

Call to Obedience #379
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
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Come Unto Me

By Pastor Reimar A. C. Schultze

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.—Matthew 11:28, 30

As I read this passage recently it had a flavor to me unlike anything I've ever tasted. I saw a depth in it that I could not fathom. This Scripture appeared to me like a beautiful rainbow arching over all things.

This passage begins with *come unto me*. Before we go any further, let us observe that the first *come unto me* came right after man sinned and was cast out of the garden of God. From then on we find this *come* in every book of the Bible all the way to the Revelation. This *come* indicates that man has lost his way. He's not where he should be. This *come* is a call for him to come back to where he belongs. It is a call for him to leave that which is difficult, hard and burdensome, to come to something which is light, restful and delightful. Of course, there is first an initial coming to Jesus but then even in the abiding in Him, there is a perpetual coming to Him with all our needs. There is each morning, a coming to Him for our daily bread.

That is the general picture. Now let us look at this *come* from Matthew: *Come unto me, all ye that labor*. Let us look at it in the context of Jesus' teaching on the yoke. Notice that at first, Jesus addressed the Jewish people. It was directed towards them and all who labor under religious bondages. It was addressed to people who try to live for God by rituals, traditions and religious laws. Jesus had and has compassion on these people, in fact He wept over Jerusalem.

Next, we know that Jesus also spoke to people who found themselves in some state of poverty, sickness, disadvantage, neglect; being bruised, broken and restless in their souls (Luke 4:18).

Thirdly, Jesus' *come* is extended to the trophy chasers. It is addressed to people who have given their all to get honor and respect, to make a name for themselves in sports, entertainment, in business, the religious world, in wealth or fame, who have given their all to get their trophies and are now burnt out, disappointed, having discovered they have chased after the wrong things. He says to them, *come unto me*.

Finally, Jesus is calling those who have been worn down and out by the consequences of foolish and selfish decisions of their youthful days. Jesus says, *come unto me!*

Jesus says, "Bring yourself and your burdens to Me. Be done with your self life, your lifestyle, your ways and come to Me and you will *find rest for your soul for my yoke is easy, my burden is light.*" Notice of course, Jesus does not say, "My burden is weightless." He says it is light compared to the burden that you carry without Christ living in you. Now, once we've come to Jesus, there is a work that must begin within us, there is a process we must submit to. It begins with:

1. If we are to **take up a yoke**, then there must first be a **fitting of the yoke**. You cannot take up your yoke until you are fitted for it. No ox can pull successfully with another ox's yoke. The fitting of a yoke for each ox is the work of a master craftsman. Every ox's neck is different. The yoke has to be fitted so there will be no strain on the ox, whether he pulls a light load or heavy load, whether he turns to the left or the right, whether he has his head up or down for feeding. Only Jesus, the master craftsman, can fit you for your yoke. In fitting you He has to strip you of everything that is of the self life. Everything of the self life will prevent you from being comfortable with the yoke. Everything of the self life will bring stress on your life under Jesus' yoke. So it must first be stripped off. The work of fitting is to make you one with your yoke, to make you one with the perfect will of God.

2. Once fitted, there must be a **taking up of the yoke**. So, the taking up here implies an abandoning of the old yoke that has made your life miserable, burdensome, stressful and heavy. You cannot take up a yoke that is easy unless you let go of the yoke that is hard. You cannot take your burdens with you into the yoke that Jesus has for you. The yoke has only room for that for which Jesus is burdened. Any time you take your burdens and put them on top of Jesus' burdens, you become unhitched. As the self life has to go, so the burdens of the self life have to go with it. The yoke is fitted for you to only pull Jesus' burdens. The yoke is grasped with the hands of self-denial and obedience.

In modern times many Christians, even some pastors, have copied the ways of today's businessmen. These ways include setting a "spiritual" goal which is relentlessly pursued through shoving, driving, pushing, and manipulating in order to gain success and the favor of man, and often only in order to outdo the competition. Often this pursuit comes out of misdirected zeal for Jesus. Often it is a result of misunderstanding about what ministry is to be. More pastors have had heart attacks in this generation than any other. By having gone about the work of God in the world's ways they have stressed themselves out, and what is worse, they are considered heroes because of their hard work for Jesus. The problem is, they have worked *for* Jesus, instead of having Jesus work *through* them. They worked in the power of the flesh instead of in the power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' yoke there are no stress-induced heart attacks or strokes. *His yoke is easy, His burden is light.*

People pressed upon Jesus all the time. But Jesus never allowed Himself to be governed by need. He warned us that the poor (the needy) will always be with us. They will always press upon us. We cannot meet everyone's needs. We cannot say yes to everyone. We need to be governed by the will of God, to stay in the yoke. The more time we spend with people, the less time we spend with God. Moses died at 120 years, having governed a whole nation. He died a young man: *And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated* (Deu. 34:7). He did not die stressed out. The apostle Paul, Moses' New Testament equivalent in spiritual greatness, was one of the most active Christians there ever was, yet He also did not die of a heart attack. He lived abiding in Christ and died because his work was finished. Had either one of these two great men died of stress-induced heart attacks or strokes it would have been an embarrassment to Christianity. *My yoke is easy, my burden is light.* Prove that to the world, and your spouse and your children as well.

3. In the yoke **spiritual learning** takes place. There is much learning that takes place in our religious institutions. But this learning normally does not go beyond head knowledge of Christianity, it does not do much in helping us in the area of spiritual discerning, communion with Christ and walking with God. With all their religious learning of the Bible, the Pharisees killed Jesus. "Higher" education often leads to pride and neglect in the cultivation of the heart. Few who are mighty in knowledge will submit themselves to Jesus' yoke. This is why Jesus said: *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight* (Luke 10:21). God can do nothing with the somebodies, but He can do much with the nobodies.

Therefore religious education outside the yoke can be very dangerous. It has brought much division to the church. It caused the persecution and rejection of many of God's finest men. So, the best spiritual learning is found by us being yoked with Jesus. *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* (Matt. 11:29). The further we get down in humility, the more intimately will we know God and the further our spiritual branches will spring upward. Jesus' yoke is the best seminary in the world. You have an invitation to join it. The tuition is free. Go for it.

So my friend, you must be born again. But remember, after that you must be fitted for the Master's use. Therein lies your rest, your strength and your joy.

Being yoked with Jesus will cause you to know what Paul means when he says, *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"* (Heb. 4:9).

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