

Message Five

Christ as the One Who Gives Us Rest

MC Hymns: 86, 910

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26, 31—2:2; Matt. 11:28-30; Exo. 31:12-17

- Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
- Gen 1:31 And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
- Gen 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth and all their host were finished.
- Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
- Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.
- Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- Matt 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.
- Exo 31:12 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
- Exo 31:13 Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, You shall surely keep My Sabbaths; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies you.
- Exo 31:14 Therefore you shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.
- Exo 31:15 Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Jehovah; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death.
- Exo 31:16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.
- Exo 31:17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

I. “Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”—**Matt. 11:28-30:**

- A. To toil here refers not only to the toil of striving to keep the commandments of the law and religious regulations but also to the toil of struggling to be successful in any work; whoever toils thus is always heavily burdened.
- B. After the Lord extolled the Father, acknowledging the Father’s way and declaring the divine economy (vv. 25-27), He called this kind of people to come to Him for rest.
- Matt 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.
- Matt 11:26 Yes, Father, for thus it has been well-pleasing in Your sight.
- Matt 11:27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one fully knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone fully know the Father except the Son and him to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.
- C. Rest refers not only to being set free from the toil and burden under the law or religion or under any work or responsibility, but also to perfect peace and full satisfaction.
- D. To take the Lord’s yoke is to take the will of the Father; it is not to be regulated or controlled by any obligation of the law or religion or to be enslaved by any work, but to be constrained by the will of the Father.
- E. The Lord lived such a life, caring for nothing but the will of His Father (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38); He submitted Himself fully to the Father’s will (Matt. 26:39, 42); hence, He asks us to learn from Him:
- John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

- John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
- John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
- Matt 26:39 And going forward a little, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.
- Matt 26:42 Again, going away a second time, He prayed, saying, My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.
1. The believers copy the Lord in their spirit by taking His yoke—God’s will—and toiling for God’s economy according to His model—11:29a; 1 Pet. 2:21.

Matt 11:29a Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, ...

1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
 2. The Lord, who was submissive and obedient to the Father throughout His life, has given us His life of submission and obedience—Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:7-9.

Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

Phil 2:6 Who, existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped,

Phil 2:7 But emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men;

Phil 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of a cross.

Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

Phil 2:10 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

Phil 2:11 And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Heb 5:7 This One, in the days of His flesh, having offered up both petitions and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him who was able to save Him out of death and having been heard because of His piety,

Heb 5:8 Even though He was a Son, learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

Heb 5:9 And having been perfected, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,
 3. Christ was the first God-man, and we are the many God-men; we have to learn of Him in His absolute submission to God and His uttermost satisfaction with God.
 4. God is doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ that we may be able to do His will (13:20-21); God operates in us both the willing and the working for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

Heb 13:21 Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
- F. To be meek, or gentle, means not to resist opposition, and to be lowly means not to have self-esteem; throughout all the opposition the Lord was meek, and throughout all the rejection He was lowly in heart.
- G. He submitted Himself fully to the will of His Father, not wanting to do anything for Himself or expecting to gain something for Himself; hence, regardless of the situation He had rest in His heart; He was fully satisfied with the Father’s will.
- H. The rest that we find by taking the Lord’s yoke and learning from Him is for our souls; it is an inward rest; it is not anything merely outward in nature.

- I. We learn from the Lord according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection—Eph. 4:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:21.
 Eph 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
 Eph 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,
 1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
- J. The Lord's yoke is the Father's will, and His burden is the work of carrying out the Father's will; such a yoke is easy, not bitter, and such a burden is light, not heavy.
- K. The Greek word for *easy* means "fit for use"; hence, good, kind, mild, gentle, easy, pleasant—in contrast to hard, harsh, sharp, bitter.
- L. If we take the Lord's yoke (the Father's will) upon us and learn from Him, we will find rest for our souls; the yoke of God's economy is like this; everything in God's economy is not a heavy burden but an enjoyment.

II. In Exodus 31:12-17, after a long record concerning the building up of God's dwelling place, there is a repetition of the commandment to keep the Sabbath; according to Colossians 2:16-17, Christ is the reality of the Sabbath rest; He is our completion, rest, quietness, and full satisfaction—Heb. 4:7-9; Isa. 30:15a:

- Exo 31:12 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
 Exo 31:13 Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, You shall surely keep My Sabbaths; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies you.
 Exo 31:14 Therefore you shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.
 Exo 31:15 Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Jehovah; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death.
 Exo 31:16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.
 Exo 31:17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.
 Col 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
 Col 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
 Heb 4:7 He again designates a certain day, today, saying in David after so long a time, even as He has said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."
 Heb 4:8 For if Joshua had brought them into rest, He would not have spoken concerning another day after these things.
 Heb 4:9 So then there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.
 Isa 30:15a For thus says the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, / In returning and rest you will be saved; / In quietness and in trust will be your strength; ...

- A. The fact that the insertion concerning the Sabbath follows the charge for the building work of the tabernacle indicates that the Lord was telling the builders, the workers, to learn how to rest with Him as they worked for Him.
- B. If we only know how to work for the Lord but do not know how to rest with Him, we are acting contrary to the divine principle:
1. God rested on the seventh day because He had finished His work and was satisfied; God's glory was manifested because man had His image, and His authority was about to be exercised for the subduing of His enemy, Satan; as long as man expresses God and deals with God's enemy, God is satisfied and can rest—Gen. 1:26, 31—2:2.
 Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

- Gen 1:31 And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
- Gen 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth and all their host were finished.
- Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
2. Later, the seventh day was commemorated as the Sabbath (Exo. 20:8-11); God's seventh day was man's first day.

Exo 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day so as to sanctify it.

Exo 20:9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

Exo 20:10 But the seventh day is a Sabbath to Jehovah your God; you shall not do any work, you nor your son nor your daughter, your male servant nor your female servant, nor your cattle nor the sojourner with you, who is within your gates.

Exo 20:11 For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.
 3. God had prepared everything for man's enjoyment; after man was created, he did not join in God's work; he entered into God's rest.
 4. Man was created not to work first but to be satisfied with God and rest with God (cf. Matt. 11:28-30); the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).

Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Mark 2:27 And He said to them, The Sabbath came into being for man, and not man for the Sabbath.
- C. Exodus 31:17 says, "In six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed":
1. The Sabbath was not only a rest to God but also a refreshment to Him.
 2. God rested after His work of creation was completed; He looked upon His handiwork, at the heavens, the earth, and all the living things, especially at man, and said, "Very good!"—Gen. 1:31.

Gen 1:31 And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
 3. God was refreshed with man; God created man in His own image with a spirit so that man could have fellowship with Him; man, therefore, was God's refreshment—v. 26; 2:7; cf. John 4:31-34.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

John 4:31 In the meantime, the disciples urged Him, saying, Rabbi, eat.

John 4:32 But He said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about.

John 4:33 The disciples therefore said to one another, Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
 4. God was a "bachelor" before He created mankind (cf. Gen. 2:18, 22); He wanted man to receive Him, love Him, be filled with Him, and express Him to become His wife (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25); in eternity future God will have a wife, the New Jerusalem, which is called the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9-10).

Gen 2:18 And Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart.

- Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- 2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

5. Man was like a refreshing drink to quench God's thirst and satisfy Him; when God ended His work and began to rest, He had man as His companion.
 6. To God the seventh day was a day of rest and refreshment; however, to man, God's companion, the day of rest and refreshment was the first day; man's first day was a day of enjoyment.
- D. It is a divine principle that God does not ask us to work until we have had enjoyment; after a full enjoyment with Him and of Him, we may work together with Him:
1. If we do not know how to have enjoyment with God, how to enjoy God Himself, and how to be filled with God, we will not know how to work with Him and be one with Him in His divine work; man enjoys what God has accomplished in His work.
 2. On the day of Pentecost the disciples were filled with the Spirit, which means that they were filled with the enjoyment of the Lord; because they were filled with the Spirit, others thought that they were drunk with wine—Acts 2:4a, 12-13.

Acts 2:4a And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, ...

Acts 2:12 And they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, What does this mean?

Acts 2:13 But others jeered and said, They are full of new wine!
 3. Actually, they were filled with the enjoyment of the heavenly wine; only after they were filled with this enjoyment did they begin to work with God in oneness with Him; Pentecost was the first day of the eighth week; therefore, concerning the day of Pentecost, we see the principle of the first day.
 4. With God it is a matter of working and resting; with man it is a matter of resting and working.
- E. In doing God's divine work to build the church, typified by the work to build the tabernacle, we must bear a sign to indicate that we are God's people and that we need Him; then we will be able to work not only for God but also with God by being one with God; He will be our strength to work and our energy to labor:
1. We are God's people, and we should bear a sign that we need Him to be our enjoyment, strength, energy, and everything so that we may be able to work for Him to honor and glorify Him.
 2. The Sabbath means that before we work for God, we need to enjoy God and be filled with Him; Peter preached the gospel by the infilling God, the infilling Spirit; therefore, Peter had a sign that he was God's co-worker, and his gospel preaching was an honor and glory to God—v. 14.

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke forth to them: Men of Judea, and all who are dwelling in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.
 3. As God's people, we must bear a sign that we rest with God, enjoy God, and are filled up with God first, and then we work with the very One who fills us; furthermore, we not only work with God but also work as those who are one with God.

4. In our speaking to God's people, we must always seek to bear a sign that our Lord is our strength, our energy, and our everything for ministering the word—2 Cor. 13:3; Acts 6:4.
 2 Cor 13:3 Since you seek a proof of the Christ who is speaking in me, who is not weak unto you but is powerful in you.
 Acts 6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.
- F. Keeping the Sabbath is also an eternal agreement, or covenant, that assures God that we will be one with Him by first enjoying Him and being filled with Him and then by working for Him, with Him, and in oneness with Him—Exo. 31:16:
 Exo 31:16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.
1. It is a serious matter to work for the Lord by ourselves without taking Him in and enjoying Him by drinking and eating Him—cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; John 6:57.
 1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
 John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
2. As Peter was speaking on the day of Pentecost, he was inwardly partaking of Jesus, drinking and eating Him.
- G. The Sabbath is also a matter of sanctification (Exo. 31:13); when we enjoy the Lord and then work with Him, for Him, and by being one with Him, spontaneously we are sanctified, separated unto God from everything that is common, and saturated with God to replace everything that is fleshly and natural.
 Exo 31:13 Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, You shall surely keep My Sabbaths; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies you.
- H. In the church life we may do many things without first enjoying the Lord and without serving the Lord by being one with the Lord; that kind of service results in spiritual death and the loss of the fellowship in the Body (vv. 14-15).
 Exo 31:14 Therefore you shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.
 Exo 31:15 Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Jehovah; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death.
- I. Everything related to God's dwelling place leads us to one matter—to the Sabbath with its rest and refreshment of the Lord; in the church life we are in the tabernacle, and the tabernacle leads us to rest, to the enjoyment of God's purpose and of what He has done!
- J. The building work of the tabernacle and all its furniture (typifying the work of the Lord to build up the church) should begin with the enjoyment of God and continue in intervals with the refreshment by enjoying God; this will indicate that we do not work for God by our own strength, but by the enjoyment of Him and by being one with Him; this is to keep the principle of the Sabbath with Christ as the inner rest in our spirit.