

1. We are going to finish with a study about knowing God.
2. We've been using a passage from Matthew chapter 11 verses 25-30 as the basis for our study.
3. Let me read this passage and then re-cap what we've studied so far.
4. **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."
5. In week one we learned that God wants to reveal himself to us so that we can know him and relate to him more intimately.
6. But there is a spiritual position that we have to be in to be able to receive what he will reveal.
7. In verse 25 Jesus reminds us that God doesn't reveal himself to those who are wise and learned in their own eyes.
8. Those whose attitude is they know enough, and as a result won't listen.
9. Instead, God reveals himself to little children. Those who approach God with a child-like faith.
10. Though there are many, we chose one particular child-like characteristic, and that is the willingness to ask God questions.
11. To be real with him. To pour out our heart to him with raw emotion if necessary.
12. Over and over again that is what king David did in the book of Psalms. 51 times he questioned God.
13. And yet we find that God was not offended or hurt by David asking him questions. In fact, just the opposite is true.
14. David is the only person in the bible whom God called a man after his own heart.
15. So, you and I can be real with him, and we can question him, and God can handle it.
16. And then last time we identified a characteristic about who Jesus is that has great impact on our daily life.
17. **Matthew 11:27** "All things have been committed to me by my Father.

18. This truth is repeated in Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
19. So, we asked the question. What does that mean that everything in the heavens and on earth is under Jesus' authority?
20. We get a better understanding of what that means by a passage in the book of Colossians.
21. Colossians 1:15-17 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
22. So, when Jesus says everything is under his authority, he is saying that everything is held together by him.
23. In Jesus Christ this world is not random. Our life is not random. The happenings in our life are not random.
24. And they are not falling apart. For sure it may feel like things are falling apart.
25. But by faith we believe and live with the hope that in Jesus everything is being held together.
26. If Jesus wants it to be held together then it will be held together, and we don't have to worry about it.
27. That's one of the reasons why we are told in Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
28. The only possible way you and I can be at peace, especially when it seems like everything is falling apart is when we relate to him according to the truth that he has got it all under control.
29. That he is the glue that holds it all together.
30. Now. I would really love to stand up here and tell you that I am able to successfully live in that peace all the time.
31. But I am not. I am a work in progress. I believe we are all works in progress.
32. So thankfully we have the last part of this passage in Matthew chapter 11.

TEXT: 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."

TITLE: Which Yoke are you in?

INTRO:

1. The next thing we learn about the Lord is that when we miss the mark.
2. When rather than living like everything is being held together by him, and we mistakenly believe that it is all being held together by us, and as a result we become weary and burdened, the Lord doesn't reject us and push us away.
3. Instead, he invites us to come closer. To come toward him, rather than move away from Him.
4. I don't know if what I say next will apply to anyone else, but it for sure applies to me.
5. When I find myself weary and burdened, not just tired and in need of rest, which is normal and natural for all of us.
6. But when I realize that I am weary and burdened, it is most often because...
 - There is an aspect of who God is that I don't know.
 - There is an aspect of who God is that I don't fully understand.
 - There is an aspect of who God is that I have forgotten about and need to be reminded of.
7. And so, as we finish this series today, we are going to dissect some things about who God is that to me are life changing.
8. Through verse 28 we learn that it is not God's intent that we be weary and burdened, and as a result alone.
9. It is his intent that we have supernatural rest that comes from him.
10. Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
11. If you find yourself weary and burdened then come to me, and I will give you something special and powerful. I will give you the gift of rest.
12. So, verse 28 invites us to receive this gift of rest. But I believe verses 29 and 30 explain better what that gift is really like.
13. And just because this gift is supernatural and just because God

gives it to us, it does not mean that we just passively receive the gift and there is nothing for us to do in cooperation with the gift.

14. In order to receive the gift of rest that we need, the kind of rest that chases weariness and lifts the burdens off our shoulders, we have to take what the Lord gives us, and we have to respond to it.
15. We have to actively participate in the command that he gives.
16. Because the command is not just to come to him. When we come to him there are some actions that we must take that will lead to that rest.
17. Matthew 11:29 *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,*
18. The two things we must actively do to cooperate with this supernatural rest is to take his yoke upon us, or in other words, get in the yoke with him.
19. And we have to be willing to learn not only from him, but also learn about him.
20. So, let's talk first about...

Getting in the yoke with Jesus.

1. A yoke was a wooden device that was fitted on the neck of two oxen or two other animals for the purpose of binding them together, and for the purpose of easing the work of hauling a load.
2. That is the physical definition. But there is also a spiritual definition and that is a yoke signifies taking on the role of a servant who carries the burden of a task or mission.
3. So, Jesus says, take my yoke upon you.
4. Now. If you are hearing about what a yoke is and what it is for, and you are thinking to yourself. I don't want anything to do with a yoke. I don't want anything to do with servitude. I think I'll just pass on that.
5. You need to be aware of something.
6. I was talking to someone about this passage the other day and they made the statement. The command of Jesus was not only to take his yoke upon us, but it was also a command to take off the yoke of weariness and being burdened or weighed down.
7. This person said...everybody wears a yoke. The only question is, which yoke will it be.

8. I really believe that is accurate. Try and live this life alone or try and live this life as if it all depends on you, or try to live this life in some sort of hybrid Christianity where part of it depends on you and other parts depend on God, and what you will find is that kind of living only leads to a yoke of weariness and heaviness that just plain sucks the life out of you.
9. So, when Jesus says, take my yoke upon you, what he is saying is, if you want true rest, you have to take off the yoke that leads to exhaustion and death, and put on the yoke that leads to rest and life.
10. So, the first part of unwrapping this gift of rest and actively cooperating is we have to take his yoke upon us.
11. And then the second part of unwrapping this gift of rest is to actively...

Learn from Him.

1. Learn from Jesus. What do we learn from Jesus when we get in the yoke with him.
2. Any time two animals are yoked together, one of the animals is the lead animal, and the other is the follower who assists.
3. Both of the animals can't be lead animals. If they were they would be continually pulling against one another, trying to go in the opposite direction.
4. So, to learn from him means first of all that we allow him to be the leader in our life. The Lord of our life. The master of our life. And as a result of being all those things we let him choose whether we go right or left of forward or backwards.
5. We let him lead and we follow.
6. But not only do we learn from him, if we look closely at how Jesus describes life in the yoke with him, we also learn about him.
7. Matthew 11:29-30 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."
8. It is only through getting in the yoke with him and learning from him, that we truly and deeply and intimately get to know him.
9. And it is in truly knowing him that makes all the difference.
10. If we don't truly know him then it is going to be pretty difficult to stay in the yoke with him because all of us have this part of us that wants to

be in control.

11. All of us has this side of us that wants to call the shots. To be large and in charge.
12. Now, I can't speak for everyone else, but I can speak for me. I have tried many times in my life to be large and in charge, and usually where I wind up is tiny and trampled.
13. Worn out. Weary. Burdened. Weighted down. Overwhelmed.
14. But when I submit to him, and I get in the yoke with him, and I set in my heart to learn from him and let him lead, then I discover the most amazing things about who God is.
15. Jesus says take my yoke upon you and learn from me. Why? Because...for... I am gentle and humble in heart.
16. When Jesus says for I am, he is giving us precise insight into his nature and his character.
17. He says, I am gentle and humble.
18. So, what is God really like. While we are in the yoke with him, we are still human. We still have tendencies to wander, to get off track, to turn left when we should have turned right.
19. And so how does God treat us when we start to wander. He is gentle with us.
20. God is not...illustrate. Yank. Pull. Tug.
21. He is gentle. He takes into account that we are still learning, and he doesn't treat us harshly along the way.
22. He is the perfect, loving, heavenly father.
23. And not only is he gentle, but he is humble.
24. Why would humble matter.
25. It matters because when we submit to getting in the yoke with the Lord and learning from him it doesn't take very long to realize that he is the smart one and we are not.
26. When we get in the yoke with him, we discover quickly that he is the brains of the operation.
27. To quote Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. 9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

28. Intellectually we are on a lower plane than God. But here's the thing.
29. God is humble. He doesn't put his foot on our neck and keep us pinned down.
30. God is not like that 8th grade know it all, or the 28-year-old know it all, or the 48-year-old know it all, or the 68-year-old know it all that each and every one of us have encountered in our lives.
31. He doesn't stand over us and tell us how smart he is and how dumb we are.
32. He humbles himself and he invites us to be with him. He humbles himself and he elevates us up to his level. He humbles himself and he allows us to share in the joys and the blessings and the rest that only he can provide.
33. You see, God is not some arrogant bully who shoves us around to get his way. He is a gentle, humble, loving father who wants nothing more than to lead us toward life and wholeness and fullness and even rest.
34. And when we get in the yoke with him, and we submit to him, and we not only are willing to learn from him, but we are willing to get to know him. Then and only then can we know the absolute truth.
35. And what is the absolute truth?
36. Matthew 11:30 *For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

Conclusion:

1. Truth. That is the truth. His yoke is easy, and his burden is light.
2. In other words. His yoke is not hard, and his burden is not more than we can bare.
3. It is the truth. And I know it is the truth. And yet so often I feel like I am living and experiencing something different.
4. Partially that is because we live in a fallen world that for the most part refuses to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
5. Partially that is because all of us have been influenced and treated by others in this world differently than the Lord treats us. And because of that it's hard for us to relate to God for who he really is. We tend to relate to God based on how others have related to us.
6. And because we live in that fallen world, it is easy for the enemy to

tempt us into living by the world's philosophies.

7. And all of that leads to this tiresome, weary, burdened, excruciatingly painful life.
8. But the Lord calls us to something better.
9. Would you close your eyes for just a moment and imagine that Jesus is looking you directly in the eye and that he is talking to you and only you?
10. 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."
11. I do not know how many times I have done the very opposite of that, and as a result come to a completely different false conclusion about what God is really like and who he really is.
12. I would be afraid to try and count the times.
13. But little by little. Step by step, I am learning more and more that when I find myself experiencing anything other than what God promises here in this passage, if I will just take the truth of God's word and hold it up and compare myself to his word and allow the Holy Spirit to change whatever doesn't match up, I will begin to discover again that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.
14. When I am weary and worn and worried and wrung out, I know that is not from the Lord. Because his desire is to give me rest.
15. When I feel pushed and pulled and yanked and scattered in a thousand directions, that is not the Lord. Because the Lord is gentle.
16. When I feel lower than dirt, and I am down on myself and, I feel like I don't measure up and that everybody else is better than me, that is not the Lord because he is a humble father who lifts me up to where he is.
17. When the yoke is hard and the burden is heavy, that is not the Lord. It is usually a sign that I am trying to carry more than I should.
18. Maybe you can relate.
19. So, can we close this morning by spending a few moments in relationship with the real father and the real son?
20. Lord. I am weary and burdened, so I come to you, and I believe your desire is to give me rest.

21. Lord, I choose today to get in or stay in the yoke with you and to learn from you.
22. To let you lead and me follow.
23. Lord, I want to know you and I want to experience the truth of who you are.
24. Help me learn to relate to you as a gentle and humble father.
25. Lord, help me to carry your yoke and not some other yoke you have not intended for me.
26. In Jesus name.