

Concerning Rest

Matthew 11:28–30

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.

Introduction

Have you ever slept for eight hours and still woken up exhausted?

Your body rested, but your heart still felt heavy. Your schedule had paused, but your mind had not. You were physically refreshed, yet emotionally and spiritually drained.

Many people live exactly that way. They go on vacation but return just as anxious as when they left. They take a day off but carry the same burdens in their hearts. Why? Because physical rest alone cannot restore a weary soul.

We live in one of the busiest generations in history. Technology was supposed to make life easier, yet somehow, we are busier than ever. We carry smartphones that never stop buzzing. Emails arrive around the clock. News follows us wherever we go. Even when we are sitting quietly, our minds continue racing.

The world tells us that if we work harder, earn more, accomplish more, and own more, we will eventually find rest. Yet the opposite often happens. The more we chase, the more exhausted we become.

Jesus offers something entirely different.

He does not merely say, "Take a vacation."

He says, "**Come to Me... and I will give you rest.**"

Notice that Jesus does not offer a program, a technique, or a self-help strategy. He offers Himself.

Today I would like us to discover four kinds of rest God desires for His children:

1. Rest for our bodies.
2. Rest for our souls.
3. Rest through God's people.
4. Eternal rest in His presence.

I. Rest for Our Bodies

The very first mention of rest in the Bible is found in Genesis. "By the seventh day God completed His work... and He rested."

Did God rest because He was tired? Certainly not. The Almighty never grows weary. God rested because His work was complete. By resting on the seventh day, He established a rhythm for human life.

God designed us to work. But He also designed us to stop working. That rhythm is not optional; it is part of creation itself.

Unfortunately, many people ignore God's design. Some wear busyness like a badge of honor. "I'm so busy." "I never stop." "I hardly sleep." As though exhaustion were a sign of success. It is not. God never intended His children to live constantly depleted.

Think about your smartphone. No matter how advanced it is, eventually the battery becomes empty. The phone must be connected to a charger. None of us laughs at a phone because it needs charging.

Yet many people expect themselves to keep running without ever stopping. Eventually the battery dies. The same is true physically. Ignoring God's design eventually catches up with us.

Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is simply rest. Take a Sabbath. Sleep. Walk. Spend time with your family.

Jesus Himself often withdrew to lonely places (Luke 5:16). If the Son of God needed quiet places, how much more do we?

Physical rest is not laziness. It is stewardship. It is acknowledging that we are creatures—not the Creator. Even when we stop working, God never stops working.

That truth allows us to rest without guilt.

II. Rest for Our Souls

Although physical rest is important, it is not enough. Many people sleep well but remain anxious. Others retire from their careers but still feel empty.

The deepest weariness is not found in our muscles. It is found in our souls.

That is why Jeremiah the Prophet says, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths... and walk in it; and you will find **rest for your souls**" (Jeremiah 6:16).

Notice that God promises rest—not by escaping life—but by walking His way. Our world constantly searches for new answers. God points us to the ancient paths. Not outdated paths. Eternal paths that are written in His Word, the Bible.

His Word is not restrictive. It is liberating. Like a map leading a lost traveler home, God's truth guides us out of confusion and into peace.

Jesus echoes the same invitation. "Come to Me... and learn from Me." Again, notice the invitation.

Not, "Come to a religion." Not, "Come to a philosophy." Not, "Come to a set of rules."

But "Come to Me."

Rest is found in a relationship. Many Christians know about Jesus but rarely spend quiet time with Him. Prayer becomes only a shopping list. Bible reading becomes another task to complete. But God invites us into something much deeper.

Psalm 37:7 says, "Be still before the Lord" (ESV) Stillness has become rare. Silence feels uncomfortable. We immediately reach for our phones. We fill every empty moment with noise. Yet often God speaks most clearly when everything else becomes quiet.

One pastor told of a young mother with three small children. She loved God. She served faithfully. But she felt completely burned out. Her pastor asked one question. "When was the last time you simply sat quietly before God without asking Him for anything?"

She could not remember. He challenged her to spend fifteen minutes each day simply sitting in God's presence. No agenda. No requests. Just being with Him.

Several weeks later she returned with tears in her eyes. Her circumstances had not changed. The children were still noisy. The laundry still piled up. The schedule remained full. Yet something inside had changed. Her soul had finally rested. Like a phone quietly charging overnight, God had renewed her spirit.

Isaiah promises, "Those who **wait for the Lord** will gain new strength" (Isaiah 40:31).

Waiting is not wasting time. Waiting is trusting God instead of ourselves.

III. Rest Through God's People

God never intended believers to carry their burdens alone. One of God's greatest gifts of rest is Christian fellowship.

Proverbs 12:25 says, "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad."

What a beautiful picture. One encouraging sentence. One thoughtful visit. One prayer. One phone call. These simple acts become God's medicine for weary hearts.

The Letter to Hebrews reminds us, "Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds... **encouraging one another**" (Hebrews 10:24).

Notice what the church is supposed to be. Not merely a place to hear sermons. Not merely a building where people gather once a week.

The church is God's family. It is where tired people find strength. Lonely people find friendship. Broken people find hope.

Illustration

During World War II, soldiers spoke about those rare moments when the guns became silent. They called them "a quiet in the line."

During those brief pauses, they shared stories, laughed together, read letters from home, and reminded one another why they were fighting.

Many soldiers later testified that those moments restored them more deeply than sleep itself. They returned to battle stronger because someone had encouraged them.

The church should become that kind of place. While this world constantly drains people, the same people should leave church stronger than when they arrived.

Our words matter. Our presence matters. Our encouragement matters. Perhaps God wants to use you this week to become someone else's place of rest.

One phone call. One text. One visit. One kind word. One prayer.

You never know how God may use it.

IV. Our Eternal Rest

Every kind of rest we experience now is only temporary. Every night's sleep ends. Every vacation finishes. Every peaceful retreat eventually comes to an end. But God has prepared something infinitely greater.

The Bible speaks of an eternal rest awaiting God's people. Hebrews declares, "There **remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God**" (Hebrews 4:9). Everything we experience

today is only a foretaste. Every peaceful prayer. Every Sabbath. Every encouraging fellowship. They are previews of heaven.

John gives us that glorious picture in Revelation. God Himself will dwell among His people. He will wipe away every tear. There will be no more death. No more mourning. No more crying. No more pain.

Can you imagine living one day without anxiety? One day without sickness? One day without grief? One day without fear? That day is coming.

And it is coming because Jesus completed His work on the cross. When Jesus cried, "It is finished," He accomplished everything necessary for our salvation.

Because His work is finished, our striving can finally cease. Because He paid our debt, we no longer have to earn God's acceptance. Because He conquered death, we can look forward to everlasting rest in the presence of God.

One day we will finally be home. No alarms. No deadlines. No hospitals. No funerals. Only joy. Only peace. Only worship.

Forever. That is the Christian's hope.

Conclusion

At the beginning of my sermon, I asked whether you have ever slept through the night and still awakened exhausted.

Perhaps that describes you today. Your body is tired. Your mind is overwhelmed. Your heart is burdened. Your soul is weary.

Listen once again to the words of Jesus.

"Come to Me, **all who are weary and heavy-laden**, and I will give you rest." Notice what He does **not** say.

He does not say, "Come when you have everything together."

He does not say, "Come after you've solved your problems."

He simply says, "Come." **All who are weary and heavy-laden.**

The world says, **Keep running.** Jesus says, **Come to Me.**

The world says, **Work harder.** Jesus says, **Take My yoke.**

The world says, **Earn your worth.** Jesus says, **Rest in My grace.**

The world says, **Hurry.** Jesus says, **Be still.**

The world says, **Carry your burdens alone.** Jesus says, **Cast all your cares upon Me.**

And finally, the world says, **You must finish the work yourself.** But Jesus declares, **"It is finished."**

Because His work is finished, we no longer need to strive for God's acceptance. Because Christ completed the work of salvation, we are free to rest in His grace, walk in His peace, encourage one another along the journey, and look forward with joyful anticipation to the eternal rest that awaits us in His presence.

So today, accept Christ's invitation.

Honor the body God has given you. Feed your soul with His Word. Be still in His presence. Strengthen one another with words of hope. And keep your eyes fixed on the glorious day when faith becomes sight and God's people enter His everlasting rest.

Until that day, may we hear the gentle voice of our Savior saying,

"Come to Me... and I will give you rest."

Amen.