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Sermon Notes

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## **Our Inviting King**

**Matthew 11:28-30**

Illus. Once upon a time, there was a powerful King who ruled over all His realm with unshakeable authority. Nothing escaped his attention, and His power was daunting. He had never lost a battle, and His realm extended far and wide.

Invitation Illustration

The greatest invitation ever... a summons from the King of Heaven itself to Come very close to Him for eternal life

### **I. Review: Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility**

- A. Christ Denounces Unrepentant Cities (vs. 20-24)
- B. Christ Praises God for Sovereignty (vs. 25-27)
- C. Christ Invites All Burdened Sinners to Come to Him (vs. 28-30)

Start and finish of this text: human responsibility

Center of this text: Divine sovereignty

Perfect blending together in text... no controversy, no confusion, no cacophany

- D. Divine Sovereignty
  - 1. Divine Power: Christ's Miracles
  - 2. Divine Perception: Supernatural Knowledge of Gentile Cities
  - 3. Divine Prerogative: NOT to Do Miracles There
  - 4. Divine Praise: Christ Praises Father for Sovereignty
  - 5. Divine Position: Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth

6. Divine Preference: Concealing to Some, Revealing to Others
7. Divine Pleasure: All Things Done According to God's Pleasure
8. Divine Presentation: Father Commits the Universe to the Son
9. Divine Privacy: No One Knows the Father or the Son
10. Divine Privilege: The Son Chooses to Reveal the Father to Some

#### E. Human Responsibility

Christ invites us to come close to Him

Astonishing picture!! A King inviting

## II. Whom the King Invites: Burdened Sinners (vs. 28)

### A. Our Inviting God: Father, Son, and Spirit

**vs. 28-30** *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon me 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."*

#### 1. God Says "Come..."

##### a. Come for forgiveness

**Isaiah 1:18-20** *"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

God, speaking to His rebellious people, urges them to come back under His reign, under His rule. If they will only come, they will eat the best of the land. But if they will not, they will be devoured by the sword.

##### b. Come for feasting

**Isaiah 55:1-3** *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not*

***satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live.***

God, speaking to His thirsty and hungry people, urges them to come to Him and enjoy the richest of possible banquets. He is most urgent, pleading with the people to "Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good!!"

The God of the Old Testament invited His sinful people to Come for forgiveness, and to Come for feasting

2. So also Christ says "Come"

a. speaking to His disciples

***Matthew 4:18-19 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."***

b. speaking through parables of the wedding banquet

***Matthew 22: 4 "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'***

c. speaking to hungry, thirsty, desperate souls

***John 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."***

d. speaking to the dead to command them out of the tombs

***John 11:43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"***

***John 5:28-29 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out-- those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."***

e. Judgment Day: blessing the faithful stewards

***Matthew 25:21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'***

f. Judgment Day: speaking to the sheep who will inherit the Kingdom

***Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.***

Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, entered the world to invite sinners to enter heaven! He said, "Come, come, come, come!!"

3. And the Spirit says "Come"

***Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.***

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are inviting sinners all around the world to renounce their sins, turn from them, and come... come into the Kingdom of God!!

B. Mysterious Context: Rejection, Sovereignty, and Invitation

1. Christ denouncing cities who refuse to repent

YET He continues to reach out, continues to invite sinners

Lesson: Christ never grows weary, continues to hold out the word of life, the invitation of the Gospel despite repeated refusals. Yet it will not continue forever, for as in the days of Noah, someday the opportunity to enter will end forever.

2. Gospel of Matthew: Christ Preaches the Kingdom of God... "Repent and enter the Kingdom"

YET He is asking, inviting rebellious sinners to come back and submit to Him! It's very odd for a King to invite rebels back!

Lesson: Note the incredible graciousness of our King... offering compassionate amnesty to rebels who have resisted His rule over their lives. No earthly King ever does this!! Kings don't INVITE submission, they FORCE it!

3. Christ espouses highest form of absolute sovereignty, even over salvation

YET He gives a free invitation to ALL who are weary and burdened

Lesson: God's sovereignty is absolutely in harmony with a free and general invitation to all who hear

How is predestination, election, God's sovereignty (so clearly taught in verses 20-27) consistent with such a free invitation?

Some people assume that such invitations, and other such passages make election impossible, and free will the absolute rule:

**[KJV] Revelation 22:17 whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**

This phrase, "Whosoever will" is a key one for people who reject God's sovereignty in salvation.

1) Evidently Christ saw no conflict whatsoever here, since He follows such a strong statement on sovereignty with a general invitation

**Matthew 11:27-28 "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. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."**

2) Other Scriptures teach that no one will naturally respond to this invitation of their own power:

**John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.**

John Murray: "It is a moral and spiritual impossibility" for any natural person to come to Christ apart from a direct work of God drawing him.

3) YET God DOES draw sinners to Christ, and effectually calls them by making them able to respond to Christ

**John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.**

4) It is at the moment of the audible calling through the Word of Christ that sinners come:

**Romans 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.**

Illus. General call by firemen in NYC on 9-11, moving in and around the rubble of the World Trade Center, calling "Anyone who can hear me, please respond!! Is anyone there? Hello, call back if you can answer!" Obviously the firemen were only calling for the living, not the dead. So it is with the gospel call... the evangelist calls to a huge crowd, but only those whom God is regenerating can respond

C. Who Is Invited? Weary, Heavy-Laden Sinners

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore. Jesus ready stands to save you... full of pity, love and power!!"

1. "Weary and heavy-laden"

Lit. "those who labor"... exasperating hard toil, a crushing burden like that of slavery

Lit. "those who have been weighed down with crushing weights"

Illus. Israelites in slavery in Egypt... making bricks without straw; day after day, crushed by the labor

- a. some think it refers to those crushed by demands of Mosaic Law

Ten Commandments: we break these day after day

Two Great Commandments: we break these day after day!!!

Represents overwhelming burden of attempting to save yourself through your own obedience

Day after day, trying to do "enough" to please a perfect God, and there's never "enough"

Illus. Martin Luther's extreme grief

- b. focus is on the word "yoke" which I will discuss in a moment

***Acts 15:10 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?***

***Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.***

The Scribes and Pharisees had prescribed a severe, legalistic crushing system of religion in which even the most diligent efforts only led more and more to despair

The Scribes and Pharisees delighted in the "yoke of the law", and they spent their full time studying... they also developed an elaborate set of rules and regulations which threatened to crush the life out of the common person

***Matthew 23:4 [The Scribes and Pharisees] tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.***

Rules and regulations about everything!!

## 2. Real burden is SIN

- a. sin is a crushing burden every day... a grievous taskmaster, whipping us with its demands

The lifestyle of sin... compelled to do ever more to serve sin, with ever-decreasing pleasure

Illus. C.S. Lewis "Screwtape Letters"

b. even greater is the crushing burden of impending wrath of God

i) meticulous accounting on judgment day

***Job 31:4 Does he not see my ways and count my every step?***

***Matthew 12:36 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.***

ii) burdened, guilty conscience

***Lamentations 1:14 "My sins have been bound into a yoke; by his hands they were woven together. They have come upon my neck and the Lord has sapped my strength. He has handed me over to those I cannot withstand.***

***Psalm 40:12 For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me.***

Old Covenant worship simply unable to deal with the crushing burden of a guilty conscience

***Hebrews 9:9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.***

***Psalm 51:16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.***

Illus. Edgar Allen Poe's "Telltale Heart"... murderer hears the beating heart of his victim, while the police interrogate him in the very house where the man is buried. It is a dark inquiry into the incredible power of a guilty conscience

Illus. Lady MacBeth, trying to scrub blood from his hands: "Out, damn spot!!"

Memory stirs, conscience accuses, terror grows... a burden from which we cannot escape

***Job 13:26-28 For you write down bitter things against me and make me inherit the sins of my youth. 27 You fasten my feet in shackles; you keep close watch on all my paths by putting marks on the soles of my feet. 28 So man wastes away like something rotten, like a garment eaten by moths.***

Puritan Joseph Alleine: "Our sins are as mighty as they are many. The sands are many but they are not mighty. The mountains are mighty, but they are not many. But woe is man, my sins are as many as the sands, and as mighty as the mountains. Their weight is greater than their number."

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*: Christian carried on his back a huge burden... only when he came to the cross did it roll off:

"I dreamed and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out in a lamentable cry, saying, 'What shall I do?'"

"Legality" threatened to crush him... Mt. Sinai got bigger and bigger and towered over him, threatening to fall on him and crush him!! Also, the burden on his back got much heavier!!

iii) sense of doom and fear of God's wrath

***Hebrews 10:27 ...a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.***

What a terrible burden to walk under say after day! Not knowing if today you will die in your sins, and be sent to eternity in hell.

There is no greater a burden than anyone can walk under!!

So, whom does the King invite? Such people as are crushed under the burden of their sins... of a guilty conscience, or fear of wrath and judgment from God; such people as are weary of trying man-made religion and self-help efforts

Who know that no matter how many good works they think to do, they are only storing up more and more wrath day after day

D. To What are Sinners Invited?

***"Come to ME, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest!!"***

1. Come to Christ!!

Christ: the only incarnate Son of God, and our only hope for salvation

a. "Come to" means simply believe in Him for salvation

***John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.***

To come to Christ means to believe in Him... to find everything you need in Him, to be fully satisfied!!

b. to look to Christ's death on the cross as your only hope for salvation

c. to know that He CAN and WILL save!!



***“Come to ME, all you who are weary and burdened, and I WILL give you rest!!”***

There’s no doubt that Christ is able to give you rest from constant religion, constant guilt under the Law

2. Christ’s death: full atonement for sins
3. Christ’s righteousness: full acceptability before God on Judgment Day

Simple faith... simple trust in Christ alone!! Come to Christ!!!

III. What the King Commands: Submit to My Yoke

IV. What the King Promises: Rest for Your Souls

V. Application

- 1) Marvel at the Grace of our King: Sovereign, Yet Inviting
- 2) Feel the Burden of Sin... and Let Christ Remove It!!
- 3) Come to Christ for Salvation
- 4) Come to Christ for Sanctification
- 5) Let Him who Hears Say “Come!!”

***Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.***