

## **COME TO ME AND REST.**

**TEXT: Matt 11:16-19, 25-30.**

(from New International Version)

### **THEME:**

Christians should be letting Jesus take control of their lives so that they don't carry burdens that will weigh them down.

**Grace, peace and mercy, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

There are a lot of things happening in the world, which can get under our skin these days! Take for instance when I look at the newspapers or the television news reports and see that there is no relief in sight with the prices of petrol; the food and groceries getting dearer all the time; the River Murray water not flowing

downstream where irrigators and farmers are suffering; and the lake is running dry. Plus a whole lot of other things that may be getting up our noses as well.

For me, there is nothing more irritating than listening to the Newsreader say, 'tighten your purse strings and get used to the idea that from here on in the petrol prices are on the rise and it won't be long [tongue in cheek] before we all will be paying two dollars a litre for our petrol'. That really stirs me up and makes me angry because we have to be more constructive in making our dollar stretch further than it already is.

So what can I do about it! Let the bitterness eat me up and consume me; or fume about it constantly, get mad and angry about it, be sarcastic and nasty with the petrol console operator every time I have to pay for my petrol. I mean being constantly in that mood is a fair bit of weight to carry in itself, right? I'm trying to make light of it or course; but the silly thing is, that is what some of us

really do, isn't it? We can get ourselves into a constant state of anger and bitterness all the time.

In today's gospel reading Jesus tells us in verse 28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest". Otherwise we can fume and nag, and be a grizzling grumble-bum to all with whom we come into contact with. And the bottom line there is that, no one wants to be around anyone who whinges all the time, it would drive anyone nuts.

That's why Jesus' opening sentence in the gospel reading makes so much sense: verse 16, "To what can I compare this generation?" The answer to that can be anything, but Jesus is saying that whatever is thrown at us, can be overcome, do not let whatever is bugging you, consume you. We must take a lighter view of it otherwise the seriousness of it all can consume us; and what good will that be for ourselves and families or people who rely upon us to be loving good natured people.

The Devil makes hay when this kind of situation occurs; and he loves nothing better than if Christian people are at odds with the world and with each other. So it's up to each and every one of us to let common sense prevail and be courteous to each other as loving Christian people should do. Are you a grumble-bum; do you get on people's nerves; because now maybe a good time to arrest that situation?

The Epistle reading in Romans chapter seven tells us that the Apostle Paul struggled with his inner sin. We all have this inner fight and struggle going on inside each and every one of us [the devil and angel in all of us]. The good Paul tries to do is always being counteracted by the sin lurking within him; and he ends up doing the wrong thing instead of the right thing; when he knows he should be doing the right thing. How often does that happen within us; especially when we deliberately want to set

aside special time for God, just to be within his presence and to enjoy him?

So not only are the spiritual and supernatural forces are wanting us to go astray, but that there are selfish, ungrateful, proud human beings who will have a go at you just for good measure. Verse 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' As we know, John the Baptist was his own man who knew his calling in life. He was the last of the prophets who stuck by his guns and told people what the situation was like in the world that they lived in.

He was eventually killed for his strong stand for God by speaking out against Herod and his wife and for what was righteous and good in a marriage. As Christians we are all going to be persecuted for doing the right thing and for our belief in God. And if it hasn't happened to you yet, it will come, no Christian is immune for antagonism from the Evil One and his demons.

In our lesson today, Jesus goes on to give glory to God the Father for all he has created and for giving wisdom and insight to the little ones and not the wise and learned ones who should know better. And Jesus is also glad that all things have been committed to him, because from him he will reveal to those whom he chooses to reveal these things from above. And the last few verses encourage those with heavy loads to cast all their cares upon Jesus yoke because he is able to carry the load: his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

Even though the word of God is being preached to all people through all mediums [TV, newspapers and radio] in this day and age, have a lot of people's hearts become like those of the little children that have been referred to in our gospel lesson today. Have grown up adults acted like children and just ignored the word of God altogether? I guess a lot of people have done just that: because there is something better out there apart from

God and what he offers, that is consuming all of their attention? The truth seemed to have been kept from them or their ears aren't hearkening to the word from so many sources that are so easily accessible through so many mediums today.

John the Baptist's message was ignored and he was accused of having a demon. We can sympathize with John and understand his angst if we have been ignored or accused of something outrageous for speaking out in defence of the Lord and his business? John the Baptist didn't get angry or fumed about it; he went about the Lord's business in the face of all adversity, and when God saw fit, he took the Baptist home and gave him rest from all his labours.

Jesus says in verse 27, that; "The Father has been revealed by the Son to whom he chooses". So how fortunate for us to whom the Father has been revealed. What does that mean faith-wise and life-wise? It means

this especially in relation to the gospel lesson: we don't have to carry loads and burdens on a yoke around our necks in the first place. Christ says that his yoke is easy because the burden is light for him.

We don't have to go around fuming against all the bad things that have been done, and will continue to be done and said about us. We don't have to be 'as mad as hell, and do something about it' which will get us into more trouble in any case. Jesus says he is the answer to all the burdens we are carrying around within us.

Just in conclusion, how many people do you know, that are carrying around heavy loads that are far too weighty for them? These people may need [hypothetically] for instance; Christ's love but they reject it. Need mental and spiritual healing but do things in their own strength? Facing death and destruction but refuse God's grace and promise of heaven and eternal life where they can face death in a positive manner.

Acceptance of Jesus is the beginning of faith. Living for him takes it a step further. Partaking of him in the Holy meal assures us that God is for us and we belong to him forever. Why fume and cut him out of your lives when he is yoked to take our burdens upon himself. Amen.

**The peace of God which passes all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.**