

ALL WHO ARE WEARY

Series: You are Invited
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Invitation, Rest, Life
Matthew 11:25-29

After the resurrection of Jesus, he hung out with his disciples for 40 days. He was seen around by people. His resurrection was for many what sealed their faith in him. The disciples had mostly given up and thought that was a lost venture. After his death, they were hiding in fear and some returning to their old lives. They were convinced that was over. Actually, those who first learn of his resurrection were not hoping to find resurrection, there were rather going to anoint his body.

But He is alive and He shows up. It once again revitalizes their faith and they spring back. Even better, one of them after seeing the resurrected Christ, touching his wounds, kneels before him and confesses that He is not only his Lord but also His God. Finally, in light of the resurrection, the deity of Jesus comes into focus. Or the fact that Jesus is God comes into full view.

It is this point of resurrection that stirs faith in the disciples who then receive an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to boldly share the message of the Good News of Jesus. In fact, Paul says that if there was no resurrection, our faith would be meaningless. It was so significant that even people like James the brother of Jesus, who we hear nothing of during the ministry of Jesus becomes a follower of Jesus. Imagine trying to convince your brother that you are important, let alone, the son of God, let alone God.

But one of the things that I want to draw our attention to is something Jesus said, in the time after the resurrection

Matthew 28:18

All Authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to me

Authority, a word we have a problem with in this century. Jesus says he has all authority. And throughout, we see people calling him Lord. In fact, one of his apostles, calls him Lord and God.

Paul, a guy who wrote a lot of letters that found their way into the New Testament uses such words as master referring to Jesus and calls us his servants, sometimes even uses the word slave. And sometimes this language is very problematic in our century because of the picture we have of people in authority.

We have a bad relationship with authority. Actually, very terrible and bossy leaders are often called authoritarian leaders. Kinda gives you a glimpse of how we relate to authority around here in this century. Masters and Lords are people who demand

and control and make people do things. Masters and Lord are to be severed. So sometimes people are wary of Jesus being Lord and God over their lives.

But how does Jesus relate with authority? Remember, He has all real authority both in Heaven and on Earth. Quite contrary to how the world does things Jesus is very invitational. What he goes around saying is 'You are invited!'

He does not make us do things or force us into things. Instead, he invites us to do things. We do not have to do anything, we get to do things with Him. Everywhere in scripture what you find is Jesus inviting everyone to follow him to different things in the kingdom of God. His way of Lordship and being Master is by making invitation of which I want us to spend a few weeks looking at.

Let's pray

One day Jesus was teaching his disciples and he said these words

Matthew 11:25-29

"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

So Jesus right from talking about who He is. Right from saying that everything has been committed to him, that He is Lord over it all instead of using forceful or threatening words makes an invitation. The first invitation we will focus on. An invitation to the weak and weary.

Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

One of the saddest realities of life is that on epitaphs we often have the inscriptions 'Rest in Peace'. Is it not sad that the reality for most people and certainly all of us in certain seasons is that we know no peace? So we live lives in this endless search for peace and meaning and rest. So we live lives weary and tired and so on epitaphs, we express our desire that hopefully, our loved ones have now found rest in death.

And life itself takes so much from everyone. The pressures of meeting daily needs, the pressure to compete in an ever-changing world. The pressure for some to keep up appearances.

The emotional and psychological pressure of being human and in relationships with other humans. Marriage, colleagues from work, everywhere. Unfortunately, all none of life can be done in isolation but we have not even figured ourselves out and we know we are a mess and we find ourselves in relationship with similar humans.

The people run to faith. Because life quickly teaches you that there is more to this. That you need God. Many actually meet this point of weariness and exhaustion and cry out to God saying, If you are out there. Unfortunately, in the space of faith, religion takes hold and puts on people another weight. And people are just restless.

So sad to see that each generation often has this move to break the chains of religion and in the space of freedom take new shackles and chain themselves up in new religion. Because we often do not know what to do with or even how to do freedom.

You know for example one of the things we enjoy here in this community is being simple and laid back. Because most of us were tired of religion where traditions of the church that had nothing to do with the message of Jesus were pushed down peoples throats.

You have to dress like this and speak like this and do that every other season etc. However, care should be taken that in this space we do not make new rules and bind ourselves in new religion where we then push it on others to be laid back just because we are.

Humanity pressed on every side. People are seeking to just breathe. Economically, physically, spiritually, emotionally. Everyone searching for rest and peace and a meaningful life. So Jesus says, Come if you are weary. All you who are weary and Tired from life.

So this invitation Jesus is making is quite honestly for all of us. If you will realize that you are tired. If you have come to the end of yourself. If you have toiled and toiled. Worked and worked for a different life through this crazy life. Jesus is making an invitation.

If you have realized that your soul is worn out from working hard through the oppressive economic systems of our world...

toiling through the rotting political climate of our time...

beaten down by kneading through the weight of none transformative religious work,

Jesus is saying, "Come and I will give you rest

Weirdly Jesus mixes metaphors. Then he says, 'Take my yoke upon you...' Wait, doesn't that sound like work? I thought we were being invited to rest?

Sometimes we get into this deceptive thought that the only way to find rest if we do not need to work. We sometimes think that rest is synonymous with inactions or vacation. There is nothing wrong with vacation or taking a break.

In fact, those are things that can really help us get into a place of rest before we spring back to work and life. But have you noticed it is possible to not be doing anything and not be at rest? It is possible to be on vacation and not at rest at all. You can be in bed at night, resigned from all the activities of the day and still be completely not at rest.

Yet you can be at work and find so much rest despite the exhaustion. I love my job here. It is exhausting, often stressful. There is a guy who said that the job of a pastor is designed to make you manic depressive. Because while people have to deal with a crisis in their lives you know maybe at least once a year and some every 3 months, you have to deal with their crisis weekly. Because unfortunately most people only see their pastor when things are not good. So yes, this job is stressful sometimes and on Sundays, it wears me out completely.

But I get so much life from this. It excites me every time I hear stories of life and transformation. It excites me every time I look around and see different people finding community, reaching out as they are being reached out too. When people walk in crashed and beaten down and over time in the embrace of this community they start blossoming again, this gives me so much joy and life while being tiring my body and mind sometimes.

You know work is often primarily for 2 things in my view, provisions and fulfillment. And the procession part we all get. But sometimes we do not think so much about the fundament part because we are often overcome by the provision part in this things-focussed world.

We get meaning from what we do. People need work, to feel like they are creating something, contributing to something meaningful. Work is not a punishment as sometimes presented by people misreading the story in the book of Genesis in the Bible. Work was there before the fall of man.

You see we are so wired to do something that in fighting depression or the feeling of meaninglessness it is important for someone to get something to do.

So why does Jesus juxtapose work and rest? Because rest is not complete without meaning. If you could have a vacation as long as you want and have no work for a long time, that will soon begin to drain your life. Rest is only complete in the light of work which brings meaning to us.

Jesus is asking that we join him in work because we actually need work to live meaningful fulfilling lives. And he uses the picture of a yoke which obviously living in Nakuru does not allow us to see much of. A yoke was a tool that allowed you to harness the power of bulls to plough land. Before tractors, people used bulls to plough their farms.

You would use a yoke to put the bulls in twos instead of having the bulls work singly. You see, if the power of one bull is 200 units, when you put them together in a yoke, the power of both is multiplied exponentially and it becomes something more maybe 800 units. You'd think together they would pull 400, 200 by each. Actually, their power would be multiplied exponentially.

You will be yoked to something and that can be the systems of this world, or to Jesus. So Jesus is inviting anyone who realizes their exhaustion from the systems of the world. Anyone who is tired of life as it is to find true rest in him. And to enter into this new dimension of life we get to work with him and we get to do exponential things.

Trying it alone, there is only too much we can achieve and often nothing except for exhaustion and restlessness but when we are harnessed to him, our ability is multiplied exponentially.

But then we have to lay down what we are doing and take up his yoke, take up his work. Have we not tried anyway to do it on our own? Once we come to the realization of our own poverty and enter the rest that Jesus is offering why keep holding on to the same things that we have tried with no success to find rest and meaning in? Instead, the invitation of Jesus is to join him in His work and when harnessed with him in his work, we will do much more than we can imagine.

But what is the work of God? Because Jesus is saying if work gives meaning to life we can only find true meaning in doing His work. But what is His work? This is what Jesus had to say

Luke 4:18-19

The Spirit of the Lord the Eternal One is on Me.

Why? Because the Eternal designated Me

to be His representative to the poor, to preach good news to them.

***He sent Me to tell those who are held captive that they can now be set free,
and to tell the blind that they can now see.***

He sent Me to liberate those held down by oppression.

***In short, the Spirit is upon Me to proclaim that now is the time;
this is the jubilee season of the Eternal One's grace***

Jesus basically declared that this is what He has come to do. To destroy the works of the enemy. Good news to the poor, free people held captive, give sight to the blind, liberate people held down by oppression and proclaim the Kingdom of God.

And later on His journey, he sent his disciples in pairs to the same things he did and basically, he reiterated this very list. He was committed to this. He was committed to laying down His own life.

Come all who are weary and tired to Jesus to find rest. To get here we must first come to an honest realization of our own exhaustion in search of rest for our Soul. We must come to our a realization of our poverty and make it our daily desire to enter the rest of Jesus. And to enter the rest of Jesus we need to believe. And I think Faith is something we have to choose everyday. To look forward into your day with the hope that Jesus will reveal Himself and give you rest.

And then to abandon the vein things we have worked our behinds off hoping they give us rest and take on his work. To live lives as outpouring for others. This is the work of God. Through the power of the Holy Spirit which harnesses with Jesus give ourselves to serving the world. To heal the sick and the brokenhearted, to set people free from oppression both spiritual and physical. To declare the Good News of Jesus and declare the Kingdom of God.

Some of us are stuck in our search for a meaningful life because it is all centred on us. It is all about your better tomorrow, it is all about your profile, its all about your advancement. Actually, there is no meaning to be drawn from a life that is centred on us. True meaning in life is drawn from actually laying your life to others.

The paradox of life has always been that those who lose their lives keep it and those who fight to keep their lives lose it. But to be very clear even doing this yields nothing much if we are not harnessed to Jesus. It is one thing to fight for the poor, fight for the weak and even heal the sick but unless we are harnessed to Jesus we do not achieve much.

So Jesus is inviting us to rest. Nothing wrong with vacation and all the things we do to find rest but true rest for our hearts and Souls can only be found in entering the rest Jesus is calling us to, and that is a choice to make every day to believe.

Jesus is calling us to a different form of life. To better work. Instead of living for ourselves as the world would invite us to yet give us no rest, Jesus invites us to work with him doing his work which is living our lives empowered by the Holy Spirit to see others find true life.

Is it not beautiful that before the work part we are offered rest? Everything we get to join God in doing has to come from a place of rest. And some of us a to beaten up that we cannot march forward until we are rested and healed. True rest in him.

God wants something for you. First and foremost he wants to invite you to experience true life in Him. True love, true comfort, true forgiveness, true peace. And from that confidence, you can join him in doing what he is doing in the world. Even in



this, it is not so much that you do things but you get to experience true meaningful life in doing the works of God.

Let's Pray