

The Great Invitation of Christ

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The entire Gospel message is one great invitation to men to return to God through Christ. However, the classic summary of this Heavenly invitation is in Jesus' Words of Matthew 11:28-30. This famous passage begins, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The lessons and implications of this invitation are most weighty.

1. **Truths about the Savior.** The invitation implies the Deity of Christ. Only God could make such an offer as He makes here. The purpose of Christ's work on earth is shown here as basically one of mercy. He came the first time to save; He will come the second time to judge. He provides the perfect example of being meek and lowly, although He had all the resources of both Heaven and earth with which to protect Himself. He has a yoke, a manner of life which He would have all men wear, but it is one that is easily worn compared to all other yokes.
2. **Truths about sin.** It is a burden, in fact, the heaviest burden men can bear. The load of sin is heavy because of the guilt that it brings. It is also heavy because of its evil consequences during this life (injury, illness, broken homes, and lives) and eventually, its eternal consequences. The burden of sin can be lifted; Jesus said, "I will give you rest." And **only** Jesus can take it from us. No man can unburden himself of sin.
3. **Truths about sinners.** All men are sinners and because of this, all are alienated from God. Christ invites sinners to come to Him because they left Him. Christ has never forced Himself on anyone. Men are invited to come to Him, and they must do so if they desire salvation.
4. **Truths about salvation.** Salvation from sin is now available through Christ whereas for centuries it was only promised and prophesied. The invitation is as universal as sin: not merely a few predestined ones are invited, but **all** that labor and are heavy laden are included. Christ's salvation is conditional. He has a "yoke" that we must wear. We must be willing to exchange servitude of Satan and self for servitude of Christ. Salvation carries its own burdens and responsibilities, but they are indeed light when compared with the burdens of sin. Salvation is not miraculously or instantaneously imputed, but it is the result of learning of Jesus, then taking up His yoke in obedience.

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