

Since Oct. 10, 2004

해외 한인 장로회

Church of the Lord

하나님의

Oct. 04, 2026

사랑교회

(통권 1126호)



오늘의 말씀

“Rest”

Rest for the Weary, Not Escape from Life

[Matthew 11:28~30]

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest. (29) "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. (30) "For My yoke is easy and My burden is
light."

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Introduction — Why Are We Still Tired Even After We Rest?

Beloved church, last week we talked about the first flower in our “Flourishing in Grace” series: “Abundance.” Jesus said,

[John 10:10] “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

And we discovered an important truth: An abundant life is not a life of having more, but a life that has met the Shepherd. So we ended last week with these words: “When we discover how abundant the life we have already received is, we can enter into true ‘Rest.’”

Today we come to the second flower: “Rest.” But isn’t it strange? We live in a world far more convenient than that of previous generations. We have cars, washing machines, the internet, and smartphones that allow us to do countless things. Life requires less physical labor than it once did. Yet people seem more tired than ever. We return from vacation tired. We rest over the weekend, yet dread Monday. Our bodies may be lying on the couch, while our minds are still running through everything we have to do tomorrow. Our bodies have stopped, but our minds have not. Our deepest exhaustion is not only physical. Our souls are weary. That is why the words of Jesus are so remarkable. Jesus does not say to weary people, “Get some rest.” “Do less.” “Try to be stronger.” Instead, He says, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Here is the gospel: Rest is not something we create for ourselves. It is a gift Jesus gives us.

Let Us Look More Closely at the Passage.

Our Souls Are Often More Weary Than Our Bodies, and Jesus Knows Our Weariness.

[Matthew 11:28] “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Here Jesus uses two expressions to describe our condition.

The first is “those who labor[κοπιῶντες(kopiōntes)].” It comes from the verb κοπιάω(kopiaō). It means more than simply “to work.” It means to labor, to exert oneself, to work until weary. So the people Jesus sees are not lazy people. They are people who have been trying hard for too long. They have worked for their families. They have worked for their children. They have struggled to make a living. They have served the church. They have tried to be good people. They have even tried hard to be good Christians. But eventually the soul says, “I’m tired. I can’t keep going like this.”

The second expression is “those who are heavy laden” — πεφορτισμένοι (pephortismenoi). Its root is the verb φορτίζω (phortizō), meaning “to load, to place a burden upon.” There is an important difference between these two words. κοπιάω pictures someone exhausted from all their striving, while φορτίζω pictures someone with a heavy burden placed upon them. Some weariness comes because we have been doing too much. Other weariness comes because we have been carrying too much. We carry the burden of responsibility, the burden of worry, the burden of our past, and the burden of other people’s expectations. Even our life of faith can become a burden: “I should be doing better.” “I should pray more.” “Why isn’t my faith as strong as theirs?” A life of faith that began in grace can gradually become the burden of trying to prove ourselves.

The Bible tells us about a man who became completely exhausted. His name was Elijah. This was the same Elijah who had experienced an extraordinary spiritual victory on Mount Carmel. Yet soon after-ward, he collapsed in the wilderness.

[1 Kings 19:4] “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, ‘It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!’”

Isn't that remarkable? Elijah was not a man without faith. He was not someone who had never experienced the power of God. Even someone who has done great things can become weary. What did God first do for the exhausted Elijah? He did not rebuke him. He did not tell him that he had not prayed enough. God sent an angel to touch him and say, “Arise and eat” (1 Kings 19:5). God let him sleep. He fed him. He let him sleep again and fed him again. There is something deeply tender about this scene. There have been many days in my ministry when I felt weary, meditated on this passage, and quietly wept. God does not only see our calling; He also knows our weariness. Beloved church, being weary does not necessarily mean that you lack faith. Sometimes we become weary because we have been faithful for a long time, or because we have carried responsibility for a long time. So today Jesus does not rebuke the weary. He invites them.

Jesus' First Invitation Is Not “Do More,” but “Come to Me.”

The most important command in verse 28 is surprisingly simple: “Come to Me” — δεῦτε πρὸς με (deute pros me). Jesus does not say, “Go somewhere where you can find rest.” He says, “Come to Me.” Doesn't this connect perfectly with last week's message? We kept looking outside the door for abundance. We thought Jesus + Something would give us abundant life. But Jesus said, “I am the Door.” And today He says, “Come to Me.” Abundance begins with Jesus Himself, and rest also begins with Jesus Himself.

We often think, “When this problem is over, I’ll rest. When this situation is resolved, when my children are okay, when my health improves, then I’ll rest.” But when one problem ends, another one comes. If our rest depends upon everything around us finally settling down, we may never truly rest. Jesus does not first promise to change our circumstances. He says, “Come to Me.”

The story of Mary and Martha shows us this beautifully. Martha loved Jesus, so she served Him diligently. But Luke tells us, **[Luke 10:40] “But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.’”**

The problem was not that Martha served. The problem was that her serving had begun to control her heart. Finally, she complained to Jesus: “Do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?” Jesus answered,

[Luke 10:41~42] “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. (42) But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

Mary sat at the feet of Jesus. We can become so busy doing for Jesus that we lose the joy of being with Jesus. But rest begins with being with the Lord before doing something for the Lord.

Paradoxically, Rest Is Not a Life Without a Yoke, but a Life Under the Yoke of Jesus.

In verse 29, Jesus says something unexpected.

[Matthew 11:29] “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.”

Doesn't that sound strange? In verse 28 Jesus says, "I will give you rest." But in the very next verse He says, "Take My yoke upon you." Wouldn't we expect Him to say, "Put down your heavy burden, and never carry anything again"? Instead, Jesus says, "Take My yoke upon you."

The Greek word for yoke is ζυγός (zygos), or yoke in English. A yoke was used to guide an animal in a particular direction as it worked. So Jesus is not simply saying, "Do nothing and rest." He is not calling us to an irresponsible life. Rather, He is saying, "Put down the yoke of trying to decide every-thing by yourself, control everything by yourself, and carry everything by yourself. Now take My yoke upon you." This is true rest.

Jesus continues, "Learn from Me." Rest is not simply stopping everything. It is learning a new way of living with Jesus. It is a transition from a life in which I must solve everything and control every-thing to a life in which I entrust myself to the Lord and follow His leading; from a life in which I must carry tomorrow to a life in which I receive grace for today. David says,

[Psalm 55:22] "Cast your burden on the LORD, and He shall sustain you."

Peter says the same thing:

[1 Peter 5:7] "Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

The gospel is not, "You will never have a burden." The gospel is, "There is Someone who cares for you." And here we return to last week's confession: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." A sheep does not carry tomorrow's grass on its back. It has a shepherd.

That is why verse 30 ends this way:

[Matthew 11:30] "For My yoke is easy and My burden is

light.”

Jesus did not say that life would no longer have any burdens. He said, “My burden is light.” Why? Because it is not only the weight of the burden that has changed; our relationship to the One with whom we carry it has changed. Rest is not a life with no burdens. It is a life in which we carry our burdens with Jesus.

The Rest Jesus Gives Is More Than Rest from Our Circumstances. It Is “Rest for Our Souls.”

Look again at the end of verse 29: “You will find rest for your souls.” The word translated “souls” is the Greek ψυχή (psychē), appearing here in the plural form ψυχῶν (psychais). It is the word from which English terms such as psyche and psychology are derived. ψυχή (psychē) refers to the soul, life, or inner being. So Jesus is not simply promising, “Your schedule will become less busy.” He is saying, “You will find rest for your souls.”

This is an important difference. We can be busy and still have rest in our souls. We can have unre-solved problems and still have rest in our souls. We can face an uncertain tomorrow and still have rest in our souls. Why? Because the foundation of our rest is not our circumstances. It is Jesus.

Think about Mark 4. The disciples are crossing the lake with Jesus when suddenly a great windstorm arises. Water begins filling the boat, and the disciples think they are going to die. But where is Jesus? “But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow” (Mark 4:38). Jesus did not fall asleep after the storm was over. He was sleeping in the middle of the storm. The circumstances were not peaceful, but there was peace in Jesus. The disciples woke Him and cried, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” Jesus arose, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” (Mark 4:39). And the sea became calm. But there is

something we must not miss: Jesus was already at peace before the sea became calm. Beloved church, we often think, "My sea must become calm before I can rest." But the rest Jesus gives is different. It is not rest that comes only after the storm has ended. It is rest we can experience with Jesus even in the middle of the storm.

Conclusion ~ We Do Not Have to Wait Until Everything Is Finished to Rest.

Beloved brothers and sisters, how often do we say, "When I finish this, then I'll rest"? But when one thing ends, something else begins. We thought we would rest after raising our children. We thought we would rest after retirement. We thought we would rest when this problem was finally resolved. But life rarely says to us, "Everything is finished now." So if everything must be finished before we can rest, we may never truly rest. But today Jesus speaks of an entirely different kind of rest: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Notice what He does not say. He does not say, "Solve all your problems, and then come to Me." He does not say, "Get all your burdens in order, and then come." He does not say, "Become stronger first." He simply says, "Come to Me." This is grace. Last week Jesus said, "I have come." Today He says, "Come to Me." Because He came to us, we can now come to Him. And when we come to Him, we learn a new way of living. We learn not to carry everything alone. We learn that we do not have to control everything. We learn not to carry tomorrow's burdens today. We learn to entrust them to the Lord. We learn to walk with Him. So rest is not escaping from life. It is no longer carrying life alone.

Today's Prayer Points

A. Lord, help me lay down the burden of always having to do better and the heavy feeling that I must be responsible for everything, and help me come to You.

B. Lord, keep me from thinking that I can rest only when all my circumstances are resolved. Teach me to place today's burdens in Your hands and to walk with You.

C. Lord, even in the busyness of life, let my soul abide deeply in Jesus and experience the true rest that the world cannot take away.`