

Sermon for July 5, 2026 – The 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 11:25-30 EHV

Theme: **Come to Jesus . . .**

- 1) In childlike faith,
- 2) To find rest in His promises.

²⁵At that time, Jesus continued, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from clever and learned people and have revealed them to little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, because this was pleasing to you. ²⁷Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal him. ²⁸“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Do you feel stressed out by all your obligations at work, school, or at home? Are financial responsibilities, health troubles, or relationship problems exhausting you? Do you feel general anxiety over all the negative things happening in the world?

As heavy as these things are, an even greater burden presses upon your soul - one that few people are willing to talk about: the burden of guilt. Let me explain what I mean.

All the evil we experience in life is a consequence of sin being in the world. Much of the stress and exhaustion we feel directly results from our trying to deal with our problems on our own. Feelings of guilt prevent us from seeking help from God, as we turn more in on ourselves, calculating how we can make things better on our own.

But we can't make things better on our own. We need God's help. We need His forgiving love.

Let us, therefore, heed Jesus' invitation to **come to Him**: 1) in childlike faith, 2) to find rest in His promises.

Part One: Come to Jesus in childlike faith.

Our sermon text takes place after John sent some disciples to ask Jesus if He was the Christ. Jesus pointed John's disciples to the work He did in fulfilment of the Scriptures. After they left, Jesus lamented over the unbelief and impenitence many in Israel exhibited – despite His many miracles.

²⁵At that time, Jesus continued, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from clever and learned people and have revealed them to little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, because this was pleasing to you.

Why is Jesus thanking His Father for hiding His Gospel from clever and learned people? Doesn't He want all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth?ⁱ Yes, the LORD certainly desires everyone's salvation. God's Word not only explicitly says it, but Jesus proved it by dying for the sins of all.ⁱⁱ

How, then, are we to understand Jesus' words?

The "clever and learned" are those who imagine themselves as more enlightened than simple Christians; people who believe they don't need a Saviour. Some try to deal with their guilt by denying God's existence – dreaming that if there is no God, sin cannot exist either. Others imagine they can save themselves by outweighing the bad they do with good. Thinking they deserve God's love, they don't view their sins as all that terrible as to need forgiveness.

Make no mistake: Jesus also wants these people to be saved, but that can only happen if they acknowledge their sins, humble themselves before God, and repent. God, therefore, doesn't reveal His Gospel to them because they have no use for it. Instead, He uses His Law to expose the evil attitudes of their hearts so they might acknowledge their need for Him and repent.ⁱⁱⁱ

That is why Jesus praises His Father for hiding His Gospel from the "clever and learned," revealing it to little children instead.

Who are the "little children"? They are those who, instead of trying to act as if they don't need God or act as if He is being unfair, humbly submit themselves under His loving care. Like little children, they cry genuine tears of remorse when reprimanded, looking to be reassured of their forgiveness. When called, they come running, eager to hear what their heavenly Father has to say. Like little children, they hold nothing back. They bring Him even their most embarrassing problems — unafraid, trusting He will forgive and help them.

The little children are the exact opposite of the "clever and learned." They come running to Jesus at His invitation, not because they have the power to do so on their own, but because the Holy Spirit allows them to recognize in Jesus' call not only the voice of Him who created them but also He who promised to mercifully forgive and save them as well.

Jesus says:

²⁷Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father.

Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. He has the power to address all your earthly problems, working in all of them for your good.^{iv} More importantly, He alone has the power to fix your broken relationship with the Father, as Jesus continues:

No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

But this invites the question: to whom does Jesus want to reveal God? Not to the haughty, impenitent, or those who rely on their worthiness to save them. No, Jesus reveals His Father's

love to the humble, to those who acknowledge their sins and unworthiness and cry out in childlike faith: “Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!”^v God reveals Jesus, and Jesus reveals God to those He mercifully draws through His Word — while those who don’t know Him have only their contempt for His Word to blame.

So what does this mean for us? All too often, we take the Gospel for granted. All too often, we look to the world or ourselves for help, instead of the LORD who stands ready to hear our prayers and answer us through His Word. All too often, we are tempted to treat Jesus’ precious Gospel as something meant only for an emergency, or as stories meant to help children grow, but not for our adult, worldly problems. We pursue humanistic cleverness and learning, thinking that it will enlighten us to what is good, all the while despising the supreme wisdom Jesus offers us in His Word.

Still worse, the more we despise the Gospel, the more hidden it becomes until it vanishes from us altogether.

May this scary truth lead us to pray: “Forgive me, Lord. Too often I’ve treated your Word with contempt — ignoring it, arguing with it, and trusting worldly cleverness ahead of you. Whenever I despise your Word, I despise both you and the salvation you won for me. Help me realize that, without your grace, I’d be as lost as the world. Forgive my sins and move me to ever heed your call to come to you.”

If this is your genuine prayer, know this: the LORD has forgiven all your sins for Jesus’ sake. He lived the perfect life of obedient trust in His Father that we all failed to live. He paid for all our sins through His death on the cross and rose from the grave to prove they are forgiven. You are at peace with God – so much so that He is calling you now through our sermon text to find rest in His Word.

Part Two: Come to Jesus to find rest in His Promises.

²⁸ “*Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*”

Oh, how wonderful these words of Jesus are! Who among us isn’t weary and burdened? Who among us isn’t carrying a load of guilt and regret?

And Jesus gives you rest. How? By forgiving your sins! And how wonderful it is to know this: that every evil thought, word, and action of yours was crucified with Christ on His cross – forgiven in full to never stand against you again. How can you be so sure? Because Jesus’ resurrection proves God accepted His payment for your sins. You are reconciled to God.

And if Jesus reconciled you to God, you are at peace with Him. More than that, He has adopted you as His dearly loved child through Baptism.^{vi} Take a moment to consider what this means for you as you hear what God’s Word says:

See the kind of love the Father has given us that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are!^{vii} Now if we are children, we are also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ...^{viii}

Jesus continues:

²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

A yoke is a wooden beam that people put across the shoulders of animals (like oxen) to bind them to a load. Ancient slaves would also use a type of yoke to balance heavy loads on their backs. Many yokes looked heavy, causing them to become a symbol of oppression. But not Jesus' yoke. His yoke is special.

To understand Jesus' statement about it, we need to know that in Jewish culture, the Mosaic Law (the Torah) was often spoken of as a yoke. Why? Because it was supposed to bind the people to God and mark them as His servants. But the Law, with all its dos and don'ts, is oppressive. How so? Because it doesn't help us bear our guilt. Instead, it adds to it because we can't keep the law perfectly.

Jesus, however, invites us to take up a different yoke: His Gospel of forgiveness, life, and salvation. At first glance, this yoke might seem burdensome because of how the unbelieving world treats Christians – making fun of them for their faith, even to the point of physical persecution.

But Jesus calls this burden of His yoke light. Why? Because the Gospel gets rid of the burden of guilt. All our sins have been paid for in full. Eternal life is ours through faith in Him. And if Christ made this future rest certain for us, all the other problems we face in life become a lot easier for us to bear.

So what if people make fun of me for believing in Jesus? God has revealed the truth to me, the truth of Jesus that sets me free.^{ix} So what if my finances are tight? God promises to provide everything for my body and life as I keep focused on Him and His kingdom.^x So what if my earthly life is full of misery and suffering? Jesus promises to be with me through it all^{xi} – His Spirit praying for me^{xii} as He prepares an everlasting glory that will far outweigh it all.^{xiii} Not only that, but I can be confident that *the Lord will rescue me from every evil work and will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom.*^{xiv} Why? Because He graciously promises it through His Word.

Yes, Jesus teaches us all these things through His Word. Therefore, He invites us to come to Him in repentant faith. Don't be afraid, thinking that your sins are too great for Him to forgive. Remember what He said: *I am gentle and humble in heart.*

So, go to Jesus for rest. Why? Because, as the Bible promises: ⁸ *The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in mercy. ⁹ He will not always accuse. He will not keep his anger forever. ¹⁰ He does not treat us as our sins deserve. He does not repay us according to our guilty deeds. ¹¹ Yes, as high as the heavens are above the earth, so powerful is his mercy toward those who fear him. ¹² As distant as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our rebellious*

acts from us. ¹³ *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.* ^{xv}

Yes, brothers and sisters in Christ, go to Jesus in childlike faith whenever the guilt of your sins or the burdens of life weigh you down and find rest in His Word. In Him, that rest is already yours. Amen.

ⁱ Cf. 1 Timothy 2:4

ⁱⁱ Cf. John 1:29

ⁱⁱⁱ Cf. John 3:16-21, 1 Corinthians 5:5

^{iv} Cf. Romans 8:28

^v Cf. Luke 18:13-14

^{vi} Cf. Galatians 3:26-27

^{vii} 1 John 3:1 EHV

^{viii} Romans 8:17a EHV

^{ix} Cf. John 8:31-32

^x Cf. Matthew 6:31-33

^{xi} Cf. Matthew 28:20

^{xii} Cf. Romans 8:26-27

^{xiii} Cf. Romans 8:18

^{xiv} 2 Timothy 4:18 EHV

^{xv} Psalm 103:8–13 EHV