

THE GREAT INVITATION

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Matthew 11:25-30

1. This morning I hope that I can simplify your life in at least one area.
2. We need to understand that Jesus Christ did not live, die, and rise again in order to complicate our lives.
3. He came to simplify what mankind makes complex.
4. Jesus walked the earth at a time when Judaism had become a burden rather than a blessing.

NOTE: One example is the fact that the Sabbath Day no longer fulfilled God's intended purpose. Matthew 12:1-14

5. Very early in church history we see examples of the fact that man complicates what God has made simple.
6. Paul had harsh words for the misguided and false teachers that were causing problems throughout the church by turning people away from the simplicity of devotion to Christ.
 - a. 2 Cor 11:1-6

I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me. 2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. 3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, **your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.** 4 For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully. 5 For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6 But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not so in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made this evident to you in all things.

- b. 2 Cor 11:12-21

12 But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting. 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds. 16 Again I say, let no one think me foolish; but if you do, receive me even as foolish, so that I also may boast a little. 17 What I am saying, I am not saying as the Lord would, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. 18 Since many boast according to the flesh, I will boast also. 19 **For you, being so wise, tolerate the foolish gladly. 20 For you tolerate it if anyone enslaves you, anyone devours you, anyone takes advantage of you, anyone exalts himself, anyone hits you in the face.** 21 To my shame I must say that we have been weak by comparison.

7. Paul made it clear that God has made full provision for us in and through Jesus Christ. Col 2:8-12

8 **See to it that no one takes you captive** through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. 9 **For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

8. We see that provision clearly revealed in Jesus oft repeated invitation, “Come to Me.”

I. “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden.”

A. “As Jesus looks out over the religions of the world—including the Judaism of His day—He sees people who are laboring under heavy loads to earn the favor of whatever deity they believe in. He did not come to replace that God-appeasing load with another one.” (“What Jesus Demands from the World,” by John Piper, pg. 45)

B. Here Jesus looks at His disciples and the other Jews who were weary and heavy-laden because of the impossible demands of their religion and simply said, “Come to Me!”

1. “I will give you rest if you will come.”

2. “Walk with Me and learn from Me and walk before God as I do.”

3. “My yoke is easy and My burden is light in comparison to the one you are now carrying.”

C. Much will be required of those who respond to Jesus’ call to follow Him, but the difficulties and challenges will not be related to maintaining our relationship with Him.

NOTE: Jesus’ relationship with the Father was simple and straightforward during His earthly ministry, and He wants our relationship with Him to mirror that relationship.

II. “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.” John 6:35

A. From a spiritual perspective the person who continually looks to Jesus will be fully satisfied and sustained.

B. The writer of the hymn “I’d Rather Have Jesus,” understood this truth when he wrote, “He’s fairer than lilies of rarest bloom; He’s sweeter than honey from out of the comb; **He’s all that my hungering spirit needs**, I’d rather have Jesus and let Him lead.”

C. Don’t let anyone complicate your relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Galatians 5:1

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery.”

NOTE: Many have devised all sorts of complex systems that promise a freedom that is never delivered.

III. "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." John 7:37-39

- A. Jesus is the only one who can quench our spiritual thirst.
- B. Those who believe in Jesus in accordance with the teaching of God's word will become fountains of life giving water.
- C. Focusing on and trusting in Jesus is the key to living a life that matters.
- D. Our public life will never rise above our private life before God.
- E. If our private life is what it should be our public life will manifest the fact that it is.

APPLICATION

1. Sadly, there are many who are like those Jesus was speaking to in John 5:39-40.
"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."
2. Many Christians run from one church to another or from one teacher to another looking for the freedom and peace their hearts crave.
3. Some endlessly attend conferences, buy videos, visit websites and follow cleverly designed approaches to living the Christian life.
4. Jesus' words to Martha provide a suitable ending to this message. Luke 10:38-42
Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. 39 **She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word.** 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." 41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "**Martha , Martha , you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.**"
5. In closing let me quote J. Sidlow Baxter.
"Thus to know and love and serve Him
Let my high absorption be,
Finding as His willing bondman
Life, unfettered, radiant, free!"