

5. “Come to Me” (3Q 2021—Rest in Christ)

Biblical Material: Matt. 11:20–30; Matt. 5:5; Deut. 18:15; Gal. 5:1; Exod. 18:13–22; Gal. 6:2.

Quotes

- Everyone is in a process of spiritual formation. We are being shaped into either the wholeness of the image of Christ or a horribly destructive caricature of that image--destructive not only to ourselves but also to others, for we inflict our brokenness upon them . . . The direction of our spiritual growth infuses all we do with intimations of either Life or Death. *M. Robert Mulholland Jr.*
- We become either agents of God’s healing and liberating grace or carriers of the sickness of the world.”
M. Robert Mulholland Jr.
- The words “come unto Christ” are an invitation. It is the most important invitation you could ever offer to another person. It is the most important invitation anyone could accept. *Henry B. Eyring*
- We are called to show utter commitment to the God who is revealed in Jesus and to all those to whom His invitation is addressed. *Rowan Williams*
- God will meet you where you are in order to take you where He wants you to go. *Tony Evans*
- When God changes you, he doesn’t just do a paint job. He does it from the inside. *Ben Carson*

Questions

What do we really mean when we talk about “coming to Jesus”? What is the basis for Jesus’ invitation? What is the rest that Jesus offers, and how can we best participate in it? What insights do we gain into the character of God in this particular study? What does all this have to do with answering the charges of the Devil in the great controversy?

Bible summary

The presence of Jesus makes the rejection of him and his message even worse than previous rejections by towns like Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom. He calls on people to respond to him so he can give them rest (Matt. 11:20–30). Jesus tells his hearers, “Blessed are those who are kind for they will own the whole world.” Matt. 5:5 FBV. Moses tells the Israelites that God will give them a prophet like him (Deut. 18:15). Jesus sets us free (Gal. 5:1). Jethro urges Moses to delegate some of his responsibilities (Exod. 18:13–22). Paul tells us to bear one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:2).

Comment

As we take time to be restored, as we “come apart and rest awhile” instead of just coming apart (!), as we take the time to look and see and be healed by the God of Creation, we find rest for our restless hearts. In the wonders of the natural world may we see the spiritual lessons our loving God wishes us to learn, and in the peace and quiet of nature’s beauty may we not simply be entranced by the physical but delight in the mental and spiritual healing that our God so freely provides.

Part of gaining rest is sharing the burdens we carry. We need to take time to truly “go to God” and spend quality time with him, understanding the true priorities we should be following. Our highest aim must be to gain the healing Jesus offers, to become more like him, to have the same attitude that he did while here on earth (Philippians 2).

How does God restore this relationship that is vital for our continued existence? By showing the Devil and our first parents were totally wrong in their rejection of God, most effectively by Jesus’ life and death, showing us the truth about God. Once God has regained our trust, then he can heal us—an active intervention that restores the image of God in us. How? Well, think of how it was lost. The image of God was lost by repeated denials of truth, by choosing evil actions, by embracing lies. By recognizing truth is truth, choosing right over wrong, and by daily developing that relationship with the one who is the essence of Good, we come back into conformity with God’s reality and are healed and remade. The choices are in our brain!

Sometimes people just dismiss this as “only ideas.” Ideas are seen as something insubstantial, thoughts that come and go. But ideas have great power: to heal and to destroy. What was Lucifer’s great sin? An attitude of pride. Pride is an idea—that you are the greatest, that you are the most important, and that the universe revolves around you. This idea rejects the welfare of others, is totally selfish, and inevitably destructive. So it was an idea that dragged God’s perfect universe into all this conflict, this war that began in heaven. And it is an idea that wins us back: the proof of God as he really is, loving us back to himself. This is salvation.

Ellen White comments

Our Savior’s words, ‘Come unto Me,... and I will give you rest’ (Matt.11:28), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. {MH 115}

To the weary and heavy laden Christ says, “Come unto me... and I will give you rest.” Restless, craving, exhausted heart, think of the Saviour’s words, “Whosoever drinketh of this water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” Drink from the wells of worldly pleasure, and you will thirst again. Drink of the water of life, and you will be satisfied and refreshed; for it will be in you “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Love and light and truth and life are found in the everlasting gospel. Come, ye who labor and are heavy laden, come to the living water. “Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”{YI, September 11, 1902}

Why should we be ungrateful and distrustful? Jesus is our friend; all heaven is interested in our welfare; and our anxiety and fear grieve the Holy Spirit of God. We should not indulge in a solicitude that only frets and wears us, but does not help us to bear trials. . . . He invites the weary and care-laden, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Lay off the yoke of anxiety and worldly care that you have placed on your own neck, and “take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Matt. 11:28, 29. We may find rest and peace in God. {FLB 63}

We want to have fresh in our memory every tear the Lord has wiped from our eyes, every pain he has soothed, every anxiety removed, every fear dispelled, every want supplied, every mercy bestowed, and thus strengthen ourselves for all that is before us through the remainder of our pilgrimage. We cannot but look onward to new perplexities in the coming conflict, but we may look on what is past as well as what is to come, and say, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. {GW92 374-5}

Just trust yourself in the hands of God without anxiety, without fear. {DG 234}