

# What Kind of Rest Does Jesus Give?

Sermon Notes for July 9 2017 at Brentwood

Ps 45:10-17 & Matthew 11:25-30



**Come to me, all you who are weary  
and carrying heavy burdens,  
and I will give you rest.  
(Matt:11:28)**

## Provocative Ponderings that Call Forth Our Potential in Christ

- This passage is so typical of the teachings of Jesus – have you ever noticed that they don't make sense – at least, easy sense – they don't fit into our normal ways of thinking and acting – there's always a challenge to see things differently – to see things through God's eyes, with God's heart, in friendship with God – that's what I think is happening here
- It's an odd combination of ideas – did you notice that in your ponderings this week? – it's a strange mix of images – weariness, burdens, yokes, and rest - the wise and intelligent, the sages, gurus, and pundits of the age, are confounded – the vision of the Commonwealth of God makes more sense to infants – remember, in Jesus' teaching, children are far more open to God's parental love than adults – that's the key to understanding this part of the passage - they are more accepting and more responsive, the qualities of faith that are crucial to knowing the rest that Jesus, and only Jesus, offers in its fullness – remember the ways in which children respond with smiles and laughter when they feel authentically welcomed here – running around the aisles, from person to person – then back to the loving arms of their parents or grandparents – sadly, that's a kind of wisdom we too often lose as we grow older
- But now more confusion about what kind of rest that is – here are a couple of insights worth cultivating that the Spirit drew my attention to this week:
  - I loved this image when I came upon it – it's worth a thousand words about our text – the burdens of the yoke are not removed – rather, Jesus is with us in bearing those burdens and giving us the rest that comes from being with him, being his friend, being, as Paul comes to put it, 'in Christ' - knowing that God is with us in Christ through the power of the Spirit (note the flow of this formula) – with Jesus, the Christ, at our side and working with us, our burdens, whatever they may be, are manageable – they do not define us – rather, Jesus' companionship does – so, the insight is that the burden is light when we take on Jesus' yoke with him as our companion
  - And I've come to think of 'rest' in this passage as the rest that brings recovery for further effort – in sports psychology, they call it 'the oscillation principle' – you don't exert energy constantly – you have to develop a rhythm of exertion and rest – let's think of being yoked in the mission of blessing the world – 'co-missioning' in a way – at times one will bear more of the work, at times the other, and at times both will exert energetically or both will find a more restful pace – I think that's the kind of rest that Jesus offers – it's the rest of rhythm and pacing

Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,  
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**At this point in our ponderings, then ...**

Does this kind of 'rest' makes sense to the child in us – to that dimension of your authenticity that is still open to accepting and participating in God's mission of blessing the world – we have energy to burn – we are curious, joyful, and enthusiastic – but we also get exhausted – we need to learn to pace ourselves, to oscillate, to find a rhythm that works for us of exerting for the Commonwealth of God and resting in prayerful friendship with Jesus, the Christ