

# Come To Me!

Jesus has just finished a very difficult moment in His ministry. Difficult moments are not unusual for anyone who ministers for the Lord. Whether one is a pastor, a church leader, a worker among children or one who serves in some other capacity within or without the church, you will suffer if the Lord is working through you by His Holy Spirit. Jesus knew this truth better than anyone. Not only did John the Baptist, the forerunner of the coming Messiah, have doubts that Jesus was the Messiah; but after John's two disciples had asked their public questions, His own disciples and the crowd now had reason to question also. Was that a heartbreak? It could have been. Jesus had emotions. He was human too! In response, Jesus took time to explain why John and He were rejected. He defended John but not Himself. He pronounced judgment upon Chorazin and Capernaum for rejecting Him after seeing the miracles and wonders. Matt. 11:20-21 is a very serious reminder that Jesus' miracles were proof that He was the Messiah and deity. Romans 1:4 tells us that His return to life was also proof that He was God. This study (Matt. 11:25-30) follows these sad moments in His ministry. It is a snapshot in Jesus' life that is recorded only in Matthew.

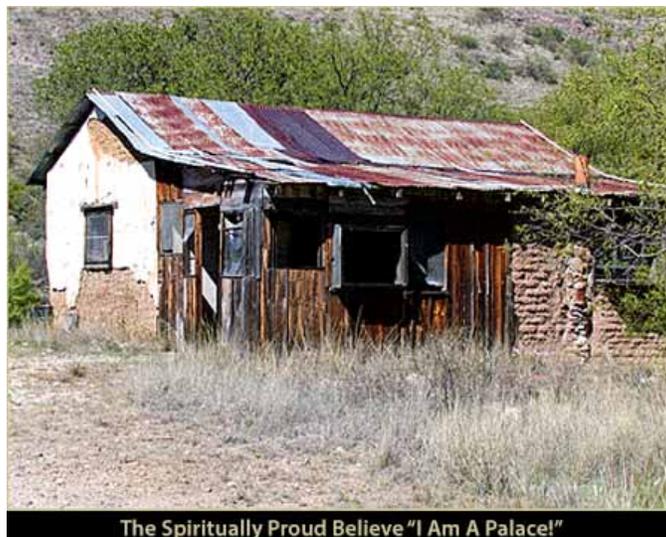
**SPIRITUAL PRIDE.** After His prophetic predictions about the cities of Chorazin and Capernaum, Jesus made a very unexpected comment.

At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants." (NASB) Matt. 11:25

So how did Jesus respond? Was He heart-broken? No! He responded with praise to God the Father, the Lord of Heaven. I just love this passage. Jesus reminds us that God the Father is not seeking control of heaven. He is not the custodian of heaven. He is not the steward, governor, president or prime minister of heaven and earth. He is in control! He is the controller of the universe! Jesus' words are wonderful. The Father is the Lord of heaven and the Lord of earth!

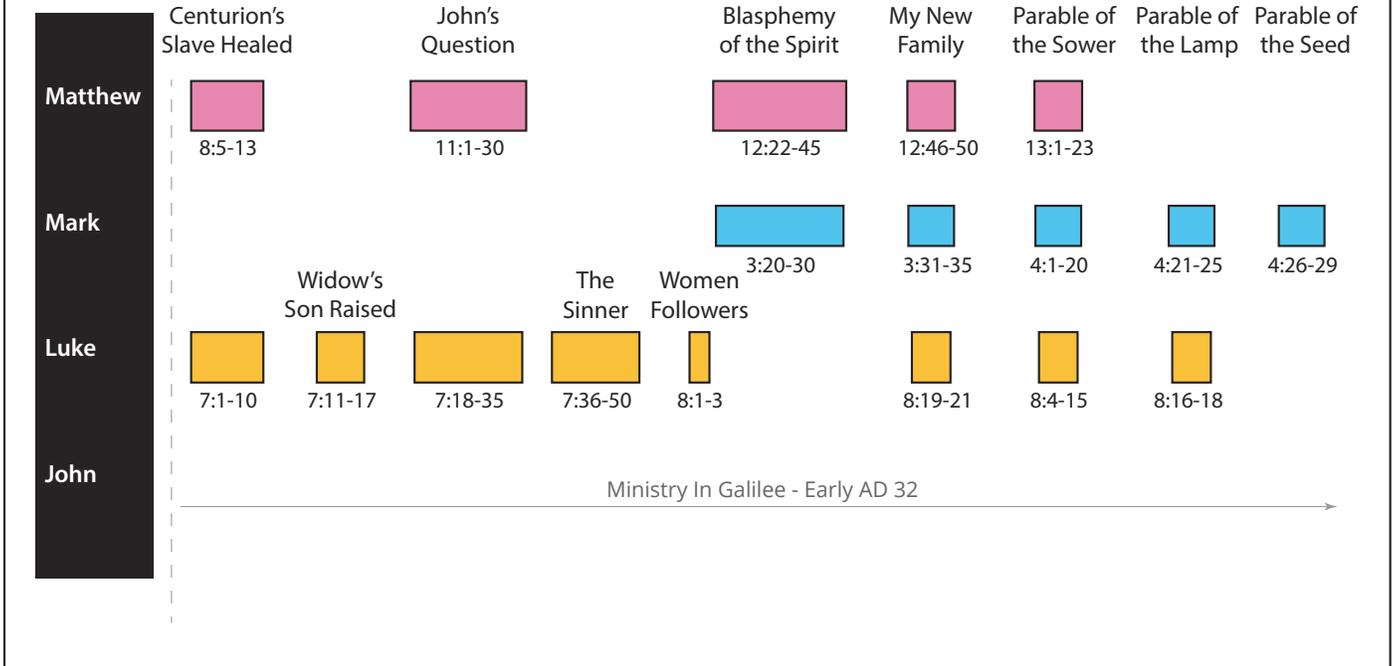
God the Father, as Lord of heaven and earth, has chosen to hide certain truths from us. He has not revealed everything, especially to those who consider themselves wise and intelligent. The Jewish leaders were included in Jesus' description. They were the educated elite in those days who because of their pride rejected Jesus.

However, Jesus' statement was not limited to the Jewish leaders. Many wise and intelligent people from all walks of life have rejected Jesus. They have not seen and do not see a need for God. This truth becomes obvious when unbelieving writers and educators attempt to discredit the Christian faith by speaking authoritatively about the Bible, even though they have never seriously studied it. It is important to notice that it was not their human wisdom or intelligence that was the problem. Their problem was pride and arrogance and their low view of God and His written word - the Bible.



# Life and Heart of Jesus

## Ministry In Galilee



Historical records tell us that thousands upon thousands of wise and intelligent men and women have accepted Jesus Christ. These are the ones Jesus refers to as the “infants.” The term “infants” includes those who are seeking to know God and have found Him. Jesus contrasted “wise and intelligent” to “infants” to make a point. The terms are used in a figurative sense. While the “wise and intelligent” are proud and arrogant, infants are eager to learn and discover. God does not hide spiritual truth from those who belong to Him. God the Father does not hide “these things” from those who are true seekers of spiritual wisdom and knowledge. It is to these that God reveals spiritual truth - not to those who consider themselves wise and knowledgeable and have already rejected Him. Unlike the world, this short verse reveals that God neither honors nor respects those who are spiritually proud and arrogant. He honors those who, like infants, desire to know Him.

The worst condition a person can have is spiritual blindness that results in the rejection of God. At some point in the life of every person who continues rejecting Jesus Christ, God will eventually confirm them in their unbelief. 2 Cor-

inthians says that today, not tomorrow, is the day of salvation. Today is the day to believe, accept, and yield to Jesus.

... for He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is “The acceptable time,” Behold, now is “The day of salvation.” (NASB) 2 Cor. 6:2

One never knows when the last opportunity to respond to God has arrived. That is, one never knows if he or she may be unwilling to respond ever again. Spiritual blindness that keeps one from coming to Jesus Christ is the worst.

**HIDDEN FROM THE PROUD.** Matthew 11:25 says that God the Father has hidden “these things” from the wise and intelligent. What are “these things”? The hidden things are found in Matthew 11:10-19. “These things” include at least the identities of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ. John was the forerunner of the coming Messiah, the fulfillment of “all the prophets,” and he was the long awaited “Elijah, who was to come.” Jesus was the promised One, the Messiah, the Christ, the Savior from sin, the Lord of lords, the King of kings, and our eternal God.

Due to the spiritual pride of some religious leaders who had already rejected Jesus, God knew that those leaders would never completely understand everything about John and Jesus. It would not make any difference in their future destiny what they knew. We must be careful not to conclude that every religious leader had rejected God. John 9:16 reveals that some of the religious leaders did believe in Jesus.

Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.” But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And there was a division among them. (NASB) John 9:16

John 19:38-39 states that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who had visited Jesus, became believers in and followers of Jesus Christ. Together these passages reveal that God provided enough information and spiritual insight for the religious leaders to believe in Jesus Christ. A few responded, but it appears that most rejected Him. True faith is evidenced by faith in and submission to Jesus Christ.

**HIDDEN FROM US.** Scripture also indicates that God hides truth from everyone. First, consider the fact that Matthew 6:6 says that God exists in secret,

... close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. (NASB) Matt. 6:6

Why does God exist in secret? Why does He not reveal Himself daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly? One of the most surprising statements in scripture is Isaiah 45:15.

Truly, You are a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, Savior! (NASB) Is. 45:15

Once again we see that God hides Himself. I believe that Philip Yancey has the answer when he says,

If God merely wanted to make His existence known to every person on the earth, God would not hide. However, the direct presence of God would inevitably overwhelm our freedom,

with sight replacing faith. God wants instead a different kind of knowledge, a personal knowledge that requires a commitment from the one who seeks to know Him.<sup>1</sup>

Jeremiah 29:13-14 reveals that God wants us to seek and search for Him.

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you . . . (NASB) Jer. 29:13-14a

If we will seek and search for Him with all our hearts, we will find Him. Why does God hide? The answer is simple. He wants our searching. He wants us to search and seek for Him. Many of the religious leaders were no longer seeking or searching. They had stopped. They were finished. It would have been a waste to pursue them further, but God continued to reveal truth to a few.

God provides the spark of truth about Jesus Christ in a person’s heart by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11). Anyone who is destined to believe will respond by seeking and searching and God will provide him or her more spiritual insight.

**THIS WAY.** Jesus’ next statement is a surprise.

Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.” (NASB) Matt. 11:26

Notice the phrase “this way.” He referred to the fact that God had “hidden these things.” God takes pleasure in hiding things. He hides truth from those who reject Jesus, and He slowly reveals truth to God-seekers. He wants our seeking and our searching. It is the proof of the desire of our hearts to know Him.

Those who believe in God will always be seeking Him. That was the passion of King David’s heart.

As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? (NASB) Ps. 42:1-2

1. Philip Yancey. Reaching For the Invisible God. Discovering Intimacy With God. Book 2. Center for Church Based Training. 2002. p. 2.9.

**ALL HANDED OVER.** Those religious leaders did not understand that the very One they rejected was in absolute control of everything. And it was He who knew God the Father and it was He who could give them insight about the Father. That was Jesus' next revelation.

*All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. (NASB) Matt. 11:27*

In John 17:2 we discover that all authority has been given to Jesus. In Matt. 7:21-23 we discover that Jesus has authority and has power over the demonic forces. In Matt. 9:18-26 we find that He has authority over disease and death. In Matt. 8:24-27 we are reminded that He controls nature. Matthew 7:22-23 tells us that Jesus will determine who will experience eternal punishment or eternal joy. Jesus has the keys to eternal life.

The very one the religious leaders rejected, insulted and later abused was and is the God of this earth and our universe. How very foolish they were.

**COME TO ME!** Jesus was not angry or grieved because of the religious leaders, nor was He disturbed by the questions that the disciples or the crowd probably had. Instead Jesus had compassion for them and offered this call,

*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. (NASB) Matt. 11:28-30*

The Greek word that Jesus used for "yoke" was a Jewish term that referred to the "yoke of the commandments," "yoke of the Law," "yoke of the Torah," and the "yoke of the kingdom of heaven." These phrases referred to the keeping of the Jewish laws, rules, prohibitions, requirements for almost every aspect of life: the Sabbath, foods, business, religion, agriculture, and marriage for example. The rabbis encouraged people to take as many obligations as possible. Sup-

posedly, they helped one gain favor with God and gain an entrance into heaven. Anyone who attempted to keep all of these hundreds and hundreds of rules was indeed "heavy-laden" and weary.

So when Jesus said take "my yoke," He was referring to a different set of religious rules. He was not talking as a farmer nor was He comparing them to cows and steers. Did you notice that He said "you will learn of Me"? When we understand the identity of Jesus and His expectations, we discover that He does not demand that we keep a long list of rules in order to have sins forgiven and to have peace with Him. He calls us to start seeking and searching for Him.

**CONCLUSION.** Matt. 11:25-30 reminds us that human wisdom and education are not required to understand the Bible. It is God who gives us the spiritual insight. It is God who helps us understand truth (Matt. 13:10-13; Luke 24:45; John 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:12-13). He starts us down the path and brings us to Jesus Christ (John 6:37, 44, 65). He gives us the faith to believe (Eph. 2:8-9) and then to find Jesus.

After we find Him, after we believe in Him and yield our lives to Him, He asks us to keep seeking and searching to know more about Him. Jesus' demands are a not a list of "dos" and "don'ts." Remember, He said, "you will learn of Me." As we seek and find Him in the pages of scripture, we will respond to Him from the depth of our hearts with love and obedience. We will be changed and a peace will consume our lives.

Jesus will not hide Himself from one who seriously seeks and searches for Him. It is God's desire that we seek Him with all our hearts. There is a lifetime of treasure in the Bible to be found about Jesus. Remember, the goal of the journey is not to know the Bible but to know God.

Jesus said, "Come to Me . . . and I will give you rest." The journey is to be filled with delight, the joy and thrill of discovering Him now and in eternity and the peace of knowing that we belong to Him forever.