

JULY 13, 2025

SERIES 2: FAITH PASSAGES

TRUST AND REST

## LESSON 2.2

### FOCUS VERSES

**Matthew 11:28–30**

<sup>28</sup> Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

<sup>29</sup> 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.

<sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

### LESSON TEXT

**Matthew 11:25–30**

### TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus invites us to come to Him for rest.

### TRUTH FOR MY LIFE

I will come to Jesus for my rest.

### Thinking about Last Week:

Have students refer to their Daily Devotional Guide to answer the following questions:

1. What most affected you as you read through the Lesson Text and the Biblical Insights?
2. How did it shape your prayers and thoughts throughout the week?
3. Do you feel you grew closer to the Lord this past week? Why or why not?

### TEACHING OUTLINE

**Icebreaker:** Have you ever been given a task that included a specific list of detailed instructions that were impossible to follow?

**Lesson Connection:** Share the Lesson Connection.

» *Do you remember what it was like when you were a child and found it easy to believe virtually anything someone older than you said?*

#### I. CHILDLIKE FAITH

##### A. Childlike Faith Trusts

» *What is a mistake one of Jesus' disciples made that has helped you avoid the same mistake in your life?*

##### B. The "Wise" Are Often Cynical

» *Are there examples in your life when following godly wisdom instead of worldly wisdom was a great blessing? Are there examples when you made the mistake of not following godly wisdom and learned a lesson the hard way?*

##### C. I Will Choose Childlike Faith

» *What are the most common "faith substitutes" that rob us of faith in God when we decide to trust in them more than Him?*

#### II. JESUS' INVITATION

- A. Jesus Invites Us to Rest in Him
  - » *What lessons have you learned from trials you've been through?*
- B. Jesus' Yoke Symbolizes Our Partnership with Him (I)
- C. I Will Come to Jesus for My Rest

### **Internalizing the Message (V)**

#### **Prayer Focus**

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us leave our burdens at His feet
- For God to reveal problems we are trying to solve with our own effort when we need His help

### **LESSON CONNECTION**

Trevor was concerned and somewhat confused. Like most young boys living in America in 1980, he enjoyed hearing stories of the wars that had been fought in American history. George Washington, Douglas MacArthur, and Sergeant York were some of his heroes. Trevor imagined himself one day fighting for his country and receiving a medal for bravery.

However, in all his seven years on the planet, he had never heard of anything so terrible as the news that came across the airwaves of the radio. He paused for a moment to try and picture the scene. Somewhere in a country that was certainly nothing like the United States, a village had been taken over by a group of “gorillas” wielding M16s. Entire families, including women and children, were gathered together and terrorized by these apes who somehow had managed to learn how to operate machine guns.

Trevor pictured in his mind the terror that most certainly stained that day on the other side of the world: families just like his family rounded up by these animals who certainly would never listen to reason. How were the humans not able to outsmart them? What could the gorillas possibly have planned next? Trevor paused for a moment and became extremely thankful that in his experience in America, the only place gorillas could ever be found was behind the bars of safety at the local zoo.

Years later Trevor discovered the meaning of the word *guerrilla*, which sounded exactly the same as the word *gorilla*. As an adult he still chuckles when telling this story, along with one about his father teasing him on their last trip to the beach about how the chef caught the hush puppies they were eating. Children often have difficulty distinguishing between the truth and jokes adults like to tell because God created us with a tremendous capacity for faith.

A child is often willing to believe virtually anything an authority figure declares as truth, even if it seems somewhat preposterous. That is why we must take seriously the admonition in Scripture to train up our children in the way they should go, taking every advantage of the opportunities we have to teach them the foundational truths of the Word of God when they will so readily receive them.

It also underscores the need for us to examine our level of faith to determine if we have the same ability to receive the truth in the Word of God. If Trevor mistakenly believed that gorillas could take up automatic weapons just because that's what he heard an authority figure on the radio say, how much more should God's children receive His timeless truth? Through God's Spirit, let's develop childlike faith to live a life pleasing to the Lord.

*Do you remember what it was like when you were a child and found it easy to believe virtually anything someone older than you said?*

### **BIBLE LESSON**

## **I. CHILDLIKE FAITH**

### **A. Childlike Faith Trusts**

Older adults often observe children playing and remark how wonderful it would be to have that level of energy. At least a portion of a child's high energy level could be attributed to a complete lack of worry over anything other than the fun they want to have in the next moment. Children are not concerned about the power bill, interest rates, their 401K, or the upcoming busy season at work. Perhaps they instinctively understand the lesson Jesus taught about worry not having the ability to add a single inch to our stature.

If we desire the energy of a child to accomplish the practical tasks we find important, how much more should we desire the faith of a child to accomplish the spiritual activities that would be beneficial to our lives and the advancement of God's kingdom? Jesus declared quite plainly: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). Obviously Jesus was not calling on His followers to display the immature actions we may see from children when their parents say no to them in the checkout line of the grocery store; He was speaking of the faith of a child we possess during the stage of life before our innocence has been lost.

Eventually we all learn that adults (or older siblings) are not always right. The disciples provide us with excellent examples of what it means to take up our cross and follow Jesus, but they also allow us to learn lessons from their mistakes. Jesus' disciples debated among themselves about who would be the greatest in God's kingdom. They seemed oblivious that Jesus always knew about their private conversations.

Jesus explained to His followers that to be considered the greatest, one must become a servant. No one can voluntarily submit to servanthood without humility. That explains why Jesus once said: "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4). Only through childlike faith can we fully trust the Lord.

*What is a mistake one of Jesus' disciples made that has helped you avoid the same mistake in your life?*

### **B. The "Wise" Are Often Cynical**

How are we adults who have lost our childhood innocence supposed to become as children? How do we reconcile Jesus' call to Paul's command to "put away childish things?" (See I Corinthians 13:11.) Any time we are faced with what appears to be a contradiction in God's Word, we must ask God for help to understand the passages together. Jesus and Paul did not disagree. The letter to the Corinthian church did not include an admonition to ignore the teachings of Jesus. Instead we discover here the difference between childlike faith and worldly wisdom. For every spiritual truth we discover in the Bible, the enemy desires to convince us to settle for an inferior substitute, and the subject of faith is no exception.

Often those who are considered wise in the world's eyes are the most difficult to convince of scriptural truth. Our world teaches us to look out for "number one," but the Bible teaches us to humble ourselves. Our world warns us if we do not promote ourselves, no one else will, yet the Bible declares promotion comes from the Lord. The wisdom of God is not often accepted by those the world deems wise because the wisdom of the world is at war with the Word of God. The Bible explains this contrast clearly in the Book of James. Worldly wisdom is referred to as "earthly, sensual, and devilish." (See James 3:15.) However, the wisdom of God is described as "pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). If we settle for the world's version of wisdom, we are buying in to a devilish deception intended to keep us from embracing the full truth of God's wisdom.

*Are there examples in your life when following godly wisdom instead of worldly wisdom was a great blessing? Are there examples when you made the mistake of not following godly wisdom and learned a lesson the hard way?*

### **C. I Will Choose Childlike Faith**

Faith is one of the most essential elements in our walk with God, but it is also often misunderstood. Some think faith is an emotion: if we pray loud enough or use enough biblical language, God has to answer. If we are forceful with people praying in altar, God must fill them with His Spirit. But God measures the fervency of our prayer by our sincerity and passion, not our volume. Unfortunately, unwise actions in the altar can become a distraction to the person praying and a reason for the white-knuckled pew grabber who is watching to stay put instead of venturing into that holy space. As we seek to grow up into a mature faith, we must trust in God like a child naturally trusts an earthly father, instead of placing confidence in our own ability.

Authentic faith is available to everyone because “God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). We are not expected to generate faith out of thin air by some emotional demonstration or mental exercise. God asks us to place all our faith in Him rather than placing our faith in ourselves or any other option the world presents us. Just as Jesus declared there were different types of soil in the Parable of the Sower, the Word of God provides multiple descriptions of faith. We can settle for being like those He described as having “little faith” (Matthew 6:30), we can walk away from Him and display “no faith” (Mark 4:40), or we can allow ourselves to become like children and display “great faith” (Matthew 8:10).

When we place our faith in politicians, we are destined to be disappointed. When we place our faith in a get-rich-quick scheme, we discover poverty sprints faster than prosperity. The only place our faith belongs is in the Lord. He counseled: “But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Luke 12:31).

*What are the most common “faith substitutes” that rob us of faith in God when we decide to trust in them more than Him?*

## **II. JESUS’ INVITATION**

### **A. Jesus Invites Us to Rest in Him**

Jesus taught, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23). He also said, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30). We must understand the commandment to deny ourselves and the offer to experience His rest are both equally important in our walk with God. As the old expression goes, they are simply two sides of the same coin. If we attempt to carry the cross in our flesh (our human nature), we will stumble and fall. However, when we are in partnership with Him, we find strength for the journey because of the rest and refreshing power of the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah prophesied this truth in the Old Testament when he declared, “For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. . . . This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing” (Isaiah 28:11–12). The rest Jesus promised was not permission to sip sweet tea and wait for Jesus to return; this rest is permission to call on Jesus’ name and trust in His Spirit to do what we cannot do on our own.

Sinners, not saints of God, live the most difficult lives. The Bible clearly declares: “Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard” (Proverbs 13:15). If we find our walk with God to be difficult, perhaps God wants to teach us a lesson. Our proper response is not to question God by asking why, but to examine ourselves and ask Him, “What do I need to learn from what I’m going through?”

*What lessons have you learned from trials you’ve been through?*

### **B. Jesus’ Yoke Symbolizes Our Partnership with Him**

We are accustomed to thinking food comes from our favorite aisle of the grocery store, but the farmer can tell the story about seeds sown, watered, grown, and harvested. In Jesus’ day it was customary for an experienced farmer to partner a seasoned ox with a young ox because he understood the seasoned ox would bear most of the load. Just as the inexperienced ox has no knowledge of the help he will receive from the seasoned ox until he finds himself in the yoke, the same is true for us. Only when we are in His yoke will we discover Jesus truly does the heavy lifting, all the while He allows us to rest in His strength. When we are yoked with Him, He

automatically directs our steps.

**Teacher Option:** *A supplemental image is available in the Resource Kit. (I)*

### **C. I Will Come to Jesus for My Rest**

Even the world tells us life is hard, but the Lord declares this simple truth: when we walk with Him, we will discover His burden is light (Matthew 11:30). Even Christians experience trials, but we do not walk through them alone. When we are yoked with Jesus, we do not “walk through the valley of the shadow of death” (Psalm 23:4) or find ourselves in the “valley of decision” (Joel 3:14) all alone. Jesus is with us through it all. Everyone who walks with God for any significant amount of time could tell a multitude of testimonies of times God has proven Himself to be “a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1).

If life is difficult for you, do not run from God; run to Him. He is the only one who can offer you the help to walk and the strength to rest. There is no substitute for the presence of God and His strength He gives us. When we are submitted to the Lord, we will discover He is there with us working for us to develop us into the people He saved us to become.

We find comfort in passages of Scripture such as Romans 8:28: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” As we follow His instructions to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, He made us a wonderful promise to weave and work our situations—the easy and the difficult—for our good. Do not give up when you feel weak. The alternative is carrying our own cross and our own burdens without His help. That plan is destined for unnecessary hardship in this life and an eternity of regret.

### **INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE**

*A supplemental video is available in the Resource Kit. (V)*

Imagine living in Israel in AD 30. From a child, you have been taught to steer clear of the Gentiles. In fact, one of your friends named Peter was “called on the carpet” because he dared enter a Gentile’s house and even share a meal with him. Your leaders are so concerned with being defiled by Gentiles that you are forced to bathe by full immersion when you return from the market in case your garment brushed a Gentile without you realizing it.

Always mindful of good hygiene, you wash your hands before eating, but you are still surprised by the detailed protocol. The water used must be equivalent to at least one-and-a-half eggshells full. As water is poured on both hands, you must raise them to ensure your entire hand is wet, being careful not to allow the dirty water to run down to your fingers again. If so, you must wash all over again. If the water does not run down to your wrists, your hands will not be considered clean. You listen and follow these instructions carefully because the rabbis said if you were to neglect washing your hands according to these strict rules, you are as bad as a murderer.

On Friday night, you are introduced to additional Sabbath rules. You know Moses gave instructions to cease from work, but you discover the Jewish leaders have created thirty-nine additional rules called “father-works” that are punishable by death. These include plowing, carrying a burden, and reaping. That seems easy, but you grow concerned when hearing about the “descendant-works” you must also avoid.

If plowing a field on the Sabbath is punishable by death, then it is unacceptable to drag a chair across the ground because that would “plow” a rut. If carrying a burden is punishable by death, then wearing false teeth is not acceptable. You can walk with a cane but not on stilts because the rabbis say the man should carry the stilts; the stilts should not carry the man.

The rabbis also forbid tying or loosing certain types of knots, writing two or more letters of the alphabet next to each other, and purposefully starting a fire on the Sabbath. You must be careful because if a fire accidentally starts, you are not allowed to put it out, even in the case of an emergency. You fear a toothache because you will not be allowed to gargle with vinegar unless you are brave

enough to swallow it afterward. Do not spit it out on the Sabbath.

Jesus' first-century Jewish audience carried heavy burdens by trying to keep the Law and all the additional laws the rabbis made, which is one reason Jesus invites us to yoke with Him. Put our faith in Him, not through obeying Jewish law but by obeying the gospel. We will find Jesus' words are true: His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

### **Prayer Focus**

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us leave our burdens at His feet
- For God to reveal problems we are trying to solve with our own effort when we need His help