.

It talks about, again, in our statement,²⁷ “*All things have been handed over to Me by My Father*”; that God is going to “hand over” certain things to Jesus and I wanted to show you how this word is used in other places.

Amazingly, the One who was entrusted with *all* things was He, Himself “entrusted” to those who killed him. So God hands *everything* over to Jesus. The Father puts *everything* into the custody of Jesus. He only puts *some* things into our custody. He doesn’t hand *everything* over to us; He gives us some things but not *everything*. But the Father showed His complete trust and confidence in Jesus by putting *everything* into His hands. Later He mentions specific things like all authority in **Matthew 28:18**, or the ability to raise the dead giving them life, according to **John 5:21**, and placing all judgment into Jesus’ hands , according to **John 5:22**.

In **Matthew 11:27** it defines the relationship between the Father and the Son with the word “**know**”. It’s an intensive and intimate word, “epiginosko” (ἐπιγινώσκω), meaning to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know accurately, to know well, to perceive, or to understand. In Matthew it is used in **Matthew 7:16** speaking of false prophets who will be “**known**” by their fruit and in **7:20** it says the same thing. In **Matthew 14:35** people who recognized Jesus ... they “**knew**” Him or recognized Him and they *brought their sick* to Him ... so they **knew** Him intimately enough to **know** He was able to heal them. They understand Jesus on a deeper level; they “**knew**” what He was capable of, or even His true identity. On the other hand, some did “*not know*” or did *not recognize* Him at all. Some recognized Him, knew Him on a deeper level, and others didn’t recognize Him at all. John was not recognized or “known” as *the Elijah who was to come* (**Matthew 17:12**) and therefore they mistreated him and they killed him.

Acts has some references to show how some were “**known**” on a deeper level. In **Acts 3:10** the lame man who was healed was “recognized” as previously being ‘the beggar’ so they knew him on a deeper level. In **Acts 4:13** Peter and John were understood as being uneducated and untrained men, but also as ‘having been with Jesus’. So, some people “**knew**” them well enough to know that they were uneducated and untrained, but they had been spending time with Jesus ... so they **knew** more about them on a more intimate level. In **Acts 9:30** when the plot was hatched against Paul, it became “**known**” so Paul was able to be saved; they had a deeper knowledge of the plot.

In **Acts 12:14** Peter’s voice was “recognized” as he stood at the front gate. Remember him banging on the gate after he was released from jail and Rhoda heard him, recognized his voice, but didn’t open the door immediately. Then in **Acts 19:34** Paul was recognized as a Jew in Ephesus so they had a more intimate knowledge of who he was. In **Acts 22:29** it was recognized that Paul was a Roman citizen, so again they had a more intimate knowledge of him. In **Acts 24:8** by examination it was hoped that Felix the governor would be able to better understand the accusations that were being brought against Paul. In **Acts 25:10** Paul maintains that the Jews “knew” he had done nothing wrong. In other words, they had a deeper understanding of his situation. Then in **Acts 27:39** those in the hurricane did not recognize the land, but headed for a bay that they saw, so in this case they didn’t have a knowledge of the land, they didn’t recognize it. But in **Acts 28:1** they did learn that the land was called “Malta” so they began to know more about it once they got on the land.

All these references indicate the movement from no knowledge, if you will, to a superficial knowledge, and then on to a more intimate knowledge of something. So, when we see the idea of *knowing God*, or *knowing Christ*, or *Jesus knowing the Father*, or *the Father knowing the Son* there are different stages of greater and greater intimacy. Of course, *the intimacy between God the Father and the Son is the greatest intimacy that you could ever have*. It's a process of knowing and therefore we get to "know" people; we get to "know" them more intimately, the more experiences we have with them. In our text, no one "knows" Jesus like God the Father does and no one knows God the Father like Jesus does. They share the most intimate knowledge possible.

Take a look at **2 Peter 1:2-3** where Peter prays that he would have "Grace and peace multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the **true knowledge** of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." When Peter uses that term "*true knowledge*", he is talking about "epiginosko" which is the **most intimate knowledge**. **2 Peter 1:8** says, "For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." In **2 Peter 2:20** *we escape the defilements of the world by our knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*. He's talking here again about this knowledge that Jesus has of God and God has of Jesus. It's an intimate knowledge

In **Matthew 11:27** "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Jesus has discretion to whom He will reveal the Father. He exercises His will or choice. The word 'will' is "boulomai" (βουλομαι) meaning to will deliberately, to have a purpose, to be minded, to desire. So Jesus had a certain desire to reveal God to some. It's used in **Matthew 1:19** when Joseph, not wanting to disgrace Mary, planned to send her away secretly. It wasn't his will to disgrace her. It is used in **John 18:39** of the choice to release Jesus or Barabbas; there is a choice being made. This word is used several times in Acts regarding choices being made. An example is in **Acts 18:15** where Gallio was unwilling to judge a matter of Jewish law. It is what people intended in various situations.

So, Jesus intended to reveal the Father to 'some' people. Jesus could choose when and to whom to reveal the Father. In **Matthew 7:6** Jesus, "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces." Jesus says you need to be discreet, discerning regarding who to reveal God to because some people will not accept what you say. *Jesus is not being stingy with the pearl of great price; God desires that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth* in **1 Timothy 2:4**. God loves the world, but *some 'will not hear truth' and Jesus can decide not to tell them*. In **John 3:20** it says, "For everyone who does evil, hates the light and will not come into the light lest his deeds should be exposed." It is the receiver who determines whether they will get the information necessary to know the Father. He who has will be given more, but the one who does not have will not keep even what he has. **1 Cor. 12:11** says the gifts of the Spirit are distributed to each one individually just as "He wills". **James 1:18** says in the exercise of His will, He brought us forth by the Word of truth so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

We sometimes forget that God must decide. He must exercise His will in order for us to “**know**” Him. He will not entrust Himself just to anyone. **James 4:4** says “if we choose to be a friend of the world then we will become an enemy of God.” So we both, God and us, have a choice to make ... the work of coordination with one another; and if this coordination is good, then we will benefit by knowing God as He already know us. Pray that Jesus wants me and you to know the Father.

Then in **Matthew 11:28-29** Jesus begins His invitation. The invitation is very basic; it has three parts to it. The parts are “come to me”, “take my yoke” and “learn from me”.

²⁸ “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, 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.” This threefold invitation is addressed to the weary and the heavy-laden souls. Jesus describes Himself as gentle and humble in heart and He describes the yoke as easy and his burden as light. Then Jesus tells us the outcome of accepting this invitation. You will find rest for your souls.

This invitation is one of the most complete given by Jesus in the Scriptures. We can divide it into four parts; and as I mentioned, I’ve been working on a sermon series here recently for the month of March and I will be dividing it into these four parts: The Invitation, The Inviter, The Invitee, and The Outcome. So, we’re going to cover all this in short form here in the rest of this message.

The Invitation

The first part of the Invitation is ‘to come’; “deute” is the word, (δευτε) which means “to come hither”, “to come here”. It’s used in **Matthew 4:19** in the New American Standard Bible where it is translated, “follow Me and I will make you fishers of men”. Literally, the phrase means “come after me”. We say, “follow me”, but it means “come after me”. In **Matthew 22:4** the slaves said, “Come to the wedding feast”. That was the invitations that they gave, “Come”. In **Matthew 25:34** at the judgment the King will say to those on His right, “come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Then, in **Matthew 28:6** the angel of the Lord invited the women to “Come, see the place where He was lying.” Then in **John 4:29** the woman at the well told the people in the city of Sychar to “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?” **John 21:12** Jesus invited the disciples to come and have breakfast. These are all “come” invitations.

In this case, Jesus’ invitation is to **come – to – me**. It is not “come to an event”; it’s not “come to church”; but “come to a Person”. *This is where the journey begins* ... we **come** and we meet Jesus.

The second part of the Invitation is ‘to take my yoke upon you.’ Take is the word “airo” (αιρω). It means “to raise up” or “life up”, “to take upon oneself and carry”, it means to “bear”. It is used 20 times in the book of Matthew.

In **Matthew 4:6** it is used of the angels bearing up Jesus if He were to strike His foot against a stone; the angels would “lift Him up” or “take Him up”. In **Matthew 14:12** John’s disciples took away his body; they “took it up”.

In **Matthew 14:20** they took up leftovers after the meal, and also in **Matthew 15:37**. But note in **Matthew 16:24** what he says; “If anyone wishes to *come after Me*, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. The “taking up” of the cross what is used here. In **our** text, it’s the taking up of the yoke. In **Matthew 27:32** Simon ‘bore’ the cross. He ‘took up’ the cross of Jesus.

So, we take the “**yoke**”. The word ‘yoke’ is “zugos” (ζυγος). It is used of cattle; when we want them to pull together we yoke them; but it’s also used of bondage as in slavery. The yoke can be an obligation to keep a certain law, whether Mosaic Law or Christ’s law. And in one place it’s used of scales; a balance of scales because the two scales are ‘yoked’ together, if you will. This is the only place where the idea of a yoke used in Matthew.

It’s used in **Acts 15:10** for the laws and the traditions associated with the old Law. Peter makes the point that *to require Gentiles to be circumcised in order to be saved would be a yoke that could not be born*. He says, “*Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?*” This would not be an easy yoke. Paul makes the same point in **Galatians 5:1** when he said, “It was for freedom that Christ set us free. Therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a “**yoke**” of slavery.” When one tries to be saved by ‘keeping the law’, it is a “**yoke**” too hard.

Paul speaks of the “**yoke**” of slavery, one man owning another in **1 Timothy 6:1**. He says, “All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God’s name and our teaching may not be slandered.” **Revelation 6:5** is where “zugos” is used for the pair of scales.

The “**yoke**” Jesus refers to is “**My yoke**”. It belongs to Him. He is already yoked and He’s waiting for me to stick my head inside the other end of the “**yoke**”. *You don’t make the commitment to pull until you stick your head in*. Of course some “**yokes**” do not require sticking your head “in” something but consists of a straight piece of wood with hooks to attach to a harness on each animal connecting them. But Jesus does say that this “**yoke**” must be taken *on you*. We use the phrase sometimes to say a responsibility is “on you”. The “**yoke**” is described as one that is easy ‘chrestos’, (χρηστος) meaning it is fit for use, it’s useful or manageable as in mild or pleasant as opposed to harsh, hard, sharp or bitter. “Easy” can mean kind or gracious. It is used in **Luke 6:35**; it is God who is **kind** or **easy** to the ungrateful and evil men. In **Romans 2:4** it speaks of the riches of His kindness knowing that His kindness or His easiness leads you to repentance?

It’s found in **Ephesians 4:32** where we are told to be “**kind**” to one another. It’s found in **1 Peter 2:3** where it says those people had tasted the “**kindness**” of the Lord. So, we are to go “**easy**” on one another. The “**yoke**” *implies that there is a load to pull*. The oxen are hooked to a wagon. Contained in this wagon are burdens. Burden is the word “phortion” (φορτιον) meaning freight, the lading as in the lading of a ship, it is an obligation, *in some cases it is the fault of the conscience that oppresses the soul*. In Matthew it is used here and in **Matthew 23:4** of the Jewish leaders. Is says there “*they tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men’s shoulders but they, themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.*” Here they are burdens that they are unwilling to help people carry.

This is a powerful and vivid picture. See Matthew 15 about the traditions of men that become obligations and become burdens. It is easy to hand someone one more brick to carry, but another to take five bricks from someone and *carry them for them*. Jesus told us to carry the soldiers' load for **two** miles doing *more than is expected*. *Instead of being "forced" to do it, volunteer to do it to make someone else's life easier.*

Galatians 6:2 speaks of bearing one another's burdens; but *also* carrying our own load in **verse 5**. Jesus is showing us both ideas in **Matthew 11:25-30**. We must accept the "yoke", our part in the load; while also accepting the partnership with Jesus. The burden Jesus offers is light. The word "light" is "elaphros" (ελαφρος). This word is used once more in **2 Corinthians 4:17-18** where there it talks about "For our momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

The concept of lightness is relative. 'Light compared to what'? Here, the *lightness of the affliction* is compared to the *weight of glory*; not to the weight of punishment if you don't suffer. It's the *weight of glory*. The sufferings are "light" compared to the weight of glory. The sufferings of the "yoke" are *worth it* when we realize the reward. Usually the oxen who pull the load are well taken care of; the best feed and water and shelter. *Being hitched to Jesus who pulls the greatest weight is a good deal compared to pulling the weight alone!* Paul is telling us that for the investment we are making, there is no comparison to the benefit that we will receive.

Romans 5:1-5 says, "... suffering produces perseverance; ⁴and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; ⁵and hope does not disappoint." The "yoke" here is momentary in light; it's temporary. The weight of glory is eternal. We are invited to bear the load with Jesus, to watch and to pray as in the Garden; to fish for men, to feed his sheep, to be His hands and feet for a season. *There is no better partnership.*

So far, the invitation involves 'coming to Jesus', and secondly 'taking His yoke'.

The third part of the Invitation is to "learn from Me". The word is 'manthano' (μαθημα). It means to understand. In **Matthew 9:13** Jesus tells the Jews to, "But go and *"learn"* what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." In this case, they *thought* they *knew* it all, or *at least*, more than Jesus! This fits with "God's pleasure to reveal things to children; to those who are still learning". In **Matthew 24:32** Jesus tells them to "learn" the parable from the fig tree. In **John 6:45** those taught by God who have heard and learned from the Father, they are those who come to Jesus. In **John 7:15** the Jews were amazed at Jesus' "learning".

Romans 16:17 speaks of teachings they have previously "learned", and those who teach *contrary* to these. Then in **1 Corinthians 4:6** it tells us not to exceed what has been written. Our learning has boundaries. In fact, we are "hemmed in" to only learn those things that God teaches us. In **1 Corinthians 14:31** prophecy is for learning in an orderly way. And in **1 Corinthians 14:35** the disruptive women were to learn at home with their husbands.

Ephesians 4:20 is discussing the sins of the Gentiles and Paul says, “**But you did not learn Christ this way.**” The call to “**learn**” is a call to apply the learning in an appropriate way. **Philippians 4:9** advises that we should *practice* what we “**learn**” in order for the God of peace to be with us. Compare this to the outcome of rest that He promises in **Matthew 11**. In **Philippians 4:11** Paul says that he has learned contentment, another word comparable to the word “rest”. **1 Timothy 2:11** says “women are to receive instruction with entire submissiveness.” In **1 Timothy 5:4** the family of widows must learn to practice piety or godliness by helping the widow. **1 Timothy 5:13** says that younger widows are to “learn” not to be idle becoming gossips and busybodies. **2 Timothy 3:7** says some are always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. Then, in **2 Timothy 3:14** Paul urges Timothy to “continued in the things you have learned and become convinced of, *knowing from whom you have learned them*”. In **Titus 3:14** Christians must learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs so that they will not be unfruitful. In **Hebrews 5:8** Jesus, the Son, learned obedience through the things that He suffered. Then in **Revelation 14:3** only the 144,000 could learn the new song.

The New Testament puts a premium on learning. Jesus invites His disciple to join His school. So if we’re going to accept the invitation, it’s an invitation to ‘come to Jesus’, to be ‘yoked with Jesus’ and to ‘**learn from Jesus**’.

But *who* does Jesus invite? Well, it says He invites all who are weary and are heavy-laden.

‘**All**’ is the word “pas” (πας), used individually as in “each” and collectively and inclusively. The context must be considered in the over twelve hundred places where this word is used in the New Testament. Two words are used to describe the ones who have been invited: the **weary** and the **heavy-laden**. “**Weary**” is the word “kopiao” (κοπιᾶω). It means those who are tired, those who are exhausted. From the curse in the Garden, men would labor in providing, and women would labor in having children.

Matthew 6:28 says “the lilies do not toil”. They don’t “**labor**”. They don’t get “**weary**.” In **Luke 5:5** Peter says that they have “**toiled**” or “**labored**” all night and caught nothing. “**Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.**” In **John 4:6** Jesus was “**weary**” from His journey, and in **John 4:38** Jesus send His apostles to reap that for which you have not “**labored**”. In other words, you have not “**wearied**” yourself, but you’re going to reap a reward anyway. In **Acts 20:35, through “labor” we support the weak.** In **Romans 16:6, 12** he mentions those who have **worked hard** in the Lord.

Paul also speaks of his *toil* in **1 Corinthians 4:12** he talks about “*working* with our own hands”. In **1 Corinthians 15:10** Paul says he *labored* even more than them all, “yet not I but the grace of God with me. In **Galatians 4:11** Paul feared that perhaps he had *labored* over them in vain. This is wearisome toil when we don’t see fruit. But if we hold fast to the Word of Life in the day of Christ we will have reason to glory. **Philippians 2:16** Paul says he could take pride because he did not run in vain or toil in vain. In **Colossians 1:29** Paul knew the secret, he says, “striving according to his power which He mightily works in me.

In **1 Thessalonians 5:12** Paul tells them to appreciate those who diligently labor among them. Then in **1 Timothy 4:10** we labor and strive fixing our hope on the living God who is the Savior of all men; especially the believers. In **1 Timothy 5:17**, elders who work hard at teaching and preaching are worthy of double honor. **2 Timothy 2:6** speaks of the hard-working farmer who receives his share of the crop. In **Revelation 2:3** Jesus tells the church at Ephesus that *even though they have persevered and endured for His namesake, they have not grown weary*. Weariness can grow. The longer and harder you work, the more “weary” you become and the more in need of rest.

This idea of work or labor ... who is Jesus inviting? He’s inviting people who are working hard; who are *tired people*. And it’s not just the tired of “this world”. *He invites the tired who are working for Him*. He invites those who are putting in the “labor”; those who are “yoked” with Him and are pulling the load. *That’s who He invites*; those who are willing to work in the Kingdom of God.

The next word is “heavy-laden”. The word is ‘phortizo’ (φορτιζω). It is only found here in **Matthew 11: 28**, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. And it’s found again in **Luke 11:46**, “But He said, “Woe to you lawyers as well, for you weigh men down with *burdens hard to bear*; while you yourselves will not even touch the burdens with one of your fingers.” This is of the lawyers who weigh people down with burdens hard to bear. These are *heavy loads to bear*.

The burdens we bear are often made heavier by others who want to control us or to exploit us. This makes life hard. Jesus wants to make our lives easier by not only removing us from the burdens, but helping us carry those burdens.

So Who is the One who invites us? We’ve talked about the invitation. We’ve talked about those who have been invited, but who’s the One who is inviting us?

Jesus describes Himself as the One who is *gentle* and *humble in heart*. “Gentle” is the word ‘praios’ (πραος). It means mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, and meekness. It is used in **Matthew 5:5** as “Blessed are the gentle”, or “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” And it’s used in **Matthew 21:5** quoting from **Isaiah 62:11**, and **Zechariah 9:9**, “Behold, your king is coming to you; He is righteous and endowed with salvation, **Humble**, and **mounted on a donkey**, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” It’s interesting here that Jesus is the gentle One. He comes to you in gentleness; He doesn’t come to you in harshness.

It is used of a Christian woman in **1 Peter 3:4**; instead of outward adornment, her beauty should be the ‘hidden person of the heart’, with the imperishable quality of a “gentle” and “*quiet spirit*”, which is precious in the sight of God.” How is this an imperishable quality; as opposed to what? What is the opposite of gentle? The opposite of gentle is harsh or rash or angry or controlling or demanding or manipulative. It could be someone who is rude or course or mean. *Imperishable here means incorruptible*. Some things on earth are valuable simply because of the quality of preservation, like gold or silver or diamonds as opposed to iron that will rust or straw that will burn. Gentleness is like gold; it is of great value. It is the inner goal of a person.

“**Humble**” is the word ‘tapeinos’ (ταπεινος). It’s found in **Luke 1:52** where it says, “God exalts those who are “**humble**”. You can see, also, **Philippians 2:5 and following** where Jesus “**humbled**” Himself and He was exalted by God. In **Romans 12:16** instead of being haughty in mind, we are to associate with the lowly or the “**humble**”. In **2 Corinthians 7:6** God comforts those who are depressed or those who are “**humble**”. Then, in **2 Corinthians 10:1** Paul urges them by the meekness and the gentleness of Christ, instead of boldness. He wanted to avoid “lording it over them”.

In **1 Peter 5:5** younger men are to clothe themselves with humility towards one another because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. *The gentle and the humble nature of Jesus must not be mistaken for weakness or complacency.* He controls His power and strength lest He crush us. He woos us to Himself and always wants to use His strength *to help us and not hurt us.*

So, what is the outcome of this Invitation? **It is rest given by Jesus ... rest for your souls.** “Rest” is the word ‘anapauo’ (αναπαυω) and the corresponding word is ‘anapausis’ or (αναπαυσις). This is what Jesus found His disciples doing in the garden when they should have been praying in **Matthew 26:45**. “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.” But in **Mark 6:31** Jesus called His disciples to go to a desert place to rest. This was to escape the relentless pace of ministry.

In **Luke 12:19**, a landowner who had grown wealthy said to himself, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for yourself for many years to come. Take your ease, or your rest. Eat, drink and be merry.’ But that very night his soul was required of him, and he had to face God.

In **1 Corinthians 16:16-18** Paul speaks of those who have provided rest for his spirit. The refreshment of our spirits is rest. **2 Corinthians 7:13** speaks of the same thing. His spirit has been refreshed by you all; he was talking about Titus there. **Philemon 7** speaks of how Philemon has refreshed the hearts of the saints; he has brought “**rest**” to the hearts of the saints. Then, in **verse 20**, Paul asks that Philemon refresh his heart in Christ.

In **1 Peter 4:14** says that when we are reviled for the name of Christ, we are blessed, *because* the Spirit of glory and of God “**rests** on you.” Then, in **Revelation 6:11** the martyrs were given a white robe and told to “**rest**” a little longer until their brethren, who would be killed was complete. Then, in **Revelation 14:13** “And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!’” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “so that they may **rest** from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.” The unclean spirit who is cast out goes to waterless places but it cannot find “**rest**” according to **Matthew 12:43**.

Well, this word is found also in **Hebrews 3:18** in the context of putting something to “**rest**” or finding a resting place. The context is comparing the Israelites who sinned in the wilderness who were not allowed to enter the Promised Land where “**rest**” would have been found. They could have gone into the “**rest**” of God very early, but because of their disobedience, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years and they had no “**rest**”.

Then, in **Hebrews 4:1** he says, we too must not fall short of entering that “**rest**”.

The faithful enter according to **Hebrews 4:3**. The one who enters His rest will rest from his work just as God did after creating the world. God rested on the seventh day and so we have a Sabbath “**rest**” waiting for us when our work is done.

Hebrews 4:9 says, “So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.” So it is a rest, He says, for the soul, or for the “psuche” (ψυχη). The psuche is one’s entire whole life.

In **Hebrews 4:10-11** it says the “**rest**” still remains and now, as we live on this earth, we are to work until he comes. “For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. ¹¹ Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.”

So we have in this invitation:

We have the invitation itself “to come to Jesus.”

We have the invitation “to put the yoke on.”

We have the invitation “to learn from Him.”

It is issued by the “Inviter” who is meek and gentle in heart

Then we have the “invitee” who is “weary” and “heavy-laden”

Last, we have the “outcome” which is rest for our souls.

So, in this section we have wonderful picture of the intimate relationship between Jesus and the Father, and the invitation *that we are given* to enter into this wonderful relationship with God and Jesus where we find rest for our souls.

Well, I know this has been a very challenging and in-depth study of this particular section of Scripture and I pray that you will benefit from getting deeply into this study and knowing “The Mind of Christ”.

Please feel free to go to our website at <https://www.centralsarasota.org/> where you can find all the things that you’re looking for; all of the archives of the things that we have produced.

Until next time, may God bless you, take care and until next time ...