

# "HEAR YE HIM"

## A Devotional Series For Radio

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The Sermon: COME UNTO ME

Scripture: Matthew 11:27-30

All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and they to whom the Son will reveal himself; they shall see the Father also. Then spake Jesus, saying, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

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If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

We are living in an age when men do less work with their muscles than at any time in the world's history. It is the age of the internal combustion engine, the age of steam and electric and atomic power, of electronics and automation. Machines now perform most of man's back-breaking drudgery and most of his tedious routine tasks. Household appliances make every woman a queen in her own home -- a queen with innumerable mechanical slaves at her beck and call, day and night. The forty hour week is standard in the United States, with talk of reducing that.

In spite of all these facts, the average man or woman one meets on the street these days is tired, restless, irritable, and in a hurry. He is too tired or too busy to sit and chat in leisurely fashion with friends, to call on the sick, to attend church, or to do any really serious reading and study in God's word. Many of our best selling books tell how to work and never be tired, how to find release from nervous tension. Yet we are still tired.

It is possible, of course, to be physically tired to the point of exhaustion. Yet it is psychologically true that a man who is happy in his work, who is interested in his task and who enjoys doing it, can work long hours without thinking about being tired. In many respects, fatigue is more the result of an attitude of mind than it is a result of physical labor. The boys who paid Tom Sawyer for the privilege of whitewashing his fence were not tired when they finished the job, because under Tom's crafty salesmanship

they were consumed with eagerness to do it. But Tom was tired before the job began, because he knew the job from past experience, and hated and dreaded it.

Yes, even in this day of labor-saving machinery and short working hours, many of us are tired. We labor, and are heavy laden. We seek forgetfulness and release from our intolerable burden in narcotics, and liquor or milder stimulants. We consume vast quantities of headache pills and sleeping tablets. And each thing leaves us more tired, more restless, more frustrated and dissatisfied than we were before. We are tired not because our muscles ache, but because our hearts ache, and because our spirits yearn for something satisfying which we have not as yet been able to find or to achieve in spite of all our busyness.

Every man needs to have some great and overwhelming cause to which he can devote himself completely and irrevocably -- mind and spirit, body and soul. Every man needs to pledge his love and loyalty to some great and all-consuming personality, which will challenge him and give him a purpose and a motivation for his life. When claimed by such a great cause or a great personality, man forgets himself. He forgets to be tired. He forgets the passage of hours. He sometimes forgets to eat and sleep, so engrossed does he become in the fascinating work which has claimed his attention. The astronomer observing a newly discovered star -- the scientist who knows that he is on the verge of a great new discovery or invention, don't punch a time clock, or quit

with the whistle, or work a forty hour week. A mother watching over a child who is dangerously ill and passing through a crisis forgets food and sleep and rest, and somehow draws on untapped reserves of strength to see her through the long and tedious hours. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Jesus offers us the incentive and the inspiration of loyalty to a great Personality, and to a great Cause.

Jesus Christ is perfect man -- man at his highest and best and finest and noblest. But he is more than man; he is also perfect God, partaker in a distinctive, peculiar, and unique way of God's nature, God's life, God's power, God's love. He is Deity in human flesh. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," says Paul. In the language of one of the ancient creeds, he is "Very God of Very God." To know him is to know God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." No man can look upon God in the flesh and live. But we can look upon Jesus, and through his mediation and atonement some day be clothed in a resurrected, immortal body which can dwell eternally in God's presence. "No man cometh to the Father but by me." No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and they to whom the Son will reveal him. All of this thought is back of Jesus' simple and sincere and appealing invitation to "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The invitation is not to come unto my Father, but to come first unto me, and through me to the Father, for it is Jesus who is our Advocate with the Father, the Mediator, the dispenser of grace, the revealer of God.

The invitation is not exclusive, or limited to an elect few. "All ye that labor" may find rest in the revelation of God as a loving and beneficent Father. The invitation is to all who are "heavy laden," those who are burdened and bowed down under the weight of fear, worry, pain, boredom, loneliness, and personal sin. It is to all the heavy laden who are trying to keep the letter of some moral law, but who find it a burden hard to be borne. Notice too, that it is to "all ye that labor." Jesus wants laborers to serve him -- not loafers. Rest comes after labor, not after loafing.

Notice too, that Jesus invites those who labor to take his yoke upon them. The yoke is a symbol of servitude. It is an implement designed to make possible greater labor with less fatigue. Work under an ill-fitting yoke, under a harsh master who offers no incentive, no love, no consideration, no hope for the future, can be an intolerable burden. Jesus' invitation is to "learn from me" how to wear the yoke of servitude. He who issues the invitation has worn the yoke. He himself is humble, gentle, kindly, loving. He fits the yoke to our needs and our capacities; therefore his yoke is easy. He offers a hope for the future, for all eternity. Under the incentive of his kindness and love, work in his service becomes a pleasure, and we find rest unto our souls.

Because of Jesus' Deity he has power to impose a yoke upon us. But he does not force us to wear his yoke, or to do his service. Yokes that are forced upon men's backs lie there heavily. They gall and chafe. Work done with them becomes a drudgery. It is only the yoke which is voluntarily assumed that is easily worn. It is only work done for one to whom we have gladly and willingly given our best admiration, love, respect, and devotion, which is done without boredom or fatigue or resentment. Jesus offers only an invitation; yet because he is Deity in human flesh, his invitation is tantamount to a command. When a King invites, it should be the eager pleasure of his subjects to obey as if the invitation were a command, gladly, willingly, freely. Only in such surrender to him who has all power given to him in heaven and in earth can man find release from his burdens of perpetual fatigue, boredom, frustration, and dull despair.

Come unto him. Give him your love, your loyalty, your life. Think of each deed you do as one more deed to express your devotion to him, and to help in the great cause of establishing his kingdom among men. Take his yoke upon you, that the strength you expend in labor may be directed into right channels and be made more productive. Learn from him the secret of toil with hope, with expectation, with dedication, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.