

Speaker: Pastor Buster Brown

Today's Message: Yoked to Learn and Find Rest

Today's Text: Matthew 11:25-30

“At that time Jesus declared, ‘I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’” **Matthew 11:25-30**

“Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.” **Augustine of Hippo**, *Confessions of Augustine (1-1)*

1. THE PREREQUISITE: Be weary and heavy-laden (discouraged and beat down by life).

2. THE PROMISE: Rest/rest for your souls.

3. THE PROCESS: Yoked to learn from Christ (the One Who is humble and gentle of heart).

“His giving himself as an all-sufficient God, to be ENJOYED by the creatures, to hold out all that is in him for the SATIATING and making them BLESSED; that is alone discovered by and in Christ. In him is a Father, a God of covenant, wherein he has promised to lay out himself for them; in him has he promised to give himself into their EVERLASTING FRUITION, as their exceeding GREAT REWARD.” **John Owen**, Volume 2, p. 90.

4. THE JUBILATION/DELIGHT/EXUBERANCE: His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

THE YOKING PROCESS

1. You will be yoked under some pursuits/system (Romans 6:16-18, 20-21)
2. Other systems (counterfeit gods) do not deliver ultimate satisfaction or hope.

“A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living. An idol has such a controlling position in your heart that you can spend most of your passion and energy, your emotional and financial resources, on it without a second thought. It can be family and children, or career and making money, or achievement and critical acclaim, or saving ‘face’ and social standing. It can be a romantic relationship, peer approval, competence and skill, secure and comfortable circumstances, your beauty or your brains, a great political or social cause, your morality and virtue or even success in the Christian ministry. When your meaning in life is to fix someone else’s life, we may call it “co-dependency” but it is really idolatry. An idol is whatever you look at and say, in your heart of hearts, ‘If I have that, then I’ll feel my life has meaning, then I’ll know I have value, then I’ll feel significant and secure.’ There are many ways to describe that kind of relationship to something, but perhaps the best one is to worship.” **Tim Keller**, *Counterfeit Gods*

3. Yoked and thankful/delighting in the Christ. (This worship and delight breaks the tyranny of counterfeit gods.)

“The only way to dispossess the heart of an old affection is by the expulsive power of a new one...thus it is not enough...to hold out to the world the mirror of its own imperfections. It is not enough to come forth with a demonstration of the evanescent character of your enjoyments...to speak to the conscience...of its follies...Rather, try every legitimate method of finding access to your hearts for the love of Him who is greater than the world.” **Thomas Chalmers D.D.**, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*

4. Yoking and trusting in the One Whose yoke is easy and Whose burden is light.

“It is also important to know that pain, by itself, does not necessarily sanctify us. I am persuaded that pain sanctifies only as we trust Him, surrender to His blows in faith, conscious that our Father is reliable, that He is our own Dear Father. I trust that the Father is not my Judge executing me, but the Master Sculptor. As the craftsman, He has a pre-vision of me which is beautiful and clean and self-forgetting, as sweet and pure as the sunny day after rain.” **The Heart of a Servant Leader**, C. John Miller

QUESTIONS

- 1) Professor Tom Shippey, who studied JRR Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, refers to the Ring as a “psychic amplifier”, i.e. the Ring takes the heart’s fondest desires and magnifies them to idolatrous proportions. How does that happen in daily living?
- 2) How can legitimate and good pursuits become idols?
- 3) How does the beauty and goodness of Christ break the power of counterfeit gods?
- 4) What does this statement mean: “Counterfeit gods make promises, but they can never ultimately deliver satisfaction, joy and peace.” What are some examples?

