

Ancient Paths to Rest

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Today's Treasure

God said, "This is the resting place, let the weary rest", and "This is the place of repose" – but they would not listen. So then, the word of the Lord to them will become: "Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here; a little there – so that they will go and fall backward, be injured and snared and captured."

Isaiah 28:12-13

Are you tired? Weary? Are you beginning today with an already overflowing schedule? Are too many people clamoring for your time? Or do you dread getting up in the morning because a new day means another twenty-four hours to live with a broken heart? I have good news for you, a message from our gentle Savior.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30.

Jesus, our gentle brother, does not promise physical rest but something far more important – soul rest. Is it possible to experience soul rest in our daily world of too many commitments, too much stuff, and too much self-absorption? Is it possible to reflect the gentleness of our Savior in the midst of our anxious, frantic, too much pressure, too little time culture? Is it possible to display His gentleness when your own heart is broken? There seems to be a conflicted message in this passage.

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

Matthew 11:28

But that way of rest is to...

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matthew 11:29-30

Rather than relieving our schedules, it appears Jesus is urging us to add one more responsibility to our list of things to do. Bur is He? What is the yoke Jesus wants us to carry?

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and strength.
Matthew 22:37*

*Love your neighbor as yourself.
Matthew 22:39*

*What does the Lord require?
To act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.
Micah 6:8*

*Be still and know that He is God.
Psalm 46:10*

A Godly Love Affair... Shortly after the death of our son, another bereaved mother whispered in my ear as tears streamed down both of our faces, "Jesus wants to have a love affair with you." In the dark midnight of grief, my greatest need was to receive Jesus' love me. Mark's death reminded me the non-negotiable of my life is to rest in His love. Taking on the yoke of Jesus ties us tightly to Him, it is an intimate love affair with Him. This love affair results in soul rest. Soul rest produces lives of purpose and peace even in the middle of urgent needs. Weary, burdened children of God are nothing new. Isaiah 28:12-13 describes the reaction of the Israelites to God's call to "the resting place":

God said, "This is the resting place, let the weary rest", and "This is the place of repose" – but they would not listen. So then, the word of the Lord to them will become: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here; a little there – so that they will go and fall backward, be injured and snared and captured."

Oh my. Refusing God's invitation to "the resting place" results in frantic doing and bondage to our own rules. What is wrong with us? Why do we add more tasks and rules to feel approved and loved by our God when such a choice takes us backward and enslaves us? What is the "resting place" to which God called His people – the place they refused to go? The place we often refuse to go? The resting place is the heart of God where our doing doesn't earn us deeper love. Where we learn that because of Jesus, God sees us as His children, forgiven and covered with grace. When the Israelites were

boxed in by Pharaoh's army, "terrified and cried out to the Lord" Moses reassured them:

Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today....The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.

Exodus 14:13-14

God's "resting place" for His children has not changed:

"Be still and know that I am God."

Psalms 46:10

Choose the Ancient Path. Stop trying to find a different way to "please God". Before you sigh with disappointment I haven't given you a new secret way to find "rest for your soul" know God is the One Who calls us back to the "ancient path". Jesus' statement in Matthew 11:28-29 is rooted in this Old Testament Scripture:

This is what the Lord says, "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls..."

Jeremiah 6:16

The Israelites did not like God's pathway to the "place of repose". In response to God's exhortation to ask for the ancient way, they said, "We will not walk in it..." The invitation of our gentle Savior to exchange our weariness for soul rest remains the same. His yoke is easy. It is in loving Him with all our hearts, minds and souls. It is in loving others because of the way He loves us. It is the ancient way, the good way that leads us to rest for our souls.

God's Invitation - Friends, we stand at the crossroads of "The Resting Place" and "Rebellion." Not only does God prepare "The Resting Place" for His children, along the "ancient path" are treasures designed to lead us into the "place of repose" that results in soul rest. Open up these treasures and enjoy the priceless privileges of the yoke that will give you rest.

- His Word: Love letters designed to reveal His love and encourage me to believe His love covers me
- His Holy Spirit: As we soak in God's Word, God's Holy Spirit pours out God's love in our daily lives, moment by moment
- The Family of God: Cultivating meaningful friendships and corporate worship deepens our love for God
- God's Omnipotence: God is sovereign and we can trust Him.

So now, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith in his promises, we can have real peace with him because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. For because of our faith, he has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be.

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us learn to be patient. And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady. Then, when that happens, we are able to hold our heads high no matter what happens and know that all is well, for we know how dearly God loves us, and we feel this warm love everywhere within us because God has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

Romans 5:1-5 (TLB)

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