



river west church

The Gospel According to Jesus

Matthew 11:25-30

Pastor Adam McMurray

2.5.2012

We've come to the end of our study of 2 Timothy, and next week we will launch into a new study in the Old Testament (let the suspense build). Today we are going to pause to listen in on one of the more compelling statements that Jesus made. You will almost certainly recognize the words of this passage. In Matthew 11:28-29 Jesus said,

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Gentle Jesus Meek and Mild?

What a wonderful invitation! These verses fall into the “feel-good” column of statements that Jesus made during His earthly ministry. We love to quote these verses. We love to memorize them and send them in get-well cards. And rightly so, for in many ways they capture the heart of the Christian message.

The invitation to come to Jesus goes out to all who are tired; all who are weary; all who are burdened, broken-hearted, devastated, or overwhelmed by life. This is Jesus “meek and mild” welcoming the needy to come and find rest and life in Him. If you've come today and you are burdened, these words are for you! They really are marvelous!

However, there is actually a lot more going on in this claim than initially meets the eye. In order to get the full impact, we will need to go back and look at the passage in context. As we do, we are going to find that this invitation is the culmination of one of the most outrageous claims that Jesus ever made.

True Wisdom and the Identity of Jesus]

The central theme of Matthew 11 involves the identity of Jesus. At the beginning of the chapter, we read that John the Baptist has sent messengers to inquire of Jesus whether He is actually the Messiah sent from God. John wants to know if Jesus is the one, or if he should wait for another. The rest of the chapter records Jesus' answer to that question.

In verse 25, Jesus makes a startling claim about the kind of person who comes to perceive His true identity. “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children...”. What are we to make of such a statement? Does Jesus mean to say that intelligent people reject Him and foolish and simple people accept Him? As we look closely at this passage, we are going to discover that Jesus is not making a contrast between wisdom and foolishness. He makes a contrast between wisdom and humility; between worldly wisdom and the humble, Godly wisdom that is pictured in the countenance of a child.

True wisdom, according to Jesus, humbly recognizes the need of humanity. It recognizes our brokenness and sin. It recognizes that we desperately need God to come; to reveal Himself to us, and to save us. It recognizes that Jesus is God's solution for all of these needs.

Big Claims that only Jesus can make

Jesus said, "All things have been handed over to me by my Father". He said, "No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him". He said, "Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest". These are big statements. Only a complete lunatic would say them...unless they are absolutely true.

This morning, as we study these claims, my prayer is that you will come to an understanding of their truth. I pray that you will come to recognize your deep need for Jesus. I pray that you will come to marvel in this wonderful invitation that Jesus gives. "Come to me". I pray that you will.