

# Rest For Your Soul

What is at stake whenever someone decides to either reject Jesus or come to Him? The answer is rest for your soul. Sadly, many will reject Jesus, despite the great evidence He has provided for being the Son of God and Savior of the world. In Matthew 11:16-24, Jesus addressed the seriousness of those who had rejected Him despite all the miracles He did. Only those who are humble will see the truths about God the Son reveals (Matthew 11:25-27). Jesus then invites all to come to Him, offering rest for the soul (Matthew 11:28-30).

**1) The need for rest.** Rest is a critical component of life everyone needs (John 4:6; Mark 6:31). However, physical rest is only temporary and is only one type of rest that is needed. Since we are both physical and spiritual beings (Genesis 1:26-27), we must address the need for both physical and spiritual rest. In fact, the greatest challenge people face in life is the challenge of how to address the sin we have committed that has separated us from God and keeps us from His rest (Isaiah 59:1-2; James 1:14-15). Those who are humble enough to recognize the devastation of sin and the need to find salvation will be burdened in trying to find that way by themselves. Since everyone has sinned, there is a burden of brokenness due to the guilt, shame, and destruction that comes with serving the harsh master of sin and the desire to find salvation (Romans 3:23; 6:16, 20-21). As one engages in this life, then, the spirit is under attack and rest is needed (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Thankfully, Jesus invites those who are weary and burdened to come to Him for spiritual rest (Matthew 11:28).

**2) The Giver of rest.** There are different ways to find some momentary physical rest, but only one Way to spiritual rest. That is Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:28)! He is the Way, Truth, and Life – and the only Way to the Father (John 14:1-7). While the Jews often had their own system created for righteousness, these things would not suffice in

bringing people into the rest Jesus identified. Today, there are many different options for people to consider as to how they will live and who they will listen to. However, Jesus continues to be the only Way to the rest that is promised by God! Jesus is the Good Shepherd you must follow if you desire to experience this rest, as He has laid down His life for us so that we can experience His rest (John 10:11, 14-15, 18). Furthermore, the character of Jesus should also draw us to Him for the rest He provides. Rather than being a merciless tyrant full of unrealistic demands, He is lowly and humble in heart (Matthew 11:29). While sin is an unyielding master, Jesus has brought Himself low and sacrificed Himself to give us rest (Philippians 2:5-8; John 3:16)!

**3) The rest that is promised.** The promise given in Matthew 11 is simply to receive rest for your soul (vv. 28-29). To anyone who recognizes the burden of sin and desires to find salvation from sin, there is an opportunity to rest through Jesus! One is not under the burden of creating his/her own path to salvation, nor the burdensome system created by the Pharisees, nor any other path to salvation. These cannot lead to rest anyways. As we have seen, Jesus promises to lead to the Father in Heaven! This is precisely the ultimate opportunity to have spiritual rest Jesus provides. Consider, for example, this rest promised in various New Testament Scriptures (1 Peter 1:3-9; Revelation 21:4; 22:1-5), in contrast with the eternal torment that will otherwise be experienced (2 Thessalonians 1:3-10; Revelation 21:4, 8). However, also notice how these passages demonstrate this promise for a future rest in Heaven will help you overcome the challenges you face while you are living on this earth! For, this hope provides your soul an anchor to cling to throughout your life (Hebrews 6:19) and helps your inner person be renewed each day on this earth (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)!

**4) How to receive this rest.** Jesus has invited all people to come into His spiritual rest (Matthew 11:28-30), but few will receive it (Matthew 7:13-14). In fact, Jesus indicated there were certain things necessary to receiving His rest. First, He requires that you come to Him. If you desire to experience His rest and salvation, you must hear His gospel and believe that He is the only one who has the solution to your problem (John 8:24). Coming to Him also requires that you repent of your sin (Luke 13:3), acknowledge Him before others (Matthew 10:32-33), and be baptized (Mark 16:16). Therefore, you must humble yourself before Him to trust and obey Him for salvation. Second, you must take up His yoke and learn from Him. The task is not done whenever you come to Jesus. Rather, He wants those who come to Him to continue learning from Him throughout their lives so as to truly follow Him (Matthew 28:19-20). Then, there are things that living for Jesus will require of you as He helps you become like Him (Luke 9:23-26; Titus 2:11-14). While this may appear difficult from a purely physical perspective (Matthew 7:13-14), being yoked to Jesus makes it easy and light in comparison to what He offers (Matthew 11:30)! For, it is only when you come to Him and live for Him that you will receive this promised rest eternally (1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:7-10; Revelation 14:13)!

Jesus promises spiritual rest to those who will come to Him, take up His yoke, and learn from Him. Still, few will recognize Christ as the Giver of this rest and value this rest enough to do this. These will suffer the burdens of sin throughout their lives and then be ushered into an eternity where they will find no relief. However, those who will trust Jesus in these ways will experience an eternal rest in the joys of Heaven!

## Thought Questions

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**Teaching:** What did you learn from this lesson?

**Rebuking:** What are some ways this lesson challenges you to live differently?

**Correcting:** How does this lesson help you make positive changes for Christ?

**Training & Equipping:** How can you apply this lesson to be trained and equipped in God's service?