

The Christian.

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EDITORIAL.

REST FOR THE WEARY.

Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matt. 11 : 28, 29, 30.

Two facts are sufficient to show the importance of this rest. 1st. It is the Son of the living God who urges the weary to accept of it. 2nd. It can only be found in him. Come unto me, etc. Either of these parts claims most attentive consideration, the two combined makes inattention unpardonable criminality. No word can describe his guilt who turns away from him who speaketh from heaven.

Let us notice :

I. Who are the persons Jesus calls to him for rest.

II. On what terms does he promise that rest.

I. Who are the persons Jesus calls to him for rest. It is all that labor and are heavy laden. It has often been described as persons under deep conviction for sins, who have been thus convicted by the law of Moses and who are striving and laboring and praying for an assurance of God's pardoning love but not finding peace to their souls. It has been taught that Jesus invites such and only such to come to him for rest. If such was Jesus' meaning how many would he find in his day thus convicted? How many in every age and in every place are thus convicted of sin and thus laboring for rest? But Jesus invites all and sends his gospel to every creature.

Again, what gives us a deep conviction of sin but the gospel of Christ, whose first fact is "That Christ died for our sins," etc. The same fact which describes our deep guilt, declares the wonderful love of Christ in dying for that guilt. The law of Moses could never so convince us of our sins as the amiable Son of God dying for them, and for this reason the gospel is Christ's first message to be preached to sinners. The apostles were never sent to preach the law of Moses, first or last, but to preach the gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and by it the Holy Spirit convinces the world of sin as well as of righteousness. Those who labored and were heavy laden were not those who were under conviction of sin, but those who were seeking to satisfy their minds' craving with the perishable things of earth, spending their money for that which was not bread, and their labor for that which satisfieth not. All that class of disappointed laborers Jesus invites to him and promises them rest to their souls. Their ever expanding minds he is able to fill and delights to satisfy forever, and with the throbbings of eternal love says "Come unto me," etc.

II. On what terms does Jesus promise that rest?

1st. He commands the weary to come unto him. Many are not satisfied with the weary *doing* anything, and contend that Jesus must do it all so as to have all the glory. The whole history of Jesus refutes and exposes this error, so does that of his apostles. Jesus commanded the man with the withered hand, first, to stand forth, and he did so. Then he told him to stretch forth his hand; he did so and was healed. He could heal him without the man moving if he pleased, but he did better. It was far better for the man to hear and believe and obey Jesus, and show others his trust in the Divine Healer, than if no command was given. It was more glory to Jesus to treat the man as an intelligent, responsible being, destined to hold an eternal companionship with himself, than to treat him as an irrational animal, or a mere machine. So, also, he commanded the blind man to wash in the pool, who gladly obeyed him, and was made whole. And so Jesus commands the heavy laden to come unto him and find rest. Both the disabled and the blind man knew that neither the stretching out the hand nor the washing had in them a merit. All merit was in Christ, but they were glad to obey him and give him all the glory. The weary and heavy laden, when they put all their trust in Jesus, are glad to do whatever he may tell them to do, knowing that all merit is in him alone.

No command can be so sweet as that of Jesus to sinful, disappointed wanderers, "Come unto me," etc. You are unhappy because you are from home and among deadly enemies. My Father sent me to die for you that he might honorably pardon you and bring you back to his favor. Come unto me that you may have his favor and rest at home. When sinners understand that sweet command and gladly resolve to turn from their sins to Jesus, they are glad, glad that he died for their sins and offers to save them. He that comes to God, or to the Son of God, must believe that he is and is, a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

2nd. Jesus' second command here is: "Take my yoke upon you," etc. Jesus has a yoke by which those who believe in him with all their heart and resolve to forsake their sins are united to Christ. Many are in the dark as to the meaning of Christ's yoke, and we often hear of a number of yokes, such as the yoke of repentance, of self-denial and the yoke of prayer, etc., etc. Now the yoke of Christ means one thing, and not many. The Jews knew the meaning of a yoke. A literal yoke was an instrument that joined together two oxen for training and work. They also had figurative yokes, such as Moses' yoke or the yoke of bondage, which was circumcision, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. (Acts xv. 10, Gal. v. 1.) They as a nation were under the Roman yoke or government.

When Christ spoke of his yoke he meant

one thing and not a dozen. He meant an instrument or institution by which those who came to him were legally united to him or put him on. What was the first thing which those who came to Christ did? They were baptized by Jesus' command. The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, etc. John's disciples said to him of the Christ, "The same baptizeth and all men come to him." But to put this matter beyond dispute we will place in one column from the record of the same Evangelist what Jesus told his apostles to teach the people, and in an opposite one what he told the scholars or people to do. (R. V)

To the Teachers, Matt. 28.

1. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations.
2. Baptizing them unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
3. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.
4. And lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world.

To the Scholars, Matt. 11 :

Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.
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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

By thus comparing what Jesus told his teachers with what he said to the scholars, the way for the weary and heavy laden to come to him and find rest to their souls seems as plain as it could be made. To further confirm this we can read what the teachers did say to them and what they did do who came to Jesus and found rest.

They taught the nations who Jesus was and what he had done and suffered to put away sin, that these sufferings were for their sins. How God had accepted of his death for them, and was now reconciling the world unto himself in Christ, not imputing unto them their sins. Told his terms of salvation. Those of the nations who believed in Christ, and made up their minds to turn from their sins and become his disciples, they baptized into the name of the glorious three.

After they had thus taken the yoke they taught them all things which Jesus had commanded them.

These commandments we find in his sermon on the mount, his conversation with the disciples after Judas had gone out to betray him and interspersed throughout his whole history. To show the beauty and blessedness of his commandments he set the example in all that he enjoined on his disciples.

We find the apostles teaching Jesus' commandments in their letters to the churches. These commandments are not grievous, they are all given to benefit the disciples as well to glorify the Master.

Jesus makes a distinction between his yoke and his burden. He says my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. His yoke is his own positive institution in which the believer puts him on and is initiated into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. That yoke is plainly understood it is easily put on, and on this very account has been reproached and rejected. Yet when John hesitated to baptize Jesus he said, "Suffer it to be so now for *thus* it becometh