

Reading: Matthew 11:28
Date: 19th February
Speaker: Roy Marshall
Subject: Come unto Me.

The Bible is full of beautiful verses, but this is one of the simplest and clearest Gospel verses.

It has:

1. An invitation to faith (“Come unto Me”)
2. A reminder of our need (“labour and are heavy laden”)
3. A promise of blessing (“I will give you rest”)

Immediately before this, the cities where the Lord did His miracles had been condemned and told of their judgement for their refusal of God's mercy. They had missed these great opportunities and privileges, but the Lord still gives individuals another opportunity.

God has offered mercy to us up to this day, but we cannot tell how long He will continue to offer it. One day, the last call will come and no one knows when that will be. In this verse, Christ shows the desire in His heart for men to be saved.

We will look at the verse in the order:

1. Need
2. Invitation
3. Promise

The Lord shows that the need is universal. The word, all, includes everyone. The word, ye, shows that it is also personal. He offers relief from exhaustion (labour) and the removal of sin (heavy-laden). He knows every heart and soul. He knows the thoughts, longings, burdens sins, weaknesses and temptations. He is the great Physician who can meet every need but, like any doctor, He starts with the diagnosis.

We all have the same need. “all we like sheep have gone astray” (Isa. 53:6). “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). All have “gone out of the way” (Rom. 3:12). There is no one in the world who has not failed in some way.

The Lord calls each person individually. You must recognise that this message is for you. As soon as you do, you can be sure that Christ is ready for you and can give you salvation. The people to whom He spoke were exhausted by trying to satisfy God by their own efforts. They, like many others, thought that there is a God and salvation, but that a person can only be saved by their own efforts. They want to earn forgiveness and peace by themselves: going to church, trying their best, helping others. All of these are the essential part, only Christ can save. However sincere or devout a person may be, the word of God says, “Not of works lest any man should boast” (Eph 2:9). No one in heaven will be able to boast about self. Are you trusting in your works or God's grace (Eph 2:8).

The diagnosis is not just labour but a burden. The conscience tells us of our failures and brings the burden of fear of death because of sin. Sin will make us miserable in the end.

2. Invitation

The only answer to this diagnosis is “Come unto Me”. It is wonderful and simple. The invitation is coming from the Saviour. He came from the highest place in Heaven to Bethlehem then to Calvary.

He is the Sufferer. He suffered throughout His life, but most important of all, He suffered on the

cross when God punished Him for our sins. He cried, “My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” He is the source of every blessing. We are burdened by sin, empty and powerless. There is power, joy and hope in Him. If you miss Christ, you miss everything in this world that is lasting and the next. If you do not have Christ, you do not have life (1 John 5:12). This is the reality and enjoyment of all things.

3. Promise

“I will give you rest”. This is a free gift. It cannot be earned, but it is available freely to all. The moment you trust Christ, there is a rest, a peace, a calm that only He can give. It is available for you, but you must “come”. You can have peace in Him through believing. Will you stay away from Him?