

Matt 11.20-30 – Come to Jesus for salvation and rest

Clint Le Page

Main point – Repent & come to Jesus to be saved from judgment, to know God and find rest.

When another week's gone by n' you haven't had a quiet time, and the guilt weighs upon you; Jesus invites you to Rest.

When you feel the pressure to perform, so God will accept you;

Jesus invites you to Rest.

When your friend feels they have to be good enough for God to accept them;

Jesus wants us to invite them to his Rest.-----

When you're overwhelmed by fear; by the hurt others have caused, the pain, or anxiety you experience, Jesus invites you to himself, to Rest.-----

Today we hear this most wonderful invitation.

I hope you'll accept Jesus' invitation, and I hope you'll be encouraged.-----

But before we consider that, we hear some confronting words of Jesus.-----

Last week remember Jesus wanted John the Baptism to know he is the promised King, who's come to bring salvation now, and judgement later.-----

Jesus also said his kingdom is being violently opposed, v12.-----

Because people reject him, and his Lordship over them.-----

And now Jesus makes clear that judgement is coming.-----

Our first of 3 points is, Come to Jesus to be saved from judgement.----- (SLIDE)

Remember Jesus has been preaching in towns in Galilee.

Look for the blue arrow in the **map on the screen**.-----

V20 also says Jesus has performed many miracles there.

They back up his message, and confirm that he is the promised Messiah King, as he said in v4 quoting Isaiah.-----

God was in their presence but people did not repent in response.-----

To repent means to change your mind and direction. To do a U-turn.-----

If you repent you stop living for yourself or idols, and you turn to God.

Now we turn to God by turning to the Lord Jesus in faith and trust.-----

So we repent by turning away from sin, and coming to Jesus, trusting in him.-----

Jesus says if the cities of Tyre and Sidon (near the red arrow) had witnessed the miracles you have, they would have repented.

Tyre and Sidon were OT cities that suffered God's judgement, from Assyria and Babylon.

And we read in **Gen 19** how the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were judged by God for their immorality n' wickedness, as God rained down fire on them all.

And Jesus says, **v23**, if the people of Sodom had heard the Gospel, and seen what you've seen, they would have repented.

Too often the people of Galilee were wowed and amazed by Jesus, but didn't repent.

Yes some did – even the apostles Peter, Andrew and Philip were from Bethsaida.

Repentance was possible but most refused.

So Jesus says, Woe to you Chorazin, Woe to you, Bethsaida, and Capernaum.-----

Woe means doom, destruction is coming; it's a grave warning.

Woe Woe, because I've shared God's good news with you, and you didn't want it.-----

You didn't want to repent, so now judgement is coming, and God's judgement on you will be severe. More unbearable and terrifying.-----

Jesus' words here tell us that God does not owe anyone anything.

If Sodom would have repented if Christ had appeared, preached n' performed miracles, so be it, but God was not under obligation to do that, and Sodom was still responsible for their sin.-----

People are responsible for their choices.-----

And personally responsible when they reject Jesus.-----

Jesus is also highlighting God's justice and fairness here.

For God takes into account opportunities people have had to turn back to God.

And if people have not had the same opportunity or knowledge, then their judgement in hell will be less severe.-----

Jesus is teaching there will be degrees of judgement in hell, and hades where unbelievers go after death.------(Lk16.23;12.47)

You may be thinking, yes, these Jews rejected Jesus and deserve judgement, but **What about those who've never heard the Gospel**, how can God judge them?-----

God is just and he will not judge people for not turning to a Jesus they never heard of. People will be judged for their sinful choices, and for rejecting the God they did know something of through creation.

And Romans ch1 says no one is without excuse.-----

In God's mercy he sends workers to the unreached peoples of the world with the Gospel.---

But I'm deeply concerned for many Australians.(SLIDE)

So many used to go to church when they were younger, had RE at school, could visit a church down the road, or picked up a Gideon's Bible in the Hotel room.

So many have had access to the knowledge of God, and rejected it.

When our friends hear we're a Christian, how many want to know more?-----

So pray for God to change hearts and minds, and grant repentance, before the judgement comes all people deserve.-----

When 12 police raided Peter Noble's house in western Sydney he knew he was done.

Scouring the 19yo's house looking for photos of graffiti, bolt cutters n' spray cans, police found enough evidence to charge him with 26 graffiti offenses.(SLIDE)

There seemed to be no way round it. He was going to jail.

Shortly after his arrest, a friend invited him to a Bible study. Having grown up in a Christian home he was no stranger to church, but he'd been living a double life.-----

With nothing to lose he went along.

He watched an evangelistic dvd, and the presenter asked, "If you died tonight, where would you be going?"-----

And Peter says, I thought, man, I'd be going to hell. I was really hit by the weight of my sin.

I went home that night and I was just shaking. I could barely put the keys in my car. I remember going home and weeping and crying out to God to save my life.

In that moment Peter committed his life to Christ.-----

Not everyone has police raid their house to wake them up. But he says some people do need have their life taken away from them, to realise God's trying to get their attention.---

Now Peter's at Bible college, while he runs a Youth drop-in centre and has a hip-hop ministry.

But before all that, when in court, Peter stood up, looked the judge straight in the eye and said, 'I'm sorry that I'm here. I stand before you now, with my friends and family and pastors who all know me, to promise, that you will never see me in this court again.'-----

Amazingly Peter escaped jail, even a suspended sentence.-----

He says, I didn't get justice, I got mercy.-----

Why was that?----- Cos he repented.-----

Before Jesus the judge, have you repented?-----

If you don't want it to be unbearable for you on the day of judgement, turn back to God by trusting in Jesus.

Turn your back on your sin, and Come to Christ, so your soul may live.-----

Next point is, Come to Christ to know God, the Father.

Jesus prays v25, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to infants" or little children.

Jesus here is not contrasting knowledge and ignorance, the educated and uneducated, or the old and young.

It's more about those who think they can save themselves, vs those who in dependence, rely on God.

Too many people boast in their achievements, see themselves as self-sufficient, and find it so hard to trust God.-----

The Jews of Galilee and their leaders, heard the Son of God preach; saw his miracles, and thought they didn't need to repent, they knew best.-----

So God does not exclude smart people from the kingdom, but those who trust in their smartness. It's not intelligence but intellectual pride that shuts people out of the kingdom.-----

So before God, are you an achiever, or a child?-----

John MacArthur shares this: Once a girl, perhaps 9 or 10 came up and asked me a question, **'What happens to babies and retarded children when they die?'**

She was obviously very serious, and I did my best to answer her.

Beginning with David's comment about his infant son who had died, 'I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.' (**2Sam 12.23-SLIDE**), I explained that God takes to himself all of those, such as babies and retarded people, who are not able to choose him.

(I would add the Bible promises that for the children of believers, but for others we can't be sure)

MacArthur says, Afterward her mother explained that the girl's younger brother was seriously retarded, and understood almost nothing of what went on around him. His sister, young as she was, knew the way of salvation and was deeply concerned that her little brother might not go to heaven, because he was not able to understand how to receive Christ as Saviour.

I reminded her that Jesus said, 'Unless you are converted and become like little children you shall not enter the Kingdom of heaven (**Matt 18.3**). She was greatly relieved when I said her little brother was a living illustration of the kind of person Jesus came to save and receive into heaven – the utterly helpless.----

It is to spiritual babes, those who acknowledge their utter helplessness, whom God reveals himself to.-----

And as **v26** says, God can reveal himself to whoever he chooses.-----

God sovereignly chooses who to reveal himself to.-----

So Jesus could simultaneously warn the people who did not repent, and praise God who conceals, and reveals to others.-----

At the same time, God is sovereign over people's salvation and people are responsible for their choices.

And I know that is something many struggle with.-----

Jesus then goes on to say, **v27**, it's up to him, who he chooses to reveal the Father to.---

No one knows, truly and fully knows the Father, except the Son.

That's a breathtaking claim.

And reminds us of statements in John's Gospel.-----

The point is, if Jesus does not disclose and reveal God the Father to us, then we remain blind and dead in sin.

If we want to know God, we come through Jesus. We come to Jesus.-----

If you want to know God, you need to know Jesus.-----

If your father still lives, I could learn and **know facts about him**: where he lives, his job, things he does, his likes n' dislikes.

But that's way different from knowing him personally, and having a relationship with him.

And if we want to know God personally, then you and I must know Jesus personally in a relationship of faith and trust.-----

When **Mahatma Gandhi,(SLIDE)** the Indian civil rights and spiritual leader, was dying, one of his relatives came to him and asked, "Babaki, you have been looking for God all your life. Have you found him yet?"-----

'No' was the reply. "I'm still looking."

Many think Gandhi was a great teacher, but his statement highlights Jesus's words, 'no one knows the Father except the Son'.

If you don't have Jesus, the Son, then with Gandhi you don't have God.

If you want to get to God, **Come to Jesus**.

If you're hungry for relationship with God, pray and ask him to reveal himself to you as you read the Bible.

If you want to discover God, you'll find him by trusting in Jesus.-----

If we come to Jesus we'll be saved from judgement, we'll know God, **and now thirdly, we'll find Rest.(SLIDE)**

V28 is the most wonderful, warm invitation to all who feel in need of rescue by God.

'**Come to me...** and I will give you rest' is another breathtaking claim.-----

Rest from what?-----

Many Greeks were burdened by their search for truth.

Many Jews must have found religion a burden, a matter of endless rules n' duties.

And it is religious rules and regulations that Jesus particularly has in mind here, when he speaks about the **yoke** he wants to take off us.

A yoke (**SLIDE**) was a frame used to help animals or people carry heavy burdens.----

Weary describes work to the point of exhaustion, a word that normally describes the tiring field work. But here it's not about physical work.

Jesus says later in **Matt 23**, "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees...⁴They tie up heavy loads that are hard to carry, and put them on people's shoulders..."

God's law n'and the 10 commandments were always beyond man's ability to obey.---

But the Jewish leaders even added man-made rules on top of it.

So in **Acts 15.10(SLIDE)** Peter describes salvation by works as, 'putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear'.

Similarly in **Galatians 5** Paul says,(**SLIDE**) 'Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not submit (or be burdened) again by a yoke of slavery.'-----

Jesus offers relief from the burden of religious law keeping as a means of self-worth, or salvation.

Trying to earn God's favour n' acceptance by your good deeds only puts a heavy yoke on your back that we cannot carry.

Yet we can so easily fall into the trap of thinking like this.-----

But what does God do?

He comes to us in his Son, and Jesus carries our burdens for us.

He carried the burden of the law in our place.

He lived sinlessly then died our death.

On the cross he carried the burden of our sins away.-----

So Come to Jesus; believe in him, trust him; rest your all on him.-----

Jim Sawchak was born into a Roman Catholic family, and says, I did everything that was expected of me: I attended mass, went to catholic schools, fasted n' was an altar boy.

But I had no assurance of salvation, so I stopped going to the Roman Catholic Church.

I knew I was going to hell and I was right.-----

Jim just wanted to make it to the top. He and his wife moved to Seattle and lived the good life.

Jim said, I had a good job, lots of money and lived well.

However I felt the void in my life, and started to search to fill it.

I tried Islam, Scientology and hung out with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Nothing could fill the void.

I started to read the Bible and see the errors of the RC Church, JW's, Islam and Scientology. I accepted JC as Saviour, Lord and God, by faith alone, through grace alone in 1990. He has made changes in me that no religion could make. He changed my life forever.

And Jim says, "Have you read my testimony and feel the same void in your life? Do you feel that you sin too much for God to accept you?

Were you raised in a religion that depends on you saving yourself rather than God saving you?

Fear not, God is waiting for you with open arms. Come as you are, God will accept you if you truly desire Him. The changes will come after you trust Jesus as your

Savior and Lord. I am living proof that God does exist."-----

And what will we experience if we come to Jesus n' depend on him?-----

Rest, v28, 29.

This verse is dear to the heart of many a believer, isn't it?-----

If we come to Jesus in faith, he promises, promises us, rest and refreshment.-----

Red Bull might claim to give you wings, & vitalize you, body and mind.

Powerade might claim to make you go stronger for longer.

But they can't give refreshment that lasts, or satisfy us deep inside, in our souls.---

Jesus fulfills this and gives this.-----

Because we can get off the performance treadmill, of trying earn God's favour.----

And we can have the wonderful assurance that our eternal destinies are secure in Christ.

So it's about rest and peace now, and eternal rest in the future.-----

But Jesus also gives rest in other ways.-----

Knowing God has met my eternal needs in Jesus, we can trust him patiently to meet all our other needs – food, a job, a home, loving relationships, & the strength for each day.

Phil 4.19 says God will meet all our needs in Christ Jesus, even when life is hard.----

Therefore Rest is also **freedom from things that weary us and disturb us.**

And don't we have lots of those in lockdown at the moment?-----

But Christ can free us from things that rob us of peace and joy.-----

So rest isn't only relief from uncertainty, fear, anxiety, despair, it is positively, peace of mind, peace in your heart.-----

Jesus came to end the search for rest, by taking us in his loving arms.(SLIDE)-----

Rachel (not from Bundy) has had Chronic Fatigue Syndrome for 3 years.

She says, "The experience is at times unbearable and often overwhelming. Physically the fatigue becomes so bad my whole body feels horrible, like each muscle is being injected with a poison of pain and heaviness. It affects me mentally (I struggle to concentrate, read, think or interact with people), and emotionally... I am often frustrated, isolated, lonely... Sometimes God feels so far away, and I feel I've got no trust left, and I cant do it anymore."

Rachel says "Throughout this suffering my heart seeks comfort and joy, and I'm ashamed at how often I've turned to our broken world for these things instead of to God. I've found my biggest challenge in any day is to run to him... I wonder sometimes how many things God has to take away from me before I listen to his voice: "Cling to me. Cling to me. I love you."-----

So many of God's children can testify that the rest Jesus gives enables us to grieve with hope, and patiently endure; he gives us strength for the day, grace to love, calmness in the storm.-----

It's not about being free n' independent, so I can be selfish n' do nothing.-----

No, Jesus says, yoke yourself to me.

Stick yourself to me in faith, by trusting my word.

And you will find deep peace and satisfaction that will never find elsewhere.

And a new way of living.----

So the light yoke Christ asks us to carry, is **following him as his disciple.**

It's about trusting and obeying him.

Yes that can be hard and involve effort, in God's grace.

But we trust and obey out of sheer gratitude for the salvation already given to us, and cos it's so delightful.

To live for Jesus is joy, deep down joy.-----

Jesus says to you and I today, I have come for you. Now Come to me.-----

As I opened, I close:

When another week's gone by and you haven't had a quiet time and the guilt weighs upon you.

Jesus invites you to rest.----

When you feel the pressure to perform so God will accept you. Jesus invites you to rest.

When your friend feels they have to be good enough for God to accept them.

Jesus wants us to invite them to his Rest.-----

When you're overwhelmed by fear; by the hurt others have caused, the pain, or anxiety you experience, Jesus invites you to himself, to Rest.-----

Will you Accept his invitation?-----

Let's pray.