

**I Will Give You Rest**  
**From the Series, “The King and I – Matthew Tells Us About the King of the Universe”**  
**By Phil Brainerd**

**Introduction**

I once worked for a place that allowed people to meet before work to pray together. The standard habit with groups like this is to ask if anyone wants prayer for something special. One day, when that request was put out, a good friend of mine raised his hand. Here was his request: “Please pray for my wife - We had our first baby last month. She says that she’s terribly tired all the time, and no matter what she does, she just can’t seem to kick it.”



Standing next to me was a mature woman. She looked at a friend and quietly said: “Yeah, that will last about, oh, 20 years.”

Mothers know what it’s like to be tired all the time. But it’s not just mothers. Lots of people feel tired all the time.

At times like this, I can’t help but type simple questions into an Internet search engine. So, I went to Google and typed in, “How to stop feeling tired.” Here are results: Healthline.com had an article entitled: “15 Ways to Combat Tiredness” Three of the ways include: Get regular exercise, drink more water, and get good sleep. The site “WebMD” had an article with this title: “9 Ways to Get Your Energy Back”. Their ways included: Get moving, drink plenty of water, and get to bed early. Somehow, that sounds familiar. The next sight I ran into was “Health Link British Columbia”. Let’s see what our neighbors to the north have to say: Their article is entitled: “How to Stop Feeling Tired All the Time”. Their suggestions include: Increase physical activity, drink lots of water, and get enough sleep.

Well, there you go. These articles all had other things to say, but there were certainly some things in common. And that’s just the start- There are articles all over about feeling tired and how to overcome it.

Jesus had something to say about all this. Let’s look at one of his most famous statements:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”  
(Matthew 11:28)

We're in a series right now called, "Faith, followers, and Failures". We're in the book of Mathew, chapter 11. We're listening in on things that Jesus shared with the world of his day. In particular, we're looking at the way people reacted. Some had faith, and they followed Jesus. Some failed. Our message today is: "I will give you rest."

There were a few things that Jesus said before making that famous statement. Let's take a look.

25 At that time Jesus said, "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. 26 Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. 27 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." (Matthew 11:25-27)

What's Jesus doing here? Let's unpack this and find out.

## **I. The Authority of Jesus**

Jesus is going to start off with some statements that emphasize his authority. Let's look at the first statement:

"At that time Jesus said..." (Matthew 11:25)

What time was that? In our last session, we saw Jesus make some very stern statements. When we talk about "Faith, Followers, and Failures", he was talking about the "failures". Many of the people who failed to understand Jesus opposed him. Jesus said that some of those people were like spoiled, badly-behaved little children - They were like spoiled brats.

I've spoken in a lot of places. In some of those places, I've had listeners who disagreed. When that happens, I can't do things like compare my audience to spoiled brats. I try to find polite and respectful ways to explain my thoughts. I have to do that because I don't have lots of authority. I have some authority, but not lots - I'm just me.

Jesus however, had authority. So, if the best way to respond to people involved being stern, he could do that. In fact, in our last session, Jesus said things that were even stronger. He said that there were whole towns who failed to follow him. They failed to repent even though they saw incredible miracles. According to Jesus, things would go very badly for those towns in the final judgement. Those are things you only say when you have authority, and lots of it.

So, Jesus is going to share some things now that emphasize his authority.

## **A. He is the Son of God.**

We're going to see that Jesus has authority because he is the Son of God. Let's read on:

“I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth”

When Jesus prayed, he didn't sound like anyone else in his day. He didn't sound like anyone who came before him. When he spoke to God, he called him “Father”. That had a special meaning to his listeners. Jesus instructs us to refer to God as “Our Father in Heaven”. But it's different when he addresses the Father.

Let's look at another place where Jesus did this, and we'll see how people reacted.

...Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.” 18 For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. (John 5:17-18)

People in the days of Jesus sometimes thought of God as a Father. However, he was the father of all mankind. People are not equal with God. When Jesus prayed, he spoke with God the Father in a very unusual way, an intimate way - the way someone would speak to another who is equal. More on this later.

Jesus goes on to make this even more clear:

“...I praise you Father, *Lord of heaven and earth...*” (Matthew 11:25)

So, Jesus makes it clear. He's speaking to the Creator God. And he's speaking in an intimate way - A way mortal humans don't.

Jesus does even more than this to show his authority.

## **B. Jesus understand the ways of the Father**

Jesus demonstrates his intimate relationship with the Father by understanding the ways of the Father.

“...because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.” (Matthew 11:25(b)-26)

Jesus says three things here. First, God has hidden things from a group that Jesus calls the “wise and learned.” Now, if you look through the Bible, you’ll see a lot of respect for “wisdom”. You’ll also see respect for “learning”. So, Jesus isn’t saying that wisdom, intelligence, and learning, are necessarily bad things. However, it looks like these things can go wrong. And they often did in the days of Jesus.

Many of the people who opposed Jesus were highly educated people. There is something about spending lots of time with books that can make people think they don’t need God. They begin to feel that they have answers for everything. And all the answers come from the minds of people on earth. Any answer you could possibly need, some people think, can be found if you spend enough time at the library, or in the laboratory.

Sadly, there are lots of problems we have here on earth that will never be answered by spending time in the library. And sadder, there are many who will never discover this.

Then, there are children. Why does Jesus talk about children here? Children can be very humble. They’re very inquisitive. They’re always asking questions. How – How? Why – why? The difference between children and some adults is that when a child receives a good answer, they accept it and move on.

Previously, Jesus compared some of the people who opposed him to children. Comparing people to children is not always a bad thing. It’s a good thing when you’re talking about good children.

This is a figurative way of saying that God dislikes self-righteous, prideful people. However he likes humility. The apostle James said it in another place:

“God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” (James 4:6)

So, God reveals himself to humble people - People who come to him seeking truth. He does not reveal himself to prideful, self-sufficient people who think they don’t need any help.

Why does God do this?

Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. (Matthew 11:27)

God does this because he does what he pleases. He does what he pleases because he is God. No one tells God what to do. However, because God is good and kind, he often shows his love and grace even when he is not asked.

So, Jesus shows his authority because he understands the ways of the Father.

Next, Jesus has authority because the Father gave it to him.

All things have been committed to me by my Father (v 27).

What kind of things have been committed to Jesus? All things. That's a lot of things! Are there any exceptions? No. All things have been committed to Jesus. That's a lot of authority.

Next, we see that Jesus has authority because he is unlike any other being in the universe.

“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.” (v 27)

Jesus is like no one else. He has a unique relationship with the Father that no one else has. As we said earlier, he is equal with the Father. Only the Father can completely know Jesus, the Son. No one can understand the Father except Jesus, the Son. Fortunately for us, Jesus chooses to reveal the Father to anyone who comes to him. If you want to know God the Father, you must come to him through the Son.

There are lots of people in the world. Many of those people, if I were to compare them to myself, would be perfectly good people. However, one day all people will appear before God. There will be a final judgement. In that judgement, no one will be compared to other people. It doesn't matter whether you're better than me or I'm better than you. Everyone will be compared to the perfect standards of God. To pass that judgement, you must know Jesus.

There are lots of religions other than Christianity. There are lots of philosophies. But none of them teach people to know Jesus. Only Christianity does that. Here's how Jesus stated in another place:

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

That's a strong statement. If I were to make it, that wouldn't mean much. **But it's what Jesus says.** He said that no one comes to the Father except through him.

## **And Invitation**

Friends, do you know Jesus? He wants to show you his love. He wants to show you the Father. Let us tell you how you can know Jesus. We want you to enjoy Jesus and his love. There will be important information at the end of this article.

We've seen through all this that Jesus has great authority, because he is the Son of God.

Jesus offers us eternal life. But he also offers us wonderful things in this life as well. Now that we understand his authority, we're ready to look at what he offers to us in the famous statement that we started with.

## II. His Offer

Jesus makes a great offer. He calls to us, and this is what he says:

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 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. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

This is both a call and a promise. Let's take it apart.

"Come to me"

Once again, we see the authority of Jesus. Anyone else would have to say, "Go to God." Jesus says, "Come to me." Who is going to help us? Jesus. He can help us, because he is God, and he has all the authority of God.

Who should come?

...all you who are weary and burdened...

Jesus calls to everyone, no matter who you are. Rich or poor. No matter where you come from. Any nation, any people group. If you want to come to Jesus, you can come.

Jesus gives a special call though, to people who feel weary and burdened. To those people he says:

"I will give you rest"

Let's stop here and ask a question: What makes people feel weary and burdened? I think there are three sources of this feeling: **SLIDE**

- Physical (our body)
- Emotional
- Spiritual

If you recall the beginning of our message today, when people asked how to stop feeling tired, most sources concentrated on the physical. Suggestions included: Exercise more, drink more water, and get more sleep. Those aren't bad things to do.

Some of the articles moved on to talk about emotions. Suggestions in that area included trying to avoid stress. But here's something interesting: None of the articles talked about our spirits. What if that's the best place to start? That's what Jesus said.

Let me illustrate. I ran into someone a long time ago who spent time in the military. He hated it. Why? Because people yelled at him all the time. Any officer could point to any enlisted man at any time and yell out: "Drop and give me 50!" That means 50 pushups. The man I met hated that. He just couldn't wait to get out.

Or you could be Britney Spears. What does Britney Spears have to do with anything? One time, I ran into a segment on TV where the physical trainers of Britney were interviewed. Here's how a typical workout went: They made Britney do sit-ups and other very strenuous exercises. They said, when she was so tired, she was ready to throw up, they threw her into a pool so she could swim laps.

Why would Britney put up with that kind of treatment? In fact, Britney paid these people. Again, why? Here's why I think she does it: Most of the images you'll find on the Internet show Britney wearing some skimpy outfit on stage. In order to be able to wear skimpy outfits, you need to be in great shape. Britney makes tens of thousands of dollars every time she goes on stage. So, it's worth her while to pay people to put her through what most people would consider torture.

Let's say that someone said to me, "Drop and give me 50". But then they add "and, for each one, I'll pay you a hundred dollars." I would figure out how to do 50 pushups. And I would like it, because I would look forward to being paid. If pain leads to treasure, most people will put up with pain. Some even learn to enjoy it. On the other hand, if pain leads to humiliation, people hate it.

So, it's all in what you believe. If you believe the person giving you commands is a slave driver, you hate the commands. And you hate the person giving them. And you become weary and burdened.

On the other hand, if you believe the person giving commands is doing so for your best, you learn to enjoy the commands. And you love the person giving them.

Jesus tells us which of the two he offers:

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.  
(Matthew 11:29-30)

Jesus says he's going to give us rest. However, the way he's going to do it is to offer us a yoke. A yoke is something you put on an ox so it can pull things. It's interesting - A yoke makes life easier for the ox. If someone didn't care about the ox, they could just use ropes. The ropes would chafe against the animal's skin. They would pull tight on the neck, causing the ox to choke. On the other hand, a yoke evenly distributes weight. So, the animal is much more comfortable when it's pulling. A proper yoke is carved and adjusted to fit each individual animal perfectly. No two yokes should be exactly alike.

If you want to treat an ox properly, you provide a good, custom-made yoke. And then you're careful not to overload the ox.

In the days of Jesus, a lot of people felt like they were working for slave drivers. Worse yet, many of the religious leaders of the day presented God as a kind of slave driver. God, according to the teachers of the day, had all kinds of rules. So, if you wanted to live a life pleasing to God, it all boiled down to rules. Rule after rule after rule. You never knew when you were good enough. That made people tired. That made people suspicious of God.

Jesus said that's not how God is. God has a path, custom-made for each of us. That path is designed for our best. Jesus gives commands, but his commands come from a heart of love. He's not a slave driver. His commands lead to treasure in heaven. So, he can say: "Take **my** yoke upon you and learn from me, (my comment: because he is a slave-driver? No!) 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.

Let's pull this all together.

## **Conclusion**

Jesus called to the people of his day. Some rejected him. They failed. Now, he turns to everyone else, and calls people to himself. He makes them an incredible offer.

He is not a slave driver. He is kind and loving. He gives commands, but those commands are good for the soul.

If you feel weary - If you feel burdened, the answer is not to start with your body or your emotions. Exercise, water, and sleep are good. Watching your stress level is fine. But in the end, the spirit is the best place to start.

Give yourself to God. Let him command your life. Place yourself into his loving hands.  
If you do that, you will find true rest.

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Thanks for reading! Here are some helpful links:

Trinity Church  
[www.TrinityTeaneck.org](http://www.TrinityTeaneck.org)

Phil's Site  
[PhilBrainerd.com](http://PhilBrainerd.com)

To learn how to begin a new life with Jesus Christ, visit Billy Graham's site:  
[PeaceWithGod.net](http://PeaceWithGod.net)

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