

Resting

(Matthew 11:28-30)

Yearly Theme: *“Patience is...”*

Series Title: *“The Pursuit of Patience”*

June 5th, 2022

Something to think about:

As we begin this new series today entitled, *The Pursuit of Patience*, we come to a very familiar passage of Scripture. It’s a passage about coming to Christ to find rest. Let’s read the words of Matthew’s Gospel today, and more specifically, the words of Christ, beckoning us to come and find rest...

Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT),

²⁸ Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.” ¹

The word that Jesus uses for “rest” in this passage is aptly translated “revive” or “to remain quiet.” The Greek word is *“anapauo,”* and in the context that Jesus uses it means *“to cause to rest.”* What Jesus is offering here is for the weary person to find refuge in Him from the massive burden and distresses of this life. But it’s even more than this as we’ll see in just a moment. Suffice it to say...

Here’s the takeaway this morning:

Key Point: *“The pursuit of patience requires resting in GOD’s presence.”*

Some Biblical scholars wonder if Jesus didn’t have Jeremiah’s words in mind when He spoke this. Jeremiah, the Old Testament prophet of GOD, was tasked with the role of proclaiming GOD’s judgement over Judah before they were sent into exile by the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem. In chapter 6 of the book by his name, Jeremiah proclaims the words of GOD which had sought to bring His people rest. Listen to what he writes:

Jeremiah 6:16-17 (NLT), ¹⁶ This is what the LORD says: “Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, ‘No, that’s not the road we want!’

¹⁷ I posted watchmen over you who said, ‘Listen for the sound of the alarm.’ But you replied, ‘No! We won’t pay attention!’

Now, Jesus, several hundred years later beckons new travelers, new souls, to come and find rest, with the hope that it will not be rejected. So, how does a person find the type of rest Jesus is offering in this passage? Let’s look at three different things Jesus offers:

- True rest requires coming to Christ.

Matthew 11:28 (NLT), Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

- True rest requires learning from Christ.

Matthew 11:29 (NLT), Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

- True rest requires working with Christ.

Matthew 11:30 (NLT), “For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

Something to take home:

We cannot find rest in Christ until we let Him have the burdens we are carrying.

It’s been said that “The nearer the soul is to God, the less it’s restlessness; as the point nearest the center of a circle is subject to the least motion.”² The closer we are to the heart of GOD the more steady and stable we become. The closer we are in our walk with Christ, the more patient we are and the more abundant the rest we experience.

One final thing, theologian and author N. T. Wright explains that “When [Jesus] declares here, in the old translation, that he is ‘meek and lowly of heart’, he isn’t boasting that he’s attained some special level of spiritual achievement. He is encouraging us to believe that he isn’t going to stand over us like a policeman, isn’t going to be cross with us like an angry schoolteacher. And the welcome he offers, for all who abandon themselves to his mercy, is the welcome God offers through him. This is the invitation which pulls back the curtain and lets us see who ‘the father’ really is—and encourages us to come into his loving, welcoming presence.”³

Key Point: *“The pursuit of patience requires resting in GOD’s presence.”*

¹ Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Mt 11:28–30.

² Anonymous.

³ Tom Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1-15* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 137.