

The Two Rests That Christ Offers

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into the concept of finding two types of rest as mentioned in Matthew 11:28-30. The first rest is a gift from God for the weary and heavy laden, symbolizing the forgiveness of sins and the cleansing of our conscience. The second rest is one we must actively seek, addressing the unrest in our minds and emotions caused by various life circumstances. By taking up the yoke of Jesus, symbolizing submission and obedience, we can find this deeper rest and experience peace amidst life's challenges.

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, Hebrews 8:12, Psalms 32:1, Romans 16:20, Isaiah 65:14, Romans 6:6, Isaiah 26:3, Galatians 5:16, Matthew 16:24

Topics: "Rest in God", "Finding Peace in Submission"

Description

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Transcript

So, I'd like to continue where Brother Priam started in Matthew chapter 11 and verse 28 to 30. And here we read, if you read carefully, there are two rests, R-E-S-T, two rests that God speaks about. And we must have both of them.

One he gives to us, I will give you rest, verse 28, it's a gift, all I have to do is receive it. The second, it says you will find rest for your souls, we've got to find it ourselves. So there's a difference between the two.

And the first rest speaks about, is for those who are weary and heavy laden. I believe that refers to the heaviness of sin on our conscience. It's a very heavy thing.

Of course, a dead man feels nothing, you put a one ton weight on him and he won't feel a thing. But if you're alive, even a small weight, you feel it, you'll even feel a pinprick. So all of us, when we are born as children, our conscience is sensitive.

You know, it's very difficult for a five-year-old child to tell his mother a lie, even if he tells a lie, it's written on his face that he's telling a lie. But that same child can keep on telling lies for so many years, by the time he's 20 years old, he can tell a lie with a straight face and you won't even know. And we all know that

because we've gone that way.

So it's very important to keep our conscience sensitive. So, if you have a sensitive conscience, we'll find ourselves heavy laden. It's one of the proofs by which we know our conscience is sensitive, that the slightest weight will trouble me.

But if my conscience is not sensitive, then even a heavy weight won't disturb me. But it also says here about being weary. And that's another thing that sin does, it makes us exhausted.

And that's not God's will for us. So what do we have to do? We really don't have to do much. Because I cannot, this is something which I cannot be free from.

God has to give it to me. So Jesus has come to me, I'll give you rest. And that we know from the Bible, it says, if we confess our sins, and we walk in the light and confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to cleanse us from all our sin and from all unrighteousness.

That's his promise. And then he gives us an assurance that our sins are forgiven. I remember when I accepted Christ, I did not believe that my past was blotted out.

I knew it was forgiven. But I would keep remembering things as way back 64 years ago, when I was converted, I'd keep remembering of the things I did till one day, I remember exactly where I was standing on a ship. And this word came to my heart from Hebrews 8, and verse 12.

I will not remember their sins anymore. Of course, I'd read it. And that's why it came back to my mind.

So I don't know whether all of you, particularly new believers, do you have that assurance that God does not remember your past? If the past comes to your mind, it's your memory, or the devil, but definitely not God. I want to let every particularly young believer here know that God will never remind you of a sin that you really confessed and turned from, to the best of your knowledge. It doesn't matter how bad it is.

He says, I will not remember. It's not covered. It's blotted out.

You don't have to turn to these verses. I'll read it to you. Psalm 32 says, Blessed is the man whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, Psalm 32, whose sin is covered.

In the Old Testament, sin was never cleansed. It was covered. It's like if everything's written on a board and you put a white sheet over it, it's covered.

Nobody can see it, but you can lift the sheet and it's there. But in the New Testament, you take a wet rag and wipe it out, and it's gone. That's what the blood of Christ does.

It's very important to distinguish between being covered and cleansed. Covered is Old Testament. There was always a memory of sin, because every year they had to bring an offering.

But in the New Testament, it's cleansed. I say that because many new believers can have a, you know, conscience can disturb them about things they did in the past. You must be absolutely sure, otherwise you won't have rest.

He's giving you this rest, a rest saying, your past is blotted out. Forget it. There's nothing you owe God.

The whole thing, price has been paid on the cross. But then we read in Matthew 11 about another rest, a second rest. And that is something we have to find.

It's not something which is just given by God as a gift. And many Christians who got the first rest do not have the second one. The first rest is a rest in our conscience, which keeps convicting us of sin.

Rest, because the blood of Jesus has cleansed me. And he says, I won't remember it anymore. It's a gift.

I didn't do anything for it. But this other rest is in my mind and in my emotions. And a lot of Christians have unrest there.

But so many things, it can be unrest because some financial difficulty. It could be unrest because somebody is troubling you in your place of work. Or unrest because you're losing your job.

There's so many factors that can bring unrest. That's got nothing to do with sin. It's just got to do with life on this earth.

This earth, this world is a very restless place full of unrest. So here is another promise. In this world of unrest, God can give us rest.

But we have to find it. We have to pursue it. And for that, Jesus says, take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

Now, many of you who live in this country may not have seen bullocks plowing a field. We see it constantly in the villages in India. A yoke is something which is put on two bullocks.

And they plow a field together. And here Jesus is humbling himself and saying, okay, I'm one bullock. You join me.

Take my yoke upon you. Now, supposing a bullock has just died and they've replaced that one with a new untrained bullock and this walking with this experienced bullock under the yoke. That's experienced one is Christ and we are the inexperienced one.

That new bullock has to always go at the same pace as the senior one. And it must go in the same direction. Just two things, the same pace and same direction.

So the meaning here is that in those days when Jesus spoke about it, the disciples knew what he was talking about. The meaning here is that when the Lord tells us to do something or not do something, for example, this is after we are born again. You're planning to do something and your conscience says don't do that.

If you don't listen, supposing it's a writer signing a false statement in your office. Maybe you can make a little more money. Or you can cover up some wrong thing you did in the office by some certificate, which is false, and your conscience tells you that's wrong.

And if you go ahead and violate your conscience, you're lagged behind. The yoke has gone off your neck, you won't get any rest. Or it could be another way where you do something, you prayed about something, you wanted, you're very eager to do it and you rush ahead without waiting for the Lord, particularly when people are considering marriage.

They fall in love with somebody and then without waiting on God to seek his will, they rush ahead. And even the world knows that, marry in haste and repent at leisure. So God protects us in all situations, even in marriage or job or anything.

And for this, we must receive the Holy Spirit. Because it's the Holy Spirit who prompts us in saying, you go ahead with that or don't go ahead with that. It's very, very important for every Christian to every day seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

I do that, it brings rest into my life. There's a verse in Isaiah 63 which says the spirit of the Lord, 65 I think, gave them rest. It's the Holy Spirit who gives rest.

I want to say one more thing here. The yoke is also referring to the cross that Jesus told us to take. Take my cross and follow me.

That's how that rest comes. It's when a person dies, they write it on his coffin, rest in peace. If he's not dead, he won't be at rest.

And that's another way I have tested for myself. When you come into a situation, you're not at rest, you haven't died. You have not chosen the way of the cross.

Make that a test in your life. Is there unrest in your heart? Take up the cross. The Lord says, die to yourself.

And one of the wonderful things that will happen is, Jesus not only forgave our sin on the cross, he defeated Satan on the cross. And so if you take up that cross in your life and die in a situation like that, Satan will be defeated in your life. You'll have power over Satan.

I'm telling you this from practical terms. So I'll show you one verse and close. Romans 16 and verse 20.

It's speaking about crushing Satan under our feet. Satan's our greatest enemy. And you can crush Satan under your feet, but God's gonna do it through you.

And he's called here the God of peace. Why is he called the God of peace? He's the God of holiness, the God of love, God of so many things. But he's called the God of peace, which means in your heart, when you consider a situation, there must be peace and rest.

Because you decided to die to yourself. Rest in peace is written on your coffin inside. Then, Satan will be crushed under your feet, amen.

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