

Sabbath School Lesson #5 – Come to Me – 24-30 July 2021

Christ says, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Whom does Christ receive? “This man receiveth sinners” (Luke 15:2). How many will He receive? “All ye that labour and are heavy laden.” How will He receive them? “All day long have I stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people” (Romans 10:21; Isaiah 65:2). And if they come, what assurance have they? “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). Let us go to Him; and remember that, wherever you may open Scriptures, they are they which testify of Him.

Sunday: I Will Give You Rest – To every soul, Christ cries, “Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” The rest is found in Him, because in Him the works of God are completed. In Him is the new creation, and if any man be in Him, he is a new creature. On the cross Jesus cried, “It is finished,” thus showing that in His cross we find that perfect rest that comes alone from the finished work of the Lord. This rest is gained by faith. “We which believe do enter into rest” (Hebrews 4:3). How so? – By faith we have the finished, God’s perfect work as our own. “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent” (John 6:29). Believing Him means receiving Him; and since in Him the works of God are complete, it follows that by believing on Him we find the rest. The rest that He gives is rest from sin. The heavy laden whom He calls to Him are those who are burdened with the weight of their sins. All men are thus burdened, “for all have sinned.” Our best works are utterly worthless. Christ will have a people who are “zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14-15), but the good works must be those which God Himself has wrought for us in Christ. And “His work is honourable and glorious; and His righteousness endureth for ever” (Psalm 111:3). Only His work is enduring. Therefore, “by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared, that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10). It is “not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 3:5-6). Let us go to Christ to receive rest.

Monday: Take My Yoke Upon You – Before any man takes the yoke of Christ, he has to be born again. But this new birth implies a previous death, and that death is by crucifixion (See Galatians 2:20). Now crucifixion was a form of punishment for criminals, and its use as applied to those who thereby become Christ’s shows a previous condition of rebellion. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7); “Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord” (Isaiah 30:8-9). From this rebellious state we are brought into the condition of servants – under the yoke of Christ. This “yoke” is derived from the Roman custom of erecting a yoke and causing those whom they had conquered in battle to pass under it, as a token of their complete surrender. This ancient custom also explains the act of David, in putting the men of Rabbah “under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron,” and making them pass through the brick kiln (2 Samuel 12:31). It was the same as making them pass under the yoke, as a token of their being his servants. So Christ says to us, “Take My yoke upon you.” Taking the yoke of Christ upon us is to yield ourselves completely to Him, for Him henceforth to rule every act and every thought. As Paul says it, it is “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Right here it should be noticed that true service to Christ is willing service. We are His bond-servants, brought into captivity to Him, but it was love that bought us, so that we gladly submit. The servant of a coarse man would be a most abject creature. But to be a servant of Christ is the highest honour that any creature can have in the universe. Angels in heaven, that excel in strength, do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word, and are glad to declare themselves only fellow-servants with those who on earth are wholly devoted to Christ (Revelation 22:9). Of truth, the slave of Christ is the only free man in the world. Paul says: “For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman;

likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (1 Corinthians 7:22-23). David says: "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds" (Psalm 116:16). Here we have bondage and freedom. The man out of Christ is an abject slave; he is "holden with the cords of his sins" (Proverbs 5:2). But the moment he yields himself unconditionally to Christ to be His servant, the body of sin is destroyed, and henceforth, if he continues to be the Lord's servant, sin has no more dominion over him. He is free to do the right. His bondage is the bondage of love, and he finds the yoke easy.

There is no freedom outside of Christ. The Christian is the only man on earth who really has his liberty. Sin and lawlessness are a grievous yoke of bondage, and Christ alone can break this yoke from off our necks. Anarchists fight against all law; they feel that something is galling their necks, and they imagine that it is the law, and so they would fain abolish law. But that which galls them is the yoke of sin which they bear. The law of God in Christ Jesus is not a grievous yoke. There is no man so much at liberty as the one who keeps the law of God, and this can be kept only when one is in Christ. The one who perfectly obeys the law never feels it. Said the psalmist: "I will walk at liberty; for I seek Thy precepts" (Psalm 119:45). And our Saviour set forth the whole matter as follows: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:34-36). Before this He had said: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (verse 32). This agrees with the other – Christ is the truth (John 14:6).

Tuesday: I Am Gentle and Lowly in Heart – No one can truly serve God while he seek exaltation and men's applause (see Mark 10:35-45). Lowly service is the mark of greatness in the kingdom of God. Christ is greatest, because He has done the greatest service. He has the highest position, because He is the most lowly in heart. The great things in the kingdom of God are not the things that are talked about, and published in the newspapers, and applauded in reports of religious work. Ah, it is so easy to do great service when everybody looks on and appreciates. But to do humble service, that is not noticed, or if regarded is only despised, that is not so attractive. We cannot possibly bring ourselves to this kind of service. We begin to efface ourselves because we know that this is the way to exaltation; but since we have exaltation in view, we inevitably and unconsciously collide into what seems to be the most direct and natural way to exaltation, that is, self-advancement. No; the only way it can be done is by being filled with and controlled by the Spirit of Christ. Christ is pre-eminently "The Servant." When He serves in us, the service will be perfect, because worldly methods will be entirely obliterated. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."

Wednesday: For My Yoke Is Easy – What is there about the law of God that should cause men to try to shake it off? Is it a burdensome yoke? – Not by any means. Jesus said: "My yoke is easy." Now see how perfectly this agrees with what is said of the law: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). Instead of being a burdensome yoke, the law of God in Christ gives peace and rest. It is a comfort. "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Proverbs 6:23). And "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them" (Psalm 119:165). Since the law of God is love, it is evident that those who seek to cast away God's bands and cords, are rejecting His love. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:7). Christ is He by whom men are drawn (John 12:32), because in Him is God's law of love. To reject the law of God is to reject Christ. Let us not reject our Saviour.

Thursday: My Burden Is Light – Christ says, find rest in meekness and lowliness, for "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Many are worried and burdened. But that which worries us, and tires us, is this pride of life that makes us think that we can and must do everything ourselves. But we cannot do it, and that is why it tires us. We are heavy laden with sin, and that which wearies us is our vain attempt to work out righteousness. Even in outreach work, we should know it is Christ who does it in our infirmities; He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).