

1. We are going to begin a study this morning from the book of Matthew chapter 11.
2. Turn there with me if you would.
3. There are three verses in this passage that I think will be familiar to many. You have probably read them, heard someone talk about them, and maybe even applied the truth contained in them to your life.
4. **Matthew 11:28-30** "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."
5. My process for preparing messages is that usually I am thinking about and praying about a message, weeks and sometimes months before I actually preach it on Sunday morning.
6. A while back when the Holy Spirit began prompting me to teach out of this passage, I thought to myself, I think I've taught from that passage recently.
7. And then I started to think, that is a passage that has been used and talked about quite a lot. Won't this topic be kind of redundant?
8. But the Lord kept prompting me to go ahead with my preparation.
9. I opened up my bible and began reading verses 28-30, and when I did, I noticed something.
10. I know I have, and I know I have heard others do the same thing, I have often considered verses 28-30 as a stand-alone topic. Getting rest.
11. But as I kind of panned out I noticed that this is not a stand-alone passage, this is actually three verses that are a part of a larger section in Matthew chapter 11.
12. The section that contains these verses actually begins with verse 25. And at first glance it seemed that the verses that come before are not all that related to the last three verses.
13. However, the translators of the bible, when looking at the original manuscripts felt that these six verses go together, and that they are actually on larger thought.
14. So, as I began to read and consider them all together, I noticed that while getting rest is a large part of verses 28-30, getting rest is actually just a smaller part of a bigger message.

15. And the overall message, I believe, is knowing God. Knowing him intimately, deeply, and clearly.
16. Let me read the whole passage to you.

TEXT: **Matthew 11:25-30** At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. 27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. 28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble 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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TITLE: **How do we know God?**

INTRO:

1. As I read this, in my humble opinion, getting rest is not the theme of the passage, I believe getting rest is really the by-product of the real theme, and the real theme is knowing who God is.
2. When we know who God is, it provides for us a supernatural rest that we can't get any other way.
3. But when we do not know who God is, the result is that we become weighted down and weary and burdened in a way that God never intended.
4. So, I am going to zoom out for a moment and give you what I call the 30,000-foot view of this entire passage, and then we are going to look at one single verse, verse twenty-five.
5. Jesus, in verse twenty-five is praying to his father. And in this prayer, he praises God for something very particular.
6. He says, I praise you father because you have hidden these things. What are these things? They are the things he is going to talk about next.
7. I praise you father that you have hidden these things from the wise and learned (in their own eyes), and instead revealed them to little children. (Those who approach God with a child-like faith).
8. In verse 26, Jesus gives us some insight into the revelation he is

talking about. He says, for this is what you were pleased to do.

9. In other words, this is how you wanted it, and this is how it is.
10. So, one of the things we learn from this statement is that this is the truth, this is the way things are, and the truth about how things are is not going to change, what has to happen is that we have to change to adjust to the truth.
11. Then in verse 27 Jesus no longer is praying to His father, instead he begins talking directly to the group of people that are around him.
12. What we find when we look further up is that there were several groups of people represented in this large crowd.
13. First of all, there are John the Baptist's disciples, who want to know if Jesus is really the Messiah.
14. Secondly, there is this crowd of people, and we are not exactly sure of the condition of their hearts, whether they are receiving what Jesus is saying by faith, or if they are rejecting what he says in unbelief.
15. And then there are Jesus' own twelve disciples.
16. So, there is this pretty large group of people, and Jesus moves from talking to God to talking directly to them.
17. And this is what he says in verse twenty-seven. All things have been committed to me by my father. Jesus was asserting his authority and the fact that he was God in the flesh.
18. Then he says, no one knows the son except the father, and no one knows the father except the son, and those whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
19. So, you folks around me. You are having difficulty understanding who I really am because know one fully and completely knows who I am except my father.
20. And no one really knows the father fully and completely except me, His son.
21. But that is not the end of the message. Jesus then proceeds to give them some extremely exciting news.
22. You're having difficulty knowing who I am and who my father is, but I the son have come to reveal who God is and who I am.
23. And I am going to reveal our identity to a select group of people. I said to a select group of people jokingly. Jesus really means that he

has come to reveal himself and the father to anyone who will come to him.

24. We know that because that's exactly what verse twenty-eight says.
25. Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
26. How will I give you rest? I will give you rest when you get in the yoke with me. In other words, when you choose to get in step with me and make me the Lord, when you give me power over your life.
27. When you choose to make me the authority of your life. When you choose to allow me to be the one who has the most influence in your life.
28. When you get in the yoke with me and allow me to hold that position of Lord in your life, then verse twenty-nine says you will learn from me.
29. And the reason why it is safe to get into the yoke with me and allow me to be Lord of your life is because I am gentle and humble in heart.
30. In other words, my heart toward you is not to dominate you by force, I am a humble Lord who desires to lead you gently, so that you are not harmed in the process.
31. And if you will submit to my Lordship, you will find rest for your souls.
32. And how exactly will we find rest for our souls?
33. When you make me Lord and begin to really know me, you will find something very powerful about relationship with me.
34. The truth is, my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.
35. Now. I am going to make one giant, huge statement. I have thought about it and prayed about it, and I have shared it with others who have confirmed that they believe the statement is true.
36. When we are weary and burdened. When we are weighted down with stress and anxiety and worries, it is generally because we have not fully understood the nature and the identity of God.
37. In other words, we don't fully know him.
38. Now. On the one hand, I don't think we are going to completely and fully understand who God is until we get to heaven.
39. But we can know him and understand enough about Him on this side of eternity that this life is not a heavy hearted, burdened, drudge

that we just get up every day and endure.

40. So, the purpose of this study and this series of messages is to help us know the Lord more deeply.

41. And that brings us back to the question that is our title.

42. **How do we get to know God?**

43. For the next few moments, we are going to look at verse twenty-five. And the first thing we discover is this.

44. We get to know God more deeply when we understand what kind of people, He allows to know Him.

45. **Matthew 11:25** At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."

46. To be clear, God the father invites everyone to know him more deeply. God's desire is that every single human being on planet earth would know him intimately.

47. We know that because verse twenty-eight says come to me all of you.

48. We know that because **John 3:16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

49. **Mark 8:34** Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

50. So, when Jesus prays to the father and says I praise you father because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned.

51. We need to know that the reason these things, this knowing God more intimately, is hidden, is not because God wants them to be hidden.

52. They are hidden from those who refuse to meet God on his terms.

53. **God can be known by everyone, but not everyone will come to God and put themselves in a position to know Him.**

54. Is that making sense this morning?

55. So, what is the position that will block our knowing him more deeply and keep the knowledge of God hidden from us?

56. It is the position of being wise and learned. And I put in parenthesis. (Those who are wise and learned in their own eyes.)

57. We have an entire book of the bible, the book of Proverbs, which is devoted completely to the subject of wisdom and how we gain wisdom.
58. So, we learn from that that God is not against our being wise and gaining wisdom.
59. What he is against is our approaching him in such a way that we relate to him as if we already know it all.
60. When we approach him acting wise and learned in our own eyes, then our heart is closed off to knowing Him deeply and intimately.
61. Proverbs 10:8 The wise in heart accept commands, but a chattering fool comes to ruin.
62. The wise person listens a lot and talks less.
63. But a fool talks a lot and listens less. And Solomon said that the one who won't listen comes to ruin.
64. I was talking to two different friends this week and both of them were sharing with me that they have an employee that just will not listen to instruction.
65. The first friend told me that this employee, no matter how much you try to teach them, they just look at you. And the just looking rather than responding makes this boss wonder if the person is listening at all.
66. And then their job performance confirms that they are not listening all that much.
67. My other friend said that every time he tries to give instruction to this employee, the employee cuts him off and says, I got it, it got it, it got it. But again. The employee's job performance makes it abundantly clear that they are not getting it.
68. Both of my friends expressed that they are tired of trying to get the message across and they are ready to move on to someone who they know will listen.
69. In a sense, not exactly, but in a sense that's what Jesus is saying about the type of person who is unable to truly know God.
70. The truth is hidden from them because they won't listen.
71. Take a moment. Don't say the name out loud. But is there anyone in your life who just won't listen?
72. How frustrated do you get with them? When a person won't listen

then you are wasting your breath. And Solomon learned that instruction is not what the non-listening fool needs. What he needs is something else.

73. Proverbs 26:3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the backs of fools!

74. It's impossible to relate to someone intimately if they won't listen.

75. It is a truth. It is a spiritual axiom. And God knows it is the truth because that's how he created us.

76. So, the person who acts like they know it all will never know God deeply and intimately until they change their ways.

77. Allow me to take that one step further. Sometimes what keeps us from listening is not arrogance or pride but rather fear.

78. Our flesh hates to be seen by others as ignorant or unlearned.

79. No one likes to feel like they are the dumbest person in the room.

80. And so, sometimes we act like we know, when we really don't know, just so we won't be seen as less than.

81. But here's the thing. If we are not careful, we not only will relate to others that way, but we will relate to God that way.

82. Out of fear of what the Lord will think of us, or out of fear of being rejected, we will go to God in a way that puts us in a good light.

83. We will relate to him in such a way that we think we are somehow keeping certain aspects of our life a secret from him, which almost instantly cuts off the opportunity to learn from Him or know him more deeply.

Conclusion:

1. For the life of me I can't remember who said it, and I may not be getting the question exactly correct, but it goes something like this.

2. When you go to God in prayer, which you do you present to Him?

3. Do you bring to him the fake you that appears to have the right answers and have it all together?

4. Do you bring to him the fake you that only has minor flaws and blemishes.

5. When you talk to God do you answer for him before you even give him

a chance to speak?

6. Or do you bring to him the real you. The you that misunderstands and has more questions than answers.
7. Do you bring to him the real you. The you that is flawed, dirty, sinful, even wicked sometimes?
8. Do you bring to him the you that just says God, I'm going to shut up now and I am going to be quiet and still and just listen for your voice, because I really don't know where to turn or what to do.
9. You say but pastor. Isn't it risky to relate to God that way?
10. Isn't it dangerous to be real and transparent and completely open with him and allow him to know the real me?
11. Actually, that fear of risk of being known is something we learned from flawed human beings. Those in our past or our present who have rejected us once they found out what we were really like.
12. But with God it is not risky at all.
13. Mainly because God already knows all those things about you anyway. He just wants you to come clean with him.
14. And secondly, we learn from Matthew 11:28-29 that when we come to him weary and burdened. Which by the way is an indication of weakness and being less than perfect.
15. That God's method of relating to us in our weakness is to show us his real self. A God who has a gentle and humble heart.
16. A God who allows us to know him when we allow him to know us.
17. So, no. allowing him to know the real us is not risky at all. It is in fact the safest thing we can possibly do.
18. Pray for those who have felt like they can never be real with God.
19. Pray for those who have a pride problem. Who have acted foolish toward God.
20. Lead people in prayer.
 - Lord, help me with my pride that keeps me from listening.
 - Lord, help me with my fear of being truly seen by you.
 - In your own words, go to God right now with the real you, and see if he doesn't relate to you with a gentle and humble heart.